

NORFOLK BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP

**Co-ordinator's Progress Report for the Period:
21 October 2006 – 25 January 2007**



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Quarterly Progress Report: 21 October 2006 – 25 January 2007

Introduction

This report presents a brief summary of the activities of the Biodiversity Partnership over the three-month period from 21 October 2006 to 25 January 2007. As with the previous quarterly report, it is presented using the new template from Natural England, which is now in use by many LBAP partnerships across the country. Additional information is presented in a series of annexes: Annex 1 presents a summary of the issues addressed at recent Topic Group meetings; Annex 2 presents a summary of the projects supported to date by the Biodiversity Project Fund; and Annex 3 presents information about forthcoming biodiversity events.

Highlights

This quarter has largely been a time of consolidation, following the particularly busy period leading up to the Annual Biodiversity Forum held last September. However, there have been a number of highlights and important developments, including:

- The continuing work of the Ecological Networks Topic Group, which has been developing a methodology and approach to take forward the county ecological network map at the district level. Based on these discussions, Reg Land has now prepared a preliminary map and report for South Norfolk District, which it is hoped can provide a model for other districts;
- The organisation of the Heathland Practitioners' Forum, which took place on 7 November 2006. The Forum attracted some 20 participants, and looked at the management of Salthouse and Kelling Heaths in north Norfolk;
- The receipt of over £30,000 from the SITA Enriching Nature programme, for water vole conservation activities. This successful application was prepared by Heidi Thompson at Norfolk County Council, on behalf of the Waterbodies BAP Topic Group;
- Participation by the Biodiversity Co-ordinator in the national LBAP conference, which was held in Liverpool from 5-7 December. This conference brought together some 160 representatives from local and regional biodiversity partnerships across the UK, and looked at: recent policy developments; biodiversity funding opportunities available from HLF, SITA and the Tubney Trust; urban biodiversity; and marine and coastal issues.

More information about these various activities, as well as a complete summary of the progress being made against all the "Core Services", is presented in the following table.

NORFOLK BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP

Summary of Progress

CORE SERVICES	SUCCESS MEASURES AND OUTPUTS	PROGRESS
<p>1. Establishing and maintaining a broad partnership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As far as possible, ensure that all relevant sectors are engaged in the local biodiversity partnership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local partnership contains representatives from a wide range of sectors including, as far as possible and as appropriate: business and industry; agriculture; water; marine and coastal; forestry; education; and health. It also includes local government, NGOs and government agencies. • Partnership meets regularly (at least three times per year) and fosters ownership of outcomes by all stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic Group membership continues to be expanded, to ensure the involvement of key sectors and stakeholders. Easton College has recently been invited to become a member of the Farmland BAP Topic Group; similarly, researchers from UEA have recently been invited to join the Heathland and Waterbodies BAP Topic Groups. • The Memorandum of Understanding was formally sent to all members of the Partnership for consideration and signature, under a cover letter from the Chairman. Four of the 16 members have now signed the MoU (Forestry Commission; Great Yarmouth Borough Council; Norfolk Wildlife Trust; and Norfolk County Council), and positive indications have been received from many others. • The Steering Group met four times in 2006: 20 January; 25 April; 21 July; and 20 October.

