

# Valuing Our Environment – helping people to recognise what nature does for us

## Joint Links Seminar 2012

26 – 27 September 2012

Belfast, Northern Ireland

**Audience:** Full Members of the four Links: Northern Ireland Environment Link, Scottish Environment Link, Wales Environment Link and Wildlife and Countryside Link

**Aims:** Looking at the attitudes to the environment across the UK, with the aim of identifying ways to promote its protection by all of the UK constituent governments. Exploring ways for the Links members effectively deliver their work within a devolved governance structure. Discuss a number of other issues of concern across the UK.

**Venue:** Maryville House, a boutique B&B and conference centre on the fashionable Lisburn Road area of Belfast a short bus ride from the city centre. Some B&B rooms available locally, others in the centre of town. Prices range from £45 - £65(?) for singles.

### Programme:

#### Wednesday 26 September

Am – Arrival in Belfast. The Belfast George Best Airport is closer than the Belfast International (Aldergrove) airport. However, both have dedicated bus services which will get you to the city centre where one bus will get you to the venue.

- 1:00 Lunch
- 1:45 Welcome by NIEL Chairman Andy McCrea
- 2:00 **Valuing our Environment.** Facilitated Discussion looking at land, freshwater and marine issues. How do we bring an integrated and coordinated approach to the environment, given the many political, environmental and social issues facing the UK's people and governments? How do we raise the profile of the environment and awareness of how important it is to everyone's quality of life? What are the Links and their members doing at policy, public awareness and practical management levels?
- 3:30 Break
- 5:30 Close of session
- 7:00 Possible reception at Stormont
- 8:00 Dinner in Belfast

#### Thursday 27 September

9:00 Workshop discussions on:

- Legal issues
- CAP reform including woodland/forestry
- Marine environment
- Measures of societal success (alternatives to GDP)
- Working together and separately in an increasingly devolved UK

10:30 Break – option to change workshops

10:45 Second Workshop session

12:00 Lunch

1:00 – 5:00 Strangford Lough Field Trips. Choice of:

- Boat trip on a vintage wooden sailing ship (numbers limited to 10; weather dependent) visiting the Marine Current Turbine and wildlife spotting
- Visit and Tour of National Trust Property (TBC – Mount Stewart, Castleward)

6:00 Return to Belfast, depart or dinner if staying over