

## Introduction to the revised edition

### 2004 update

The initial revision of *The Nature of Devon: a Biodiversity Action Plan* was undertaken in 2004, almost seven years after the original document was produced.

Much had changed over those seven years. The BAP remained an agreed source of habitat and species conservation priorities; a useful tool for gaining funding and support, and a very handy source of background information. However, the BAP Working Group decided that the plan should undergo a revision in order to make it a more relevant and contemporary document. To cut a long story short, the plan underwent a limited review along the following lines:

- It was made more flexible; more easily updated and, therefore, more relevant to its users.
- The number of actions was reduced. There were too many actions, and many of these were not directly relevant to contemporary working practices, timescales or funding opportunities. They were often too specific and prescriptive, and required very frequent revision and modification (which they did not receive). Hence they were replaced by shorter lists of priority or indicative actions which can, if necessary, be revised more frequently than in the past. These actions set the framework. More detailed short-term action can be established through partnership work co-ordinated by the relevant action plan Champion and other key partners (see appendix viii).
- The objectives and targets were updated as necessary and, where relevant, made consistent in nature with the UK equivalents.
- The background information in Sections A – F, including the appendices, also had a limited update.

The nature of the review meant that some habitat and species action plans underwent a greater degree of revision than others. All were given new actions but some were not otherwise revised at that time (though the process of revising the plan is ongoing). In other cases, the objectives and targets were also revised, but information

on ecology, distribution and issues remained unchanged from 1998. A few plans underwent a complete root to branch revision. It should be clear for each plan just what the degree of revision was undertaken, with information from the 1998 version being identified as such.

## 2009 review: the incorporation of Devon's earth heritage

The Devon BAP was subject to a further limited revision in 2009. This time the objective was to more fully incorporate Devon's important geology and geomorphology into the Plan.

The Devon BAP always did take a more integrated approach to nature conservation than most local BAPs and included action plans for both wildlife and earth heritage features from the start. However, by far the greater emphasis was on biodiversity.

Recent years have seen an increasing emphasis placed upon applying the biodiversity action planning process to the conservation of earth heritage features. As a result, a number of counties now have separate Geodiversity Action Plans (GAPs).

However, given the integrated nature of the existing Devon BAP and the close relationship between the geology of a location and its associated plants and animals, there was no perceived need for a separate Devon GAP. Instead, the existing plan was revised and expanded and now represents a truly integrated framework for nature conservation action within the County.

It is now formally called **The Nature of Devon: a Biodiversity and Geodiversity Action Plan**. For everybody's sake, this will continue to be abbreviated to the Devon BAP.

The geological review was undertaken by Dr. Kevin Page.

The role of the BAP remains as important as ever. It continues to identify the key wildlife and geological features in Devon and to set priorities for nature conservation. It sets a framework for action, it is a mechanism for obtaining funding, and its usefulness as a source of background information on our natural resource should not be underestimated. Perhaps, though, the most important role of our BAP has been, and remains, in bringing people together to work in partnership for the conservation of our environment.

Devon LBAP Co-ordinator, May 2009

