

TAYSIDE BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP

Steering Group Meeting

Minutes of Meeting

Thursday 24 November 2005 at 10.00 am

The Salutation Hotel, South Street, Perth

Present:	Martin Price (Chair)	CMS, Perth College
	Doug Flint	Perth & Kinross Council
	Catherine Lloyd	Tayside Biodiversity Partnership
	Pam Coutts	Angus Council
	Alison Anderson	Dundee City Council
	Mark Simmons	Perth & Kinross Council
	Christine Hall	Scottish Agricultural College
	Jo Long	SEPA
	Mike Strachan	Forestry Commission
	Martyn Jamieson	Scottish Field Studies Association
	Ruth Harland	Scottish Rural Property & Business Association
Carol Littlewood	Angus FWAG	
Apologies:	Carolyn Warwick	SNH
	Richard Lockett	Perth FWAG
	John Miskelly	NFUS
In Attendance:	Lesley Campbell	Perth & Kinross Council

No	Item	Action
1	Apologies As above.	
2	Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 31 August 2005 Minutes agreed.	
3	Matters Arising <i>Deer Fence:</i> PC advised that she has an e-mail from Stewart Roberts giving an update on the situation. PC to forward to Angela Paterson.	PC
4	Reports from Sub Group Leaders	
4.1	Woodlands – Mike Strachan Advised of proposed changes to the Grant Scheme structure to be in place for 2007, as Scottish Forestry Grant Scheme closing in late summer 2006.	

Grants also available to develop on-site processing of timber (S10) and for development of farm energy (S11) for improved woodland management for biofuel (£60,000 available for capital grant). Also £1,000 per ha for short-rotation coppice in flood plain management. Benefits mean farmer get a wood crop and would not undertake expensive river engineering, but FC recognises the level of grant is not attractive compared to oil seed rape subsidy for biofuel.

Livestock Grazing in Woodlands: Advised that there have been 18 successful applications in Highland Perthshire to control grazing of livestock in woodland areas. The grant is £100 per ha.

The next meeting is to take place on 11 January 2006 with proposed follow up on Juniper Woodland research. Work will be limited to control grazing of livestock. Both areas have approval for funding.

Forest Grant Scheme/Relationship with IACS & Rural Stewardship Scheme: Tier 3 of Land Management Contracts. Deal with Tier 2 in first instance to get plans put in place, then all the capital work required will form Tier 3. (Tier 1 is basic). MS is already looking into this.

Bracken Grant: option being considered for bracken covered ground.

4.2 **Farmlands – Carol Littlewood**

Gave an update on the Farmland Species & Habitat List, which is available on the website:-

- Rural Stewardship Scheme (RSS) – won't know until January
- Hedgerow Management
- Treeline Project – find out if Angus got funding
- Barn Owl Interest Group – Project in Tayside is now finalised. Survey is still ongoing. Sightings in Perthshire.

4.3 **Uplands – Martyn Jamieson**

Group plans to meet in the New Year. Advised that he has managed to get help from the vet (Ian Gill) in Kirriemuir in respect of the sheep tick fence. PC to speak to Stewart Roberts on the matter.

PC

MP advised on Upland Biodiversity Policy by SNH/SE. Allocation of money by 31 March for the delivery of biodiversity across boundaries. They are looking at what is set in plans and in Scotland/UK policies. Reviewing the documents and talking to the people. Understand how we can do it better.

MP

Population is an example of vertical integration. Interest by SNH to build this thinking into longer term projects. MP will be looking into this next week in relation to Tayside.

4.4 **Water & Wetlands – Jo Long**

Not met since the recent River Engineering Workshop, although planning to do so in the New Year. CL advised that the Workshop had been very successful and well attended, having turned away nearly 40 people. Received 64 feedback forms, 100% of which had requested an update workshop in a year to 18 months time. The presentation and feedback form will be available on the website in the New Year. CL to look into larger locations for the next workshop. It was agreed that an extra person be built into the budget to undertake the administrative requirements for the next workshop.

4.5 **Coast & Estuary**

David Mitchell has left. Replacement Chair to be sought - CL to action.

CL

4.6 **Urban – Alison Anderson**

Last meeting held in September 2005. Major part of the meeting spent discussing BARS (Biodiversity Action Recording Scheme).

Huge response in relation to Town Swift Survey. SNH has agreed swifts are a priority and there will be Ranger Service time committed to swift work in 2006. Nationally, swift numbers declined by 62% in 5 years.

CL advised that there had been a meeting in September for all involved in the Survey. Results plotted on map for swift colony records for all 3 Local Authorities; now needs to be put on GIS. Long-term aim is to match colonies with nest sites, and undertake appropriate conservation work in light of analysis of reasons behind national decline. No funding available at the moment. Lot of research still to be done.

4.7 **Education – Catherine Lloyd**

Paper giving update previously circulated.

5. **Finance**

DF handed out papers to the meeting, which was discussed in detail.

- TBP Steering & Management Groups to consider £5,000 c/f to next year, including need to ring-fence funds for CL's salary increment.
- £1,500 for APTC Car Allow/Business Mileage – DF to look into this

DF

- Grant claims – no problems with reclaiming SNH grant element.
- All Sub-Group leaders should be aware that they have at least £200 in their budget for projects, with the Woodlands Sub-Group having slightly more. Farmland Group (Barn Owl Interest Group) planning Newsletter; Carol Littlewood to work out what money is required and come back with estimates & costs to next meeting.

**C
Littlewood**

6. SITA Funding (TBAF – Tayside Biodiversity Action Fund)

Although still confidential at this stage, CL handed out a paper to the meeting listing those successful and unsuccessful projects for SITA funding. Quality of Life Trust meeting on 6 December 2005, when funding will be confirmed. Those who have been unsuccessful can resubmit their application at a later date. The TBAF should have £100,000 per year for 3 years. CL advised that SITA funding is specifically available for projects within 10 miles of the landfill site. Feedback on guidance notes to be passed to CL.

ALL

Copy of map showing eligible areas will be available both on the website and hard copy.

MS

7. Forward Plans & Priorities

5 Priorities:

1. Planning Manual & Leaflets
2. Review of LBAP Tranche 1
3. SITA TBAF Projects' Assessment
4. BARS
5. SAPs/HAPs for Consultation (put as drