

Notes from meeting on 8 October 2002, Hove Town Hall

Present: Steve Waite– University of Brighton, chair for 2002
Matthew Thomas – B&H City Council, ecologist
Plus 5 other representatives from Sussex countryside organizations.

1. Apologies: Jenny Bowen (EN); Patrick Fitzsimons (Uni. of Sussex)
2. New Chair for one year from next meeting will be Jenny Bowen.
Vice Chair “ “ “ “ John Patmore
3. Council News: 2 new LNRs to be declared at Ladies Mile and Withdean Woods before end of March 2003. Damage to colony of c. 3000 *Spiranthes spiralis* when council contractors (Ecovert) mowed grass verge on Downs above Marina. Matthew was aware of this colony and had tried to alert colleagues. WAG to provide guidance to Council.
4. I provided feedback on Local BAP data collation. Information now sufficient to write report with habitat and species lists for inclusion by Council into LBAP. Working group as sub-group of WAG established and I intend to present draft report to this group. However progress on implementing BAP objectives still very poorly co-ordinated within Council. For example, recent review of Council's tenanted farmland provides series of recommendations that clearly miss wildlife/biodiversity objectives from recommendations; and Matthew is leading on producing a 'School Grounds BAP', which whilst well intentioned does not seem to link to existing targets, actions or objectives.
5. 'Natureweb' project may be developed to provide reporting mechanism for monitoring SNCI condition. Dependant upon Grant from EN and difficulties over IT aspects may delay implementation.
6. Planning applications:
 - Community Football Stadium at Falmer still evolving. Access road through Stanmer Park required and bat survey not been completed.
 - Marina Cliffs, reshaping following collapse last autumn, current position not clear but it may be 'called-in' following objections from EN on Geological impact.
 - Volks Railway, western end to be developed near the Palace Pier. Tony Spiers has reported *Allium ampeloprasum* var. *babingtonii* from this section (in addition to plants at eastern end). Efforts will be made to contact the developers and create vegetated shingle area as part of this application.
 - Jewish Cemetary, top of Bear Road. Part of SNCI lies within this but planning permission was granted with apparently no regard to WAG or Matthew's objections. Chair will write letter of concern to the Council on the lack of consultation here.
7. National Park: Phase 2 open access maps (Provisional) have been prepared and will be re-released after earlier errors. Apparently this should happen this week and the best location to view is at Council offices as the web-site (links via www.Countryside-Agency.gov.uk) is not particularly detailed. 14 November is when the CA will formally meet to consider the South Downs NP proposal, all information will be made available on their web-site.

Apparently the very slow progress on the New Forest National Park proposal may delay the South Downs NP progress to the extent it is not pursued to full designation.

Next Meeting: 14 January 2003; 7.00 Booth Museum

John Patmore
Brighton