<p>2. Delivering BAP locally</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where they do not already do so, ensure that local biodiversity objectives include spatially-explicit SMART targets for the delivery of habitats and species, taking into account national targets. • Work with the partnership to agree a range of projects to deliver the local biodiversity objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A prioritised list of biodiversity projects that incorporate spatially-explicit targets for the delivery of habitats and species and which, where possible, make links to social and economic objectives. • Implementation of these projects and demonstration of progress towards local objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An effort is being made to ensure that all new action plans contain SMART targets; however, many of the objectives/targets currently in the Norfolk BAP do not conform to this standard. An indicative list of project concepts has been prepared and is available from the Biodiversity Co-ordinator. • The Partnership has continued to operate its Biodiversity Project Fund (currently £20,000 per year), which is used to support priority activities contained in the Action Plans (please see the section on “Additional Services” below).
<p>3. Fund-raising for BAP delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a funding strategy to obtain national (e.g. HLF) and local sources of external funding in support of BAP projects and to obtain funding for the local biodiversity service in the long term. • Work with the regional biodiversity partnership in the development of funding for collaborative projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of funding strategy to lever funds for biodiversity from external bodies and to secure long-term funding for biodiversity in the area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding approaches have been made to the Borough Council of King’s Lynn and West Norfolk, as well as Broadland Council. In a particularly welcome new development, BCKLWN has recently confirmed a £4,000 contribution to the Partnership for the financial year 2006/07. A helpful discussion about the procedures for submitting a funding application has been held with officers from Broadland Council. • Under the umbrella of the Waterbodies BAP Topic Group, Norfolk County Council has secured over £30,000 from the SITA “Enriching Nature” programme for the Mid-Norfolk Mink Control Project.

CORE SERVICES	SUCCESS MEASURES AND OUTPUTS	PROGRESS
<p>4. Reporting and monitoring progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS) to report on the implementation and delivery of actions initiated locally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress is reported at least annually, and the LBAP contribution is fully reported in triennial national BAP reporting rounds. • Results of monitoring used to inform review of objectives and to set future directions. Undertake a review of the LBAP at least every 5 years seeking to ensure that it remains relevant and adapts to take into account any changes to national priority species, habitats and targets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All new action plans are placed onto BARS as soon as they are adopted. Information about the status of implementation continues to be entered onto the system as time permits. Most recently, a training session was held with a staff member of RSPB, regarding BARS reporting for the Reedbed Habitat Action Plan. • Action plans continue to be reviewed/ revised on an individual, “rolling” basis.
<p>5. Integrating BAP into local policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively support local authorities, so that they are better able to develop innovative ways of delivering biodiversity locally. • Actively promote the inclusion of biodiversity objectives into Community Strategies, Local Development Frameworks and other local plans. • Promote best practice in the planning system, providing support and advice to LPAs to avoid loss of features through development, and to make the most of opportunities from planning gain. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular liaison established with the local strategic partnership and planning authority. • Increased profile for biodiversity within existing and new local plans (demonstrate this with examples). • New or revised Community Strategies and LDFs include biodiversity objectives consistent with LBAP targets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are strong linkages with local authorities. All LPAs are represented on the Steering Group. • An outcome related to ecological networks has been incorporated into the South Norfolk Community Strategy and is being actively developed; a number of small-scale project ideas will shortly be put forward to the LSP for funding consideration. The Norwich City Community Strategy has recently been released for consultation and also contains an outcome related to ecological networks. • The possibility of developing biodiversity SPD was explored at a second meeting with LPA representatives and others on 4 December 2006.

CORE SERVICES	SUCCESS MEASURES AND OUTPUTS	PROGRESS
<p>7. Representation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the LBAP partnership is represented on the regional biodiversity forum and other relevant regional and national meetings. • Respond to consultation from partners at regional and national levels of the BAP process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the LBAP partnership is represented at appropriate regional and national meetings and fora (e.g. review groups and training workshops). Demonstrate with examples. • Responses to regional and national consultations relating to biodiversity (demonstrate with examples). • Regular contacts exist with the regional biodiversity partnership and the national LBAP co-ordinator and facilitator, with a two-way flow of information including exchange of examples of good practice and over-arching problems (demonstrate with examples). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Co-ordinator participated in the Regional Biodiversity Forum held in Cambridge on 7 November. Topics included funding opportunities for biodiversity under the Biffaward scheme. • The Biodiversity Co-ordinator also took part in a major regional event on 17 November 2006, "Wild Ideas for the East of England"; this participatory workshop brought together a wide range of stakeholders, to lay the groundwork for a "biodiversity implementation strategy" for the region. • The Biodiversity Co-ordinator took part in the national LBAP conference held in Liverpool from 5-7 December 2006. This was an interesting and productive event which brought together LBAP co-ordinators from across the UK. The conference had a particular focus on urban and coastal/marine environments. • Significant contributions have been made to the development and launch of the Regional Data Needs Assessment Project. The Co-ordinator participated in the initial briefing meeting with the consultant, held on 1 December 2006.

