



# Northumberland Fire Group

**Northumberland Fire Group - Steering Group Meeting:  
2<sup>th</sup> March 2009, Highlander Inn, Belsay, Northumberland I430-1630**

**Attendees:**

- Angus Collingwood-Cameron, CLA (Chair)
- Ethan Bigelow, Northwoods
- Pete Berry, Forestry Commission
- Andrew Miller, NNPA
- Gary Jefferson, NFRS
- Chris Livsey, Ministry of Defence
- Duncan Hutt, Wildlife Trust

**Apologies:**

- Steve Gibson, NFRS
- Ian Long, NFRS

**Note:** *Can all members highlighted in the Action sections please ensure that they act on the information contained. There are some very important actions within that need to be followed up to ensure the continued success of the group.*

**ACC** opened meeting and previous minutes were discussed.

**WILDFIRE 2009**

Discussion	Action
<p><b>EB</b> gave the update on Wildfire 2009:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Webpage: <a href="http://www.wildfire2009.org.uk">www.wildfire2009.org.uk</a></li> <li>• Key Topics of Wildfire 2009:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Updates from English Wildfire Forum and Scottish Wildfire Forum</li> <li>○ Arson and Wildfire</li> <li>○ Partnership Working and Fire Groups</li> <li>○ Wildfire Behaviour and Suppression Techniques</li> <li>○ Incident Command Systems</li> <li>○ Training – Eurofire</li> <li>○ Environmental Impacts of Wildfire</li> <li>○ Summary of FIRES Seminars – Interdisciplinary Research on Ecosystem Services</li> <li>○ Land Management to Reduce Wildfire Risk</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The NFRS will be sending a delegation to Wildfire 2009 and Steve Gibson will be presenting at the conference</li> <li>• Landmarc and MOD will also be attending the conference</li> </ul>	

**NFG Evaluation**

Discussion	Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>EB</b> reviewed the results of the Northumberland Fire Group Evaluation</li> <li>• <b>Steering Group</b> agreed that the document’s recommendations should be put in place for the improvement of fire group activity in the future</li> <li>• <b>AM</b> suggested that the evaluation be forwarded to the funders of</li> </ul>	<p><b>EB</b> to revise evaluation for submission to NFG funders (past and future).</p> <p><b>EB</b> to edit aims and objectives</p>

<p>the NFG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>ACC</b> suggested the document be reviewed before sent out to funders – asked EB to review and forward to ACC</li> <li>• <b>AM</b> suggested that the group’s benefit to climate change and the local economy are more prevalent in the aims and objectives</li> </ul>	<p>and forward to ACC.</p> <p><b>ACC</b> to review and edit evaluation for submission to funding bodies.</p>
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### NFG Action Plan

Discussion	Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>EB</b> presented the fire group’s third year action plan</li> <li>• <b>ACC</b> suggested future newsletters are published on targeted dates, bi-annually. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Future Dates for release: JAN and AUG</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>PB</b> suggested that EB add a map-reading element to the Advanced Wildfire Training course</li> <li>• <b>PB</b> mentioned that the FC would be interested in receiving wildfire training from Northwoods. Steve Smith (FC) to contact EB regarding the training of FC personnel</li> <li>• <b>ACC</b> suggested that Fire Group meetings be added to the action plan activities section</li> <li>• <b>GJ</b> suggested that the NFG try to publicise its activities through the NGO magazine – EB to contact Alan Edwards</li> <li>• <b>Steering Group</b> discussed how the wildfire training courses put on by Northwoods would be delivered in the future. ACC suggested that the NFG should benefit financially from any courses put on in Northumberland, but would not benefit financially from any courses run by RDI outside of Northumberland</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<p><b>EB</b> to make suggested revisions to the NFG Action Plan</p> <p><b>EB</b> to include a map-reading section in the Advanced Wildfire Training course</p> <p><b>GJ</b> to update EB on the type of GIS programme to be used in the new regional control command room and mobile data system</p>

### NFG Spring Newsletter

Discussion	Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>EB</b> asked the steering group for relevant topics to be released in the Spring newsletter</li> <li>• Topics to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ NFG Live Wildfire Exercise</li> <li>○ NFG Argocat</li> <li>○ Fire plans – including overall Northumberland map</li> <li>○ Standard Operating Procedures</li> <li>○ Training Courses</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>EB</b> to draft Newsletter for release before Easter Holiday</p>

