

Merseyside BioBank Midterm Evaluation, Succession Strategy and Feasibility Report

Sefton MBC/Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service

Brief

BE Group was commissioned to undertake a midterm evaluation for Merseyside BioBank (MBB) to assess the use of its HLF and ERDF grants.

MBB is the local record centre for North Merseyside and is the co-ordinating body for the collation and management of biological data in the area. The funding for the project will come to an end in 2010 and therefore this evaluation is also needed in order for MBB to apply for succession funding.

The evaluation will assess the performance of MBB in terms of both outputs and wider project outcomes. Recommendations for improvement, future development and long term sustainability are also required in the form of a succession strategy.

Activities

- Collection of baseline statistics and analysis of output data
- Review of relevant background documents - funding bid, etc
- Extensive consultation with MBB staff
- Analysis of quantitative and qualitative outcomes against objectives
- Interviews with beneficiaries
- Review of other UK local record centre business models
- Feasibility analysis and recommendations on the most appropriate business model for Merseyside BioBank
- Project succession risk assessment.

Outcome

The project has achieved its ERDF targets. It is on schedule to achieve its HLF targets on time.

The project took time to get going due to unforeseen external circumstances. As such, it initially struggled to spend its allocated funding. It has therefore developed innovative ways to ensure the full grant could be drawn down, including matching in-kind contributions and extending the grant period.

However future funding is under question. External grant funding has, to a degree, shifted the project away from its core focus of supporting local authority biological data needs. However the community and education programmes are raising awareness and involvement in the sector.