ADDITIONAL SERVICES	SUCCESS MEASURES AND OUTPUTS	PROGRESS
<p>Establishing and maintaining a broad partnership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise an Annual Biodiversity Forum, in order to: encourage networking among a diverse range of organisations and stakeholders with an interest in biodiversity; provide opportunities to learn about the work of the Biodiversity Partnership; and stimulate discussion about the key issues and challenges facing biodiversity in the county. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodiversity Forum is held on an annual basis, with participation from a diverse range of organisations and stakeholders; feedback via evaluation forms demonstrates that objectives are being met. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning for the Annual Biodiversity Forum in 2007 has now begun. A tentative theme of “Biodiversity and Health” has been selected and a number of potential speakers have been identified. Linkages with Natural England’s “Environment and Health” project will be sought over the coming months.
<p>Delivering BAP locally</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate and support the operation of multi-stakeholder, thematic/habitat-based Topic Groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing Topic Groups continue to meet on a regular basis, and to develop, promote, monitor and revise Habitat and Species Action Plans and other relevant LBAP plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Topic Groups have continued to meet on a regular basis and remain actively involved in Action Plan preparation, implementation and review (please see Annex 1: Summary of Topic Group Meetings). Over the last quarter, particular progress has been made on the action plans for the following: spotted flycatcher; harbour porpoise; flixweed flea beetle; tassel stonewort; four arable “weeds”; and pillwort. Completed plans can be found on the Biodiversity Partnership’s website (www.norfolkbiodiversity.org).

ADDITIONAL SERVICES	SUCCESS MEASURES AND OUTPUTS	PROGRESS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject to the availability of funding, administer and manage a Biodiversity Project Fund to support the delivery of projects linked to the implementation of the Habitat and Species Action Plans and/or the achievement of LBAP aims more broadly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The existing Biodiversity Project Fund remains operational; projects which meet the Fund's criteria are financially supported. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One new project proposal was considered and approved by the Co-ordinator's Group during the current quarter; this was for the second phase of the silver-studded blue translocation programme (£500). Several other project proposals are under preparation and will shortly be submitted. These include projects for: a harbour porpoise survey card; a tassel stonewort survey; and awareness raising to promote conservation of white-clawed crayfish. A complete list of the activities supported by the Biodiversity Project Fund from its inception can be found in Annex 2.

Annex 1: Summary of Topic Group Meetings Held

Topic Group	Meeting Date	Principal Issues Discussed
Coastal BAP Topic Group	15 January 2007	Update on the Wash Biodiversity Action Plan; adoption of the Coastal Sand Dune Habitat Action Plan; discussion of the harbour porpoise project proposal.
Communities and Nature BAP Topic Group	13 November 2006	Discussion of the Community Biodiversity Awards; review of the first draft of the Spotted Flycatcher Species Action Plan.
Ecological Networks Topic Group	18 January 2007	Presentation on the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS) and econet work in Cheshire; update on progress with district-level mapping; integration with Norwich Green Infrastructure Strategy.
Farmland BAP Topic Group	23 January 2007	Finalisation of four arable “weed” action plans and the Flixweed Flea Beetle Species Action Plan.
Farming and Biodiversity Forum	No meeting held this quarter.	
Heathland BAP Topic Group	No meeting held this quarter.	

