

# OPM Pilot Extension 2016:

## Summary of proposed operational activity

### 1 Purpose

This paper provides an overview of the OPM Control Programme for 2016. This includes surveillance, control, communications, liaison, research and data management.

### 2 Introduction and Context

Since 2013 Forestry Commission has been delivering a pilot control programme for OPM. The Defra-funded pilot control programme has been extended for a further year for 2016. Whilst this year's work is broadly similar to previous pilot years, plans have been adapted to take account of findings over recent years and other improvements in our understanding of OPM management.

The proposals in this paper are based on our current understanding of OPM extent which we expect to change over the year; therefore we expect this plan may be adjusted accordingly in light of new findings. There may also be adjustments made as we build our knowledge in response to the latest evidence.

### 3 Objectives for 2016

The main policy objective is to limit the rate of spread of OPM from existing known areas of infestation, and to suppress population levels within infested areas to limit the impact of OPM.

This work will further develop our understanding of OPM population distribution, the best approaches to surveillance and control and provide evidence to inform the development of future policy.

### 4 Legal Considerations

#### **Statutory Plant Health Notices (SPHNs)**

SPHNs will be issued to all affected landowners outside the core zone defined for 2016. However, we may issue SPHNs to landowners within the core zone, where infestations pose a significant threat to the buffer zone. We will identify which owner's will and will not receive funding support. A new SPHN and covering letter/guidance will be issued to help landowners on what actions need to be taken.

### 5 Budget / resource allocation

The budget will be prioritised in line with the programme objectives, with resources focused on surveillance activities, control work (spraying and nest removal), research and communications.

#### **Principles behind budget allocations for each area:**

Pangbourne – continued surveillance required given we continue to trap male moths and are keen to ensure the apparent success is secured.

Olympic Park – eradication is the objective for this area; it is a relatively small scale infestation with limited host tree resource so low surveillance and control costs.

Croydon/Bromley – now an established outbreak but we appear to have had some success in 2015 in limiting the spread, pushing it back in the southern part of this outbreak. Work and budget is based on similar level of surveillance / control as 2015.

Guildford – Subject to ongoing survey work but the intention is to survey and control known infestations in line with other outbreak areas.

Main London Area – continued surveillance and control but focussed on outer edge and activity will be targeted.

## 6 Activity plans

### **Visual surveillance**

A visual survey will be carried out of trees known to be infested in 2014 and 2015, plus any within 100m. Visual survey of trees within 250m of pheromone traps where >5 moths were caught in 2015. This will be reviewed in the light of budgetary constraints as the financial year progresses.

We will collaborate with others conducting their own surveys and encourage wider surveys by others – to look out for ‘satellite’ infestations e.g. Observatree, Woodland Trust, and Tree Wardens

### **Pheromone Trapping**

In total there will be around 1500 traps deployed in 2016, covering previous areas and extending coverage further away from known infestation. As well as determining flight extent, the aim is to continue analysing trap data against survey and control activity to see what the relationship with traps may be.

We will continue to encourage other landowners to put up traps and monitor them e.g. Woodland Trust, City of London, Forest Enterprise, National Trust

### **Chemical control**

Chemical application of known infested sites in 2014 and 2015 plus host trees within 50m radius will be done. The application method will be site dependent but seeks to balance control effectiveness with other impacts.

### **Nest Removal**

Nest removal will be funded in all areas outside core zone, based on summer survey findings and subject to budget availability. Nest removal after moth emergence will not be funded or required under SPHN’s on the basis it will not affect spread and increase scope for OPM parasitoid development.

## 7 Communications

Communications will continue to focus on raising awareness, encouraging vigilance and collaboration, reporting sightings and targeted messaging at key points in the season e.g. larval emergence, when they become a public health risk.

Regular updates on progress and OPM findings through the season will be provided via email and on the FC website. A complete picture of progress relies on the provision of OPM information from others.

**Liaison**

The OPM Advisory Group will remain a key means of sharing information and gaining feedback on the programme. It will be reviewed to ensure membership reflects the geographic distribution of OPM. Specific liaison activity will be done in outbreak areas.