

KELSALE-CUM-CARLTON PARISH COUNCIL



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38th Meeting of Kelsale-cum-Carlton Biodiversity Group 7pm on Monday 11 March 2024 The Cottages, Bridge Street, Kelsale, IP17 2PB

1. Welcome and apologies

Attending: Keith Dickerson (KD, Chair), Laura Gwynne (LG, notes), Jerry Bowdrey (JB), Jem Adams (JA), Chris Colchester (CCol), Martin Colchester (MC), Glynis Robertson (GR)

Apologies: Janet Barnes (JxB), Marie Adams (MA), David Edgerley (DE), Catherine (Maple Farm)

We opened by sharing Muntjac and gravy, with oat cookies, tea and wine, and congratulated JB on a thorough and brilliant newly created BAP document. Would anyone like to order Muntjac from the Essex Wildlife Trust? If so please contact KD. **Action: All**

2. Notes and Actions from 37th meeting on 30 October 2023

The minutes of the 37th meeting were not available as the handwritten notes had been lost. LG will send her handwritten notes to KD to try to identify any remaining actions. No biodiversity surveys had been carried out since the last meeting as it had been winter and few species were on display.

Eddie Bathgate from SOS (Save Our Swifts) had given a talk at the 2023 APM and offered KcC two swift boxes to put up in additional sites in the centre of the village. Would anyone like one or could they be offered as a prize?

Nonsuch Farm poplar cutback along railway line: JB to advise when to go and check for signs of Hornet Clear Wing Moths (pupa/moths). To be followed up in June/July. Early morning is best time to see them. **Action: JB**

TPOs: The Scotts Pine in Church Lane had been felled with no notice or indication that permission had been granted. It had been one of our Top 10 trees in KcC and there was sadness and confusion as to how this could happen without consultation.

Action: LG to request that BAP Group / tree warden become statutory consultees on any parish tree issues in future.

3. Biodiversity Action Plan

The latest version of the BAP, drafted by JB and formatted by DE and KD, was a substantial document and contained much useful information. The final length of the BAP document

should be around 50 pages. We should draw out actions and targets and follow up on these as an ongoing future vision.

JxB (via email) suggested making a list of the large gardens and farms in KcC to complement the existing BAP sites. It was decided it would be best to go forward with the sites/recommendations already there. The group agreed that the main gaps in the BAP, to be filled in future versions, are woodlands (mainly used for shooting) and farms.

Action: JB, MC (woods)

KD will draft an executive summary and a list of recommendations. JA will proofread the document. All to review the draft and propose any changes / additions. **Action: KD, All**

Hedgehogs: Discussion as to where they have gone and whether it is due to badgers eating them. In the past badgers may have been more regularly dispatched by farmers. Members showed interest in homing Bryony's hedgehogs after CC had seen them at a talk in Campsea Ashe. KD, JxB and LG who are interested in having them in their gardens.

Action: To be followed up by LG

It was agreed that the Simpsons Fromus Valley Reserve could be an ideal habitat for a beaver colony that could reduce the risk of flooding in the centre of Kelsale. It would need permission from SFPT and local landowners and a grant for the fencing required by the Environment Agency. LG shared her experience of visiting the Beaver site at Spains Hall Estate in Finchingfield, Essex. KD offered to book a tour and drive other members to visit the site later in 2024. If anyone else wishes to join them please contact KD. **Action: KD**

KD reported back on the Deben Climate Centre talks in Woodbridge that were being held at the Methodist Church on Friday evenings. The latest (so far) had been given by Prof Peter Hobson from Writtle University College. He talked about ecosystem collapse and how to restore as much as possible to create a functioning ecosystem (even though it can never be fully restored to any previous state). He discussed megafauna (beavers, lynx, pine martins, auroc-substitutes, wolves, bears, etc) and their role in any fully functioning ecosystem saying that:

- Lynx are likely to be reintroduced into England (Kielder forest in Northumberland) in the next couple of years.
- Wolves are likely to be reintroduced in Scotland in the next 5 years.
- Bears will take longer (due to public perceptions) but are very likely to be reintroduced in UK in the next 50 years.

