

Hen Harrier Dialogue

Combined Working Groups
22 June 2011, Newcastle

Summary Record of Discussion

Date of issue: 29 June 2011

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Note on the Discussion Record

This document is a summary record of the meeting discussion. It was produced by The Environment Council during the meeting and is intended as an aide memoir for participants. Its meaning may not be clear to people who did not attend the meeting. Please contact The Environment Council for clarification if necessary. Comments have been summarised without attribution, which is one of the working agreements of the group.

Sentences in bold italics describe the meeting process and aid recall of the context in which the participants' contributions were made. These also summarise any key actions or agreements made during the discussions.

If you have any comments or queries regarding this report please contact:

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3. Reintroduction Project

- The latest update on this is that Natural England no longer has funding to take this up. There is a suggestion that group might do this ourselves.

██████████ of Natural England was invited to give an update on project progress of its feasibility study for reintroduction.

- From a financial perspective this project would not be possible for Natural England
- The sites most favoured were Exmoor and Wiltshire.
- The basis for Exmoor is that prey availability is similar to the habitat used already by harriers, though it is limited in extent so could be faced with a 'Bowland'. The harriers could spread to Dartmoor or Bodmin Moor. But it would increase numbers. And it's the safest place to put birds. So we know how they behave, but it would be limited in terms of population increase.
- Wiltshire did not score so well for prey, and cereal fields are unknown in terms of breeding in the agricultural context and intervention might be needed. However, the potential for range increase is much higher.
- The recommendation was that you would do both sites in tandem.

There were then some questions and discussion about the scheme:

- What about Wiltshire was preferable?
- The key criteria were a high quality area; the presence of hen harriers and that nesting has been successful in the past. It also supports a wintering population.
- Costings haven't been developed. It could be £30-40k per year for a single release site. It drawing on both Scottish and French birds this would entail double or tripling that figure.
- The reintroduction would be done over six year period
- That's £50k per year multiplied by 6.
- Once you'd release you'd need a presence to continue; across 10-15 years
- This does not account consultation with the local population
- The main report has not yet been published but it's expected in due course.
- Natural England would not be able to fund it: does some one have a spare half a million to make it happen?
- We could go for EU Life Funding for match funding

- The group agreed that there was potential for the group to support the scheme and that funding sources should be explored as a first step.

[illegible]

Appendix 1: Attendees, Agenda and Working Agreements, 22 June 2011

Attendees

| Name | Organisation |
|------------|---|
| [REDACTED] | Aberdeen Centre for Environmental Sustainability |
| [REDACTED] | Biomathematics and Statistics Scotland (BioSS) |
| [REDACTED] | Biomathematics and Statistics Scotland (BioSS) |
| [REDACTED] | British Association for Shooting and Conservation |
| [REDACTED] | Countryside Alliance England |
| [REDACTED] | Countryside Alliance Scotland |
| [REDACTED] | Defra |
| [REDACTED] | Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust |
| [REDACTED] | Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust |
| [REDACTED] | Hawk and Owl Trust |
| [REDACTED] | Moorland Association |
| [REDACTED] | Moorland Association |
| [REDACTED] | National Gamekeepers Association |
| [REDACTED] | Natural England |
| [REDACTED] | Natural England |
| [REDACTED] | North of England Raptor Forum |
| [REDACTED] | Royal Society for the Protection of Birds |
| [REDACTED] | Scottish Natural Heritage |

Apologies

| Name | Organisation |
|------------|---|
| [REDACTED] | British Association for Shooting and Conservation |
| [REDACTED] | Buccleuch Estates |
| [REDACTED] | Country Land and Business Association |
| [REDACTED] | Defra |
| [REDACTED] | National Gamekeepers Association |
| [REDACTED] | National Gamekeepers Association |
| [REDACTED] | Natural England |
| [REDACTED] | North of England Raptor Forum |
| [REDACTED] | The Scottish Government |

The Environment Council Facilitation Team

| Name | Organisation |
|------------|-------------------------|
| [REDACTED] | Independent facilitator |
| [REDACTED] | The Environment Council |