### NFG Live Wildfire Exercise

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steve Gibson and Ian Long to lead on the Live Wildfire Exercise. EB to work together with NFRS to plan and deliver the exercise</li> <li>• <b>CL</b> stated that he would be bringing a representative from Natural England – Andy McNort.</li> <li>• <b>PB</b> suggested that preparation of the site would involve 1 or more days of burning.</li> <li>• <b>PB</b> advised that attendees of the actual ‘Live Wildfire Exercise’ day would only observe the exercise; advised that the preparation work would be beneficial for practitioners and the actual exercise would be beneficial for management</li> <li>• <b>GJ</b> suggested, and general discussion followed, about the creation of a DVD based on the recent Standard Operating Procedures handbook and 2009 Live Wildfire Exercise; DVD to be used as informative video for public, voluntary and private land managers. Video should cover the role of land managers, the NFRS, and other organisations as a wildfire incident</li> </ul>	<p><b>EB</b> to seek two quotations for the production a live wildfire exercise video</p> <p><b>GJ</b> to work with EB to create a storyboard for the Live Wildfire Exercise / SOP video</p> <p><b>EB</b> to forward storyboard to AM for approval</p>
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### Cheviot Futures

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>AM</b> gave an update of the work of Cheviot Futures in relation to the fire group. 2/3 of the Cheviots would be involved in high level stewardship scheme. All estates to have fire plans. Targets for the Live Wildfire Exercise include training and the creation of an SOP video.</li> <li>• <b>AM</b> suggested holding a Live Wildfire Exercise in the Breamish Valley in 2010.</li> </ul>	
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### NFG SOP Handbook

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>EB</b> asked members how they would like to distribute the NFG SOP handbook</li> <li>• <b>Steering Group</b> suggested distribution by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training courses</li> <li>• Fire Group representatives</li> <li>• Estates w/Fire Plans</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>EB</b> to source desired copies of handbook from fire group members</p> <p><b>EB</b> to draft cover letter to accompany the distribution of the SOP Handbook</p> <p><b>EB</b> to give PB (10); AM (40)</p>
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### NFG Argocat

Discussion	Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>CL</b> stated that the MOD had purchased an Argocat for the use of the Northumberland Fire Group. Argocat to be ready for use by the end of March.</li> <li>• <b>CL</b> to organise publicity for NFG Argocat at the Live Wildfire Exercise</li> <li>• <b>CL</b> stated the Argocat would be made available for all fire group members, through the NFRS, for wildfires and for wildfire training purposes.</li> <li>• <b>CL</b> stated that EB and S. Gibson had drawn up an SOP for the use of the Argocat</li> </ul>	<p><b>CL &amp; EB</b> to organise publicity for the NFG Argocat and Live wildfire exercise</p>

### NEWACM

Discussion	Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>EB</b> explained the what the Northern England Wildfire Activity Coordination Meeting would entail. The meeting would have the following three objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase cross-regional communication on wildfire group activities; determine activities which could benefit from a collaborative effort</li> <li>• Encourage dialogue about common wildfire problems and potential solutions; discuss future ideas for wildfire group activity in the north</li> <li>• Identify additional areas within the north of England where adoption of the wildfire group approach would be of benefit; discuss steps that could be taken to promote the development of wildfire resilience in these areas</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Steering Group</b> supported this initiative, asked EB to bring it forward</li> <li>• <b>ACC</b> to contact Ian Clough of the local resilience forum in relation to this work</li> </ul>	<p><b>EB</b> to take this event forward</p>

## NFG Funding

Discussion	Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>AM</b> suggested that EB use Lantra Funding for training courses if enough demand could be identified from private organisations</li><li>• <b>DH</b> suggested that the Lowlands Leader be approached for funding</li><li>• <b>ACC</b> seconded this motion and suggested a joint application be submitted to both upland and lowland leader funds</li><li>• <b>AM</b> supported this motion, stating that the NFG pilot had been successful in the Uplands and that core funding for the group should be sought from Lowland Leader. Organisations to be approached in the lowlands include the wildlife trust, wooden chalets, AONB, etc</li></ul>	<p><b>EB</b> to contact Peter (Lantra Training) regarding potential funding for training of private organisations</p> <p><b>EB</b> to contact Lowland Leader project officer</p>

## Date of Next Meeting

Discussion	Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Full Fire Group Meeting to be held in early May.</li></ul>	<p><b>MB</b> to inform members of date</p>