Note that Peter lives in Rendham and would be a great addition to our Biodiversity Group.

Action: KD to invite him

4. Setting up an independent KcC Wildlife Group

The next step to making the BAP Group independent of the PC would be to adopt a constitution and set up a bank account for grants/donations/crowdfunding, etc. JxB had previously offered a donation which could go towards producing leaflets. JA had emailed a draft constitution for the Group to consider. Date to be decided for the inaugural meeting to agree on Constitution. **Action: JA, KD**

KD to write an article for the KcC Community Newsletter (deadline 22 March) about the BAP Group becoming an independent group and asking for volunteers to join the group and for public support. **Action: KD**

Richard Smith had previously said SCC would offer the BAP Group a fund of £300. It now transpires that BAP needs to give clear and specific items that the money would be spent on and when. The following list of items could be procured now:

- a. A license from the Ordinance Survey so we can include O.S. maps in our documents and leaflets.
- b. The cost of publishing the Biodiversity Action Plan document (around 50 pages) at Leiston Press.
- c. Setting up a website for the BAP Group. This could be designed by Kevin Allenby or Malbec but it would be good to have enough space to be able to include interactive maps and galleries of species.
- d. Access to Land Registry searches so that we can identify owners of land in KcC and ask their permission to carry out biodiversity surveys on their land.

5. Management of Sandy Stiltball protected verge

The protected hedge on the edge of the recreation field had been cut recently without notifying the BAP Group and there was a discussion as to why and by whom. PC say they don't know but possibly highways.

6. Village Car Park Grass Banks

There was a discussion about the PC recently planting daffodils on the edge of the Recreation Ground and the Village Centre Car Park. It was agreed that this represented urbanization of the countryside and it was best not to plant bulbs near nesting bees on the banks of the Car Park. Cowslip plugs would bring greater biodiversity than daffodil bulbs. However, we had previously been refused funding for these whereas funding seemed to be available for daffodil bulbs.

The problem is that our previous attempts at spreading wildflower seed (both here and elsewhere) had been ineffective and we need funding for native plug plants instead. It had not helped that until recently the BAP Group had not had representation on the PC to make our case and question plans at the discussion stage. LG would provide a stronger voice for biodiversity on the PC in future. LG to discuss with PC their views on the importance of biodiversity in KcC and how to invest. We also need to create a dialogue between the BAP Group and PC grass cutters to make them aware of habitat boundaries. LG to speak with Claire Buttle to seek advice.

7. Suffolk Coastal Wildlife Watch Initiative

Glynis Robertson introduced herself and the Suffolk Coastal Wildlife Watch initiative in relation to 'SEAS' and the Lionlink project. They encouraged the use of the iRecord app to gather nature-based information into a database to document the species in the area. Anyone can use it and she is encouraging Town and Parish Councils to spread use amongst walkers, cyclists, joggers, etc so that more information is logged in relation to evidence of level of biodiversity. Landowners are already being introduced to it. Best time to survey is April-October. JB said he uses the Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service (SBIS) database as well as the Suffolk Naturalist Society. All agreed it was a good idea and we would like to be involved. Glynis to connect all local PC Biodiversity Groups especially effected by the energy projects.

8. Report back to KcC Parish Council

LG is a member of the PC and will represent the views of the BAP Group on biodiversity. LG will report on BAP Group decisions and actions in future and bring PC views into the BAP Group.

9. AOB

The platinum jubilee oak planted in 2022 at the end of the Recreation Ground has died and we previously agreed to replace it. However, it might be easier and more effective to move the plaque to one of the trees already growing nearby. **Action: CC, MC**

We will survey Buskie Farm this year, first the ponds and later the land.

Action: LG to set up

Date of Next Meeting: TBA.

The Eels Foot pub in Eastbridge has a new swift tower and an inaugural (launch) event is planned for 4pm on Tuesday 7th May. We could attend as a group (followed by a drink?). Who would like to come?

Possible group picnic under the Rubblestone Farm Oak (the largest tree in Kelsale-cum-Carlton) in the summer.