Heathland Practitioners' Forum	7 November 2006	Focus on the management of the North Coast heaths, including Salhouse.
Waterbodies BAP Topic Group	9 January 2007	Presentation by the Wheatfen Partnership on the results of recent BAP mollusc surveys; adoption of the Tassel Stonewort Species Action Plan; discussion of the tassel stonewort project proposal.
Wetlands BAP Topic Group	No meeting held this quarter.	
Woodlands BAP Topic Group	11 January 2007	Presentations on: the historic occurrence of wet woodlands; updating the black poplar database; and the Anglian Woodfuels Project.

**ANNEX 2: SUMMARY OF PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY THE NORFOLK BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP THROUGH THE
“BIODIVERSITY PROJECT FUND”, FROM 2004/05 ONWARDS**

Topic Group	Project Title	Project Objectives	Linkage to SAP/HAP	Location	Project Manager	Time-scale	Total Cost	Biod. Project Fund	Status
Coastal	Saline Lagoon Workshop	To organise and hold a one-day workshop on saline lagoon management, with Dr. R.N. Bamber.	Saline lagoon HAP	North Norfolk	Peter Lambley, EN	One-day event (workshop, held on 14 Oct 2004)	£550	£550 (100%)	Successfully completed
Coastal	A Study of the Soft Rock Cliff Invertebrate Fauna of the Norfolk Coast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To gather new data on the invertebrate communities of the Norfolk coast To contribute data to Buglife’s UK-wide study into maritime soft rock cliffs To hold a one-day workshop for the Biodiversity Partnership on soft cliff management. 	Maritime cliff and slope	North Norfolk	Andrew Whitehouse, Buglife	May - Nov, 2006	£7,300	£4,300 (59%)	Completed and report received. A soft cliffs practitioners’ workshop will be held in the summer of 2007.
Communities and Nature	Norwich Rivers and Green Spaces Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To raise awareness about the wildlife supported by Norwich’s rivers and encourage community involvement to enhance certain areas of the urban river corridor. 	The project has linkages to a number of HAPs and SAPs and also supports the Topic Group’s “Community BAP”.	Norwich City	Matt Davies, Norwich Fringe Project	One year (Sept 2005-Aug 2006) Extended to Nov 06	£30,490	£5,000 (16%)	Completed and final report received. Discussions are being held about the possibility of continuing the photo competition as a regular annual event.

 = Project closed.

Topic Group	Project Title	Project Objectives	Linkage to SAP/HAP	Location	Project Manager	Time-scale	Total Cost	Biod. Project Fund	Status
Communities and Nature	Support for "Wild about Norfolk" 2005 (bird and bat boxes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To inform the general public (particularly children) about Norfolk's wildlife and inspire an active interest in conservation. 	This project contributes to the Biodiversity Partnership's Awareness Strategy	Thetford	Jennie Murdy, RSPB local group	One day event (15 Oct 2005)	£4,300 + volunteers' time est. at £6,900	£500 (11.6%)	Successfully completed; report received.
Communities and Nature	Support for "Wild about Norfolk 2006" (printing of activity booklet)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above. 	As above.	Norwich	Jennie Murdy	9-10 Sept 2006		£500	Successfully completed. Over 4,000 people attended the event. Report received.
Ecological Networks	Making Space for Wildlife: Creating an Ecological Network for Norfolk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To promote the development of an ecological network in Norfolk; To develop a Norfolk econet map; To prepare a set of project briefs to take the econet forward. 	An "umbrella project" with linkages to many different HAPs and SAPs.	County-wide	Reg Land, NWT	March 2005 – February 2006	£16,400	£7,200 (44%)	Consultation with Steering Group members on the draft final report and maps has now been completed.
Farmland	Databases of lowland calcareous grasslands and lowland meadows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop a database for each of the BAP grassland habitats for Norfolk 	Calcareous grasslands and lowland meadows HAPs (in prep)	County-wide	Helen Baczkowska	Nov 05 – March 06	£5,000	£3,500 (70%)	Successfully completed; report received.
Farmland	Biodiversity and farming exhibition at the Norfolk Show	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To demonstrate how farmers can manage their land to help conserve and enhance biodiversity. 	Farmland HAPs and SAPs	County-wide	Belinda James	June 2006	£22,375	£1,000 (4.5%)	Completed; brief report received.

