Great crested newt district level licensing

Rob Cameron
February 2017

www.gov.uk/natural-england
New Licensing Policies

- Exclusion, trapping and translocation
- Location of habitat compensation
- Temporary habitat
- Proportionate survey/worst case scenarios

Focus on habitat
The Woking Pilot
• **Up-front** survey and data collation, impact assessment, strategy and advice to LPA

• Baseline overview of GCN distribution and habitat at a **whole district level**

• Habitat compensation for the full impact of the development plan, **ahead of the profile of impact**

• Cost recouped from developers
Benefits of district licensing

- More influence on the planning system
- Better protection of the most important sites
- More, better, more securely protected habitat provision
- Improved knowledge of GCN status
The scale of the benefits

- **Current cost of licensing £45 million**

- **Site by site GCN licensing 2015**
  - Aquatic habitat - net gain 1.75ha, 29 ponds
  - Terrestrial habitat – net loss 738ha
  - Monitoring - national baseline 350 ponds over 6 years, with no follow up secured

- **Alternative delivery potential**
  - Stewardship rates - 6500 ponds per annum
  - Monitoring – baseline 9,000 ponds +follow up funding
National roll out of district licensing

• 150 districts
• Over 3 years
• 77% of current licensing
• £7 million Government investment in set up
• £18 million business as usual over 10 years
GCN new licence applications 2015 and 2016
Learning still to be done – the Kent project
The effect of GCN on development

B) Distribution by development allocation

Development allocations only: proportion occupied by newts

- Unoccupied within allocation
- Occupied area within allocation
The effect of development on GCN

Proportion of occupied habitat within allocation

X Estimated number of occupied ponds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Estimated Occupied Ponds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ashford</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canterbury</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dartford</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dover</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gravesham</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maidstone</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sevenoaks</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swale</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonbridge Malling</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunbridge Wells</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
C) Coincidence with agri-environment schemes

Coincidence between occupied newt habitat and agri-environment schemes

Area (km²)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scheme</th>
<th>Unoccupied Area</th>
<th>Occupied Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ELS</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HLS</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELS+HLS</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

X occupied ponds
D) Coincidence with protected areas and landscapes

Newt coincidence with protected areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area (km²)</th>
<th>Unoccupied by newts</th>
<th>Occupied by newts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SSSI</td>
<td>99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NNR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• County conservation strategy
  – Agri-environment
  – SSSIs
  – Publicly owned land
  – Nature reserves
  – Forestry land
  – etc

• Definition of favourable conservation status
• 6 district strategies
Warwickshire

– The County Council is taking the lead
– Demonstration on expanding the role of councils
– Demonstrating how it can bring an income stream into local authority ecology services
Partnership

• Data to test baselines
• Scrutiny of distribution maps
• Having your say about impacts
• Identifying habitat improvement target areas and opportunities
• Monitoring