

Meeting Actions



Partneriaeth **Bioamrywiaeth** Cymru
Wales **Biodiversity** Partnership

Title of meeting: **WBP Invasive Non-native Species Group**

Date of meeting: 16 October 2024 **Venue:** MS Teams

Time of meeting: 10.00 – 12.30

Present: **WG:** Leasa Fielding (Chair), Alison Smith,
WBP: Michaela Scrivin (secretariat)
Other: Anna Holmes (AC), Conor O'Donoghue (GBNNSS),
Craig Shuttleworth (Bangor Uni), David Docking (PCA), David
Jermyn (BBNPA), Debbie Murphy (CEFAS), Fergus O'Brien
(DCWW), Gareth Bowen (Bridgend CC), Henry Richards (NRW),
Jennie Jones (NRW), Laura Grant (NRW), Matt Tebbutt (Stitch
in Time), Niall Moore (GBNNSS), Phil Stone (Canoe Wales),
Sean Hathaway (Swansea CC), Theresa Kudelska (NRW),
Tomos Jones (WaREN), Tom Powell (DCWW),

Apologies: Adam Rowe (SEWBREC), Ben Rowson (AC), Colin Russell
(West Wales Biodiversity), Dawn Thomas (NWWT), Gareth
Holland-Jones (WaREN), Holly Peek (NRW), Ian Williams
(APHA), Judith Oakley (Swansea CC), Louis Macdonald Ames
(Wye and Usk), Olaf Booy (GBNNSS),

[Upper Wye Restoration project](#)
[Property Care Association \(PCA\)](#)
[WaREN update](#)
[NNSI Update](#)
[WBP INNS Group Newsletter](#)
[Partner Updates](#)
[Any Other Business](#)

ACTIONS OVERVIEW

Action	Lead	Timeframe	Update
Upper Wye Restoration project 1. Phil Stone to speak with Henry about INNS and paddlers 2. Fergus O'Brien to speak with Henry about other catchment INNS work	Phil Stone , Henry Richards , Fergus O'Brien , Henry Richards ,		
Property Care Association (PCA) No actions arising.			
WaREN update No actions arising.			



Action	Lead	Timeframe	Update
<p>NNSI Update</p> <p>3. Phil to collect evidence around ongoing impact of 'Check Clean Dry' packs from Paddle UK as impetus for securing funding.</p> <p>4. Leasa to send Phil the contact details for Ben Francis, APHA Co-ordinator for local action groups.</p>	<p>Phil Stone</p> <p>Leasa Fielding</p>		Done
<p>WBP INNS Group Newsletter</p> <p>No actions arising.</p>			
<p>Partner updates</p> <p>5. Anyone who hadn't managed to send a partner update to Michaela ahead of the meeting please send one by the 15th November 2024.</p>	ALL		
<p>Any Other Business / Next steps</p> <p>6. Michaela to organise next meeting for 9th April 2025.</p>	Michaela		Done

KEY POINTS & ACTIONS

Leasa Fielding welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies. The list of actions from the last meeting was reviewed:

List of actions from March 2024 meeting

1. Partner updates: Any outstanding partner updates to Michaela by end October. **Done**
2. Michaela to organise next meeting for autumn 2024. **Done**

Upper Wye Restoration project

Henry Richards from NRW gave a presentation on the Upper Wye Catchment Restoration Project, which is a 5-year, £10m project aiming to improve the Upper Wye catchment and Special Conservation Area. Objectives include:

- Improving habitat quality for important habitats and species
- Improving compliance with targets, including Water Framework Directive and Special Area of Conservation
- Increasing resilience to climate change, pollution and INNS
- Safeguarding the long term health of the catchment.

Project actions include controlling the spread and impact of INNS, along with restoring river corridors and riparian zones, slowing the flow of overland waters, restoring and reconnecting floodplains, and removing or adapting manmade structures. Henry gave an overview of initial project focus areas, along with some of the actions planned for them. In terms of INNS, Himalayan Balsam (HB) is



widespread across the catchment area, and the team decided to identify smaller tributaries at the top of catchments where HB can be eradicated and from there work downstream. They don't have volunteers for the project, so are hoping to work with other organisations and partners to perhaps set up community groups for the future. They have also contacted CABI re biological controls, but have had difficulties finding sites that meet the criteria for rust fungus trials (i.e. not flooded, not grazed), so would appreciate any site suggestions from INNS practitioners. The team have also found areas with more American Skunk Cabbage in the Hirnant and Marteg focus areas than anticipated, so have dug out accessible sites this year and hope to dig and spray in future years.

Henry asked the this Group for:

- More information about American Skunk Cabbage locations and/or suitable sites for HB rust trial sites
- Contacts for stakeholder or volunteer groups working in this area
- Examples or case studies for preventing INNS colonisations on riverbanks via riparian planting
- Any other INNS suggestions.

Actions:

- Phil Stone to speak with Henry about raising paddler's awareness and getting them to report INNS on the sections which are recreationally paddled.
- Fergus O'Brien to speak with Henry about other INNS work going on in the catchment via the Celtic Rainforest project, about potential rust trial sites on sewage treatment works, and riparian planting to prevent HB colonisation or recolonisation on riverbanks.