Topic Group	Project Title	Project Objectives	Linkage to SAP/HAP	Location	Project Manager	Time-scale	Total Cost	Biod. Project Fund	Status
Heathland	Heathland CWS Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To draw together existing information on heathland CWS; To carry out proactive site visits and surveys; To establish a programme of condition monitoring; To identify priority areas for management advice and targeting future grant aid. 	Heathland HAP	County-wide	Helen Baczkowska, NWT	Oct 2004 - Oct 2005	£1,000	£1,000 (100%)	Completed. Report awaited.
Heathland	Translocation of Silver-studded blue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To carry out a translocation of SSB from Buxton heath to Cawston heath. 	Draft silver-studded blue SAP calls for re-introductions to two sites by 2010.	Broadland	Mandy Gluth, BC	July 2006	£500	£500 (100%)	Translocation successfully completed. Report received.
Heathland	Translocation of Silver-studded blue: Phase 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To carry out a second translocation of SSB from Buxton to Cawston. 	As above.	Broadland	Mandy Gluth, BC	July 2007	£500	£500 (100%)	To take place in summer 2007.
Waterbodies	Water Vole Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To carry out a repeat survey of the national survey sites in Norfolk in 2005/06 	Water vole SAP (Action 5.5.4)	County-wide, with focus on Broads.	Steve Henson, NWT	Oct 05-Aug 06	£3,400 plus in-kind costs from NWT	£1,400 (41%)	Ongoing; first phase completed.
Waterbodies	Great Crested Newt Record Collation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To create a single, integrated dataset of GCN occurrence in Norfolk . 	GCN SAP (Actions 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.2.1, and 5.5.2)	County-wide	Helen Baczkowska, NWT	Nov 05 – March 06	£3,000 plus in-kind costs from NWT	£2,000 (66%)	Ongoing.

Topic Group	Project Title	Project Objectives	Linkage to SAP/HAP	Location	Project Manager	Time-scale	Total Cost	Biod. Project Fund	Status
Waterbodies	Norfolk Broads Mink Management Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To establish strategic control of mink in the Broads; To establish a self-sustaining mink control network; To monitor mink and water populations; To improve habitat management. 	Water vole SAP	Broads National Park	Julia Masson/ Rick Southwood	April 06 - March 08	£43,100	£5,000 (12%)	Ongoing. Two further training workshops for landowners have been held and rafts distributed.
Waterbodies	Mid-Norfolk Mink Management Project: Phase II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To establish strategic control of mink in selected parts of the Wensum River Valley; To establish a self-sustaining mink control network. 	Water vole SAP	Wensum	Heidi Thompson, NCC	1 year	£15,000	£3,500 (23%)	Ongoing. Three-year funding for the project has recently been received from the SITA Enriching Nature programme.
Waterbodies	River Glaven White-clawed Crayfish Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To clarify the distribution and status of WCC on the River Glaven and assess its suitability as a refuge ("Ark") site; To provide training to the River Glaven Conservation Group in crayfish surveying techniques. 	White-clawed crayfish SAP	North Norfolk	Steve Henson, NWT	Sept/Oct 2006 (14 days)	£4,445	£3,733.75 (84%)	Survey completed; report in preparation.

