

SUFFOLK BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP

PLANNING UPDATE No 1 October 2013



Welcome to the first Suffolk Biodiversity Partnership Planning Support Group Update!

Our aim is to provide accessible information about biodiversity issues to support your planning work as and when information becomes available. If we can help with training events, factsheets or in any other way, please do contact Gen and the team will do their best to provide what you need.

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- **Planning and Biodiversity workshop 2 July 2013**

“Applying the biodiversity validation checklist with confidence”

A summary of the workshop can be found on the [Planners Page on the SBP website](#) with links to the presentations and the Natural England Standing Advice for Protected Species.

- **[Suffolk County Council validation documents link >](#)**

Please update the link to these documents from your Local Authority.

- **Norfolk and Suffolk Planning seminar advance notice**

Last year over 60 people attended this successful event; with the majority finding it very useful. We will be circulating the agenda and invitations in September.

Date: 12th November 2013

Venue: British Trust for Ornithology, Thetford IP24 2PU

Themes: Renewable energy sources, Neighbourhood plans and Recreational Pressure

- **Draft National Planning Practice Guidance**

The Dept for Communities and Local Government is revising and updating national planning practice guidance to support the National Planning Policy Framework and make it more accessible. Click [here](#) to find out about the status of the draft planning practice guidance during [Beta](#), and what will happen before the guidance is issued by the Secretary of State later this year. The objective of the Beta phase is to build a fully working prototype which will be tested publicly with users.

- **Bats and Breathable roof membranes (BRMs)**

BRMs are widely used and, although originally designed for use as part of a continuous breathable/airtight barrier, they are also used in conventional, ventilated build. There are a wide range of breathable membranes available but it has become apparent that most of these membranes

are detrimental to bats. Neither Natural England nor the Bat Conservation Trust have endorsed any 'bat friendly' BRMs. Research is underway (to be completed December 2013) to gain an understanding of the impacts of the use of breathable membranes on bat roosts where these occur in roofs. An overview of this issue was published in the journal [Architecture & Environment](#).

Please watch out for updates.

○ **British Standard for Biodiversity**

BS42020 Biodiversity - A Code of Practice for Planning and Development published !

The new British Standard - prepared specifically to address ecological matters within the planning and development sectors - has been published at last. This is the first Standard to ever be published on a biodiversity topic. and all thanks to ALGE's energy and commitment to seeing this document come to life. It is a '*must have*' for all ALGE members!

The Standards set out specifications for how biodiversity should be addressed at each stage of the planning process:

Pre-application

- design considerations for biodiversity
- ecological surveys and assessments
- preparation and content of ecological reports
- non-technical summaries

Validation and Registration

- validation and registration
- obtaining adequate information

Decision-making

- making decisions based on adequate information
- professional scrutiny
- consulting on biodiversity
- resolving outstanding issues and agreeing and securing outcomes

Determination and Issue of Planning Permission

- satisfying statutory obligations
- using planning conditions for biodiversity purposes
- planning conditions and EPS licences
- planning obligations
- other consent regimes

Implementation of Development (Construction)

- construction Environmental Management Plans
- risk assessment of damaging operations
- practical measures to avoid impacts
- timing and responsible persons
- the role of an Ecological Clerk of Works
- protective fencing and barriers

Post Development Management and Monitoring

- long-term management of habitats etc
- monitoring and reporting biodiversity outcomes

Price : BS42020 retails at £100. Normally a BSI document of this size would retail at nearly twice the price, but since ALGE has been so instrumental in developing the Standard, we have managed to negotiate with BSI so that it is as affordable as possible. **If your Council is a member of BSI then it is available for only £50.00 so please do check.**

BS42020 is available through the BSI online shop @ <http://shop.bsigroup.com>

○ **The Association of Local Government Ecologists (ALGE) - Benefits of Membership**

ALGE works to improve understanding of the delivery of ecology at the local level and to find sustainable solutions to delivering these services, They promote best practice in protection and management of the natural environment at the local government level and aim to ensure authorities meet their statutory

duties and obligations to protecting the natural environment, thus reducing risk of exposure to negative publicity, minimising challenge and preventing avoidable losses. ALGE has an online Member's Discussion Forum and runs regular events such as an annual conference and regional meetings which encourage officers to share knowledge. This helps their authorities to manage ecological issues effectively by keeping ahead of changing policy, legislation and practice.

ALGE works with government agencies and NGOs on a wide range of topics that have significant impacts on the way local authorities meet their customer needs and deliver administrative priorities, such as Biodiversity offsetting, the National Planning Policy Framework and Green Infrastructure.

The benefits of being a member include:

- Access to a secure Discussion Forum and a network of contacts working in ecology across the UK.
- Keeping abreast of current legislation, policy and practice relating to nature conservation and the protection of natural assets.
- Enhanced understanding of nature conservation and ecology at the local government level, and so an improved standard of work for your local authority.
- Helping your authority to achieve consistency in decision-making and the effect this has on its reputation, performance and compliance with policy and legislation.
- Support to improve the way you communicate with customers (politicians, residents, communities and businesses) to ensure the needs of local biodiversity and the natural environment are explained, promoted, protected and improved.

Cost: Individual Membership - £35 a year, Corporate Membership £120 a year for up to four people.

For more information please contact: Dr Iain Boulton, ALGE Membership Secretary
Email: iboulton@lambeth.gov.uk, Tel: 020 7926 6209

○ **ALGE Conference and AGM 2013 – Monday 25th November**

“European Directives – What have they ever done for us?”

The Banqueting Suite, Victoria Square, Birmingham, B1 1BB

Topics include: the Water Framework Directive, Habitat Regulations, Ecological competence and capacity in local government, Environmental Impact Assessment and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.

For a programme and to book, please email: biodiversity@kent.gov.uk

Please send us your feedback:

Is this newsletter helpful?

What topics would you like to see covered?

Planning Support Group members:

Gen Broad, Biodiversity Officer, Suffolk Biodiversity Project

Simone Bullion, Senior Conservation Officer, Suffolk Wildlife Trust

Alison Collins, Planning and Biodiversity Advisor, Natural England

Jaki Fisher, St Edmundsbury Borough Council

Sue Hooton, Senior Ecologist, Suffolk County Council

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Contact us

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