



West Midlands Biodiversity Partnership

Terms of Reference

1. Introduction and fundamental purpose

The Partnership's 50 Year vision for biodiversity in the region is:

A vibrant, diverse and natural West Midlands, where we are connected to our wildlife and landscape; healthy, sustainable communities and local livelihoods, working with nature and securing the future...

The England Biodiversity Strategy "Working with the grain of nature" vision for local and regional action is:

The full integration of biodiversity considerations within regional and local policies, strategies and programmes. Healthy and flourishing broad partnerships that champion, promote and enhance local and regional biodiversity and its distinctiveness and help deliver national priorities.

The West Midlands Biodiversity Partnership's fundamental purpose is to promote and co-ordinate action to achieve these complementary visions within the Region.

The Region is covered by six strategically important LBAP partnerships which are responsible for developing their Local Biodiversity Action Plans. Local Partnerships agree targets for biodiversity within their area contributing to the regional 'share' of the England Biodiversity Strategy targets.

Regional level action for biodiversity is identified in the West Midland Regional Assembly and West Midlands Biodiversity Partnership's Regional Biodiversity Strategy. This is supported by an annual delivery plan which sets out the programme of work being delivered by the Regional Partnership. Each Local Biodiversity Partnership develops a local work plan for their area.

These terms of reference set out how the regional partnership will work with regional partners and local biodiversity partnerships to progress the vision for regional and local action.

2. Terms of reference

The West Midlands Biodiversity Partnership works with reference to the UK Biodiversity Action Plan, the England Biodiversity Strategy, Local Biodiversity Action Plans and the principles of Sustainable Development to:

- Identify, promote and regularly review regional biodiversity priorities.
- Work with Local Biodiversity Partnerships and other organisations to develop, monitor and promote regional biodiversity targets
- Promote understanding and support for biodiversity by key regional sectors and organisations.
- Ensure that biodiversity is reflected as a key test of sustainable development within regional decision making.

It achieves this by:

- Working together to develop an effective partnership of regional organisations.
- Working with the family of LBAP partnerships to ensure that a set of agreed SMART Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) targets inform and reflect regional priorities and cumulatively constitute the region's contribution to the England Biodiversity Strategy.
- Working with regional and local partners to identify how the region's 2015 biodiversity targets will be delivered.
- Providing strategic advice to the WM Regional Assembly, Advantage West Midlands and the Government Office for the West Midlands on regional progress in delivering the region's biodiversity targets and priorities.
- Contributing to regional plans, policies and programmes to promote national, regional and local biodiversity objectives within regional policies and programmes.
- Promoting the integration of biodiversity objectives with social and economic priorities for the benefit of people and wildlife.
- Acting as a regional focus for biodiversity expertise and advice, including provision of strategic advice and guidance on biodiversity to regional organisations.
- Helping to support and co-ordinate activities by LBAP partnerships and Local Record Centres which contribute to delivery of regional biodiversity strategy.

3. Membership of the Partnership

Membership of the Partnership is open to:

- Government departments or agencies;
- regionally active non-governmental organisations (NGO);
- regionally active commercial organisations ;or
- LBAP partnerships operating at a strategic scale
- any other organisations or public bodies able and willing to make a strategic contribution to the delivery of the region's biodiversity targets and regional vision for biodiversity.

Each LBAP is a member of the regional partnership.

Other members will be from regional organisations and the regional tier of national bodies.

Members of the regional partnership will be expected to:

- Support the aims of the Regional Partnership.
- Ensure that regional information and guidance is disseminated throughout the area or organisation they represent.

Members of the Partnership will be entitled to attend and vote at full Partnership meetings. Members of the Partnership may contribute to Steering Group and task and finish groups. Members may attend regional Partnership events free of charge.

Regional organisations that have a duty to promote biodiversity under S40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act will be encouraged to consider active membership as a way of contributing to this duty.

Membership will be reviewed by the Partnership Steering Group who will consider requests to join the Partnership.

4. Structure and organisation

The Partnership will appoint a Chair and Vice Chair and will select representatives to sit on the Steering Group. The positions will be filled annually at the Annual Conference.

Nominations for participation in the Steering Group and for the position of Chair and Vice Chair will be sought from the Partnership on an annual basis. If any form of contest arises arrangements will be put into place to ensure that all member organisations can vote prior to selection.

The Steering Group may co-opt additional members at any time.

The Steering Group will act as the main decision making body of the Partnership, between AGMs and full Partnership meetings and will guide the work of the Partnership and delivery of the Regional Biodiversity Strategy. The Steering Group should include representatives from key regional agencies and from LBAPs. It will be responsible for the following:

- WMBP Budget
- WMBP Delivery Plan
- Coordinator work programme
- Work undertaken by sub-groups/T&F groups
- Publication of reports/publications
- Web site contents and publicity material
- Appointment of consultants
- Arrangements of Partnership Meetings

The Chair and Vice Chair will chair the meetings of the Partnership and Steering Group and will guide the work of the Partnership through the Steering Group. They will act as Ambassadors for the Partnership and will represent the Partnership at national and Regional meetings/events.

A number of sub-groups, tasked with undertaking and completing activities on behalf of the Partnership, will report to the Steering Group. A remit for each sub-group will be agreed by the Steering Group.