Topic Group	Project Title	Project Objectives	Linkage to SAP/HAP	Location	Project Manager	Time-scale	Total Cost	Biod. Project Fund	Status
Wetlands	Sustainable Solutions to the Ochre and Salinity Problems in the Brograve Catchment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To undertake a feasibility study to develop a plan for sustainable use of land and water resources in the Brograve catchment. 	Reedbed, grazing marsh and mesotrophic lakes HAPs; Bittern, water vole, otter and mollusc SAPs.	North Norfolk	Lou Mayer, KLCIDB	Jan - Aug 2005	£43,524	£7,300 (17%)	Completed. Report received.
Wetlands	Norfolk Fens Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To assess the management status and condition of all non-SSI fen sites outside the Broads area; To identify sites in need of restoration; To prioritise the need for restoration and management advice; To produce site management statements and conservation plans for priority sites. 	Fen HAP (particularly Action 5.2.4)	County-wide (except Broads)	Andrina Walmsley, NWT	Oct 2004 - April 2006	£13,300	£1,000 (7.5%)	Completed and detailed report received. The final database includes information on 678 sites, each of which is also linked to a map.
Wetlands	Pingo Mapping and Condition Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and map all pingo clusters in Norfolk; Assess condition and identify sites at risk. 	Fen HAP	Fens and Breckland valleys	Andrina Walmsley, NWT	Jan-Dec 2007	£5,520	£3,020 (55%)	To begin in spring 2007.

Topic Group	Project Title	Project Objectives	Linkage to SAP/HAP	Location	Project Manager	Time-scale	Total Cost	Biod. Project Fund	Status
Woodlands	Phase 1 Roadside Orchard Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To carry out a survey of Norfolk's traditional orchards to establish their extent, status and trends. 	Traditional orchards HAP	County-wide	Gerry Barnes, NCC (with EEAOP)	April-October 2005	£1,500	£1,500 (100%)	Completed; final report and database received.
Woodlands	Phase 2 Biodiversity Survey of Traditional Orchards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To carry out surveys of invertebrates, lichens, bryophytes, ground flora and fruit varieties at five traditional orchards, representing different geographical areas and management regimes. 	Traditional orchards HAP	Five sites in South Norfolk, the Fens, mid-Norfolk, and North Norfolk.	Gerry Barnes, NCC (with EEAOP)	To be completed by Dec 2005	£1,000	£1,000 (100%)	Bryophyte, mollusc and diatom surveys completed.
Woodlands	Propagation of Traditional Norfolk Apple Varieties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that a wide variety of traditional apple saplings is available for distribution (880 trees to be grown) 	Traditional orchards HAP	County-wide	Gerry Barnes, NCC (with EEAOP)	Jan 06 to March 08	£3,036	£1,400 (46%)	Underway. Root stock planted in Feb 06 and budded. Saplings on sale in 2007.
Woodlands	Conservation, Enhancement and Re-creation of Wet Woodland and other Wet Habitats in the Nar and Wensum Valleys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a GIS database on wet woodlands/ habitats; Expand the area of wet woodland in positive management by 40 ha by mid-2007; Re-create 10 ha of wet woodland by 2009; Enhance access. 	Wet Woodland HAP	Wensum and Nar River Valleys	Gerry Barnes, NCC	April 06 to March 09	£20,000	£3,600 (18%)	Underway. A preliminary study on the historic occurrence of wet woodland has been carried out by UEA.

ANNEX 3: CALENDAR OF BIODIVERSITY EVENTS IN 2007

BAP Steering Group

25 January
26 April
25 July
25 October

BAP Co-ordinators' Group

18 April

Topic Group Meetings

- Coastal Topic Group: 23 April
- Communities and Nature Topic Group: 5 March
- Ecological Networks Topic Group: 18 May
- Farming and Biodiversity Practitioners' Forum: Spring 2007 (date to be identified)
- Farmland Topic Group: Date to be identified
- Heathland Topic Group: 6 February 2007
- Heaths Forum: 25 April 2007 (Brecks)
- Waterbodies Topic Group: 24 April
- Wetlands Topic Group: 14 February 2007
- Woodlands Topic Group: Date to be identified.

Regional and National Meetings

- East of England Biodiversity Forum: Cambridge, Monday 5 February 2007
- Breathing Places: London, 7 February