Property Care Association (PCA)

Daniel Docking gave a presentation about the PCA's new Invasive Non-Native Plant (INNP) Code of Practice (https://www.property-care.org/write/MediaUploads/Document/FINAL_GuidanceNote-InvasiveWeedsUKCodeofPracticeforManagementofNon-NativePlants.pdf), noting that while Japanese Knotweed was the focus for most stakeholders, a wider range of invasive terrestrial and aquatic plants cause issues. PCA has worked with the members of the Invasive Weed Control Group (IWCG) to create this Code of Practice specifically for terrestrial plants.

The document outlines some of the key aspects and requirements to controlling and eradicating INNP, including demonstrating competency, highlighting legislation specific for each UK geographical region, e.g. RD:58 compliance in Wales, remediation options, integrated weed management plans and suitable monitoring periods.

The new Code of Practice can be used in conjunction with another PCA document, the 'Exemplar Report for Invasive Non-Native Plants' – this provides a high standard report for those who are undertaking INNP remediation and writing management plans. It provides a new framework for assessing the hazards of INNP. By following the flow chart a reasonable assessment can be made to assess the hazard of



terrestrial INNPs, which previously has only been possible for Japanese knotweed in a public document.

The digital version of Code of Practice is being shared widely as a gateway tool for knowledge sharing, and a free printed copy will be provided to all attendees of the PCA international invasive weed conference, which is on the 28th November at the Slate University of Warwick. Please click the link to find out more:

<https://www.property-care.org/events/conferences/2024-invasive-weed-conference/17690>.

WaREN Update

Gareth Holland-Jones supplied a video giving an update on WaREN's work promoting biodiversity and ecological resilience through the development of a collaborative and sustainable approach to the management of INNS across Wales. This includes working with stakeholders to tackle INNS, along with raising awareness at public-facing events. This year, WaREN has been targeting Deeside, Wrexham, Llandudno to Rhyl, Menai Straits and Central Anglesey in North Wales and Swansea, Merthyr Tydfil, Cardiff and Newport in South Wales.

Going forward, WaREN will be organising INNS Mapper training across Wales, finding more projects and communities to engage with, and planning further INNS management in 2025. Anyone wanting further information or to work with WaREN can contact Gareth on Gareth.Holland-Jones@northwaleswildlifetrust.org.uk.

NNSI Update

Conor O'Donoghue from the GB Non-Native Species Inspectorate introduced himself as one of 17 new INNS Enforcement Officers based across the UK, who have a focus on engagement on INNS issues, compliance awareness, and enforcing INNS legislation. Conor is based in mid Wales, and his colleague Ian Williams is based in Anglesey. Since their recruitment in April they have:

- Discussed equipment and biosecurity with over 100 anglers
- Established presence of and acted upon *Azolla sp.* contamination at garden centres
- Worked with councils to remove SOSC *Gunnera sp.* from their land
- Gave resources and support to facilities offering watersports
- Corralled goats on the Great Orme
- Offered ongoing support to rapid response work and projects in other areas including Scotland.

Conor is looking to work proactively with Border Force, for instance in Holyhead, to prevent species getting established rather than focusing solely on reactive work. He also does quarterly online reviews to monitor for INNS being sold over the web.

Upcoming work includes:

- Physical visits to licensed premises such as zoos
- Review of methodologies for reporting and recording data



- Supporting data collection of *Sarracenia purpurea* sites in border countries, including active management of sites where necessary
- Collecting and evaluating data to establish extant or potential threats to Welsh wildlife
- Offering assistance with INNS work of other organisations, such as species eradication or attendance at educational events.

Ian and Conor can be contacted at ian.williams@apha.gov.uk and conor.odonoghue@apha.gov.uk respectively for information, resources in both English and Welsh, or joint working.

Action: Phil Stone initiated discussion around ‘Check Clean Dry’ packs. Phil to collect evidence around ongoing impact of packs from Paddle UK. Discussion around funding for these. Leasa to send Phil the contact details for Ben Francis, who is the APHA Co-ordinator for local action groups.

WBP INNS Group Newsletter

Michaela Scrivin gave a ‘first look’ at the revamped WBP INNS newsletter, which is now being rebooted after a hiatus to let WaREN take it forward. She noted that the format was going to change to an email ‘e-newsletter’ which aims to provide an easy to read, engaging format. This newsletter format should provide meta-data on how widely the newsletter is shared and read, giving us quantitative information about its reach for the first time.

Michaela noted that this was the WBP INNS Group newsletter, so content depends on these Group members. It is collated and formatted by her but not written by her, so please do respond to the calls for content, ideally including photos with your text.

The timing of the newsletter will change slightly – with WBP INNS meetings being held in October and April, we will look to circulate newsletter in between those, so January and July. However, the initial newsletter is likely to be released in November 2024. They will be available in English and Welsh, and people can subscribe to either or both. Any comments or queries about the newsletter can be directed to michaela.scrivin@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk.

Q&A on partner updates from members

Leasa went through the partner updates circulated before the meeting.

Action: Anyone who hadn’t managed to send a partner update to Michaela ahead of the meeting please send one by 15th November, and this can be included with the minutes when circulated.



Any Other Business

- The 'Key Messaging document' Tom Warren was working on before he left has been completed and uploaded to the WBP INNS website – it can be found here: <https://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/File/699/en-GB>
- Anna Holmes suggested APEM/NRW presentation next April on the Marine Protected Area Plans, the project for which wraps up in April 2025.
- Next WBP INNS meeting to be organised for 9th April 2025.

Action: Michaela to organise next meeting for 9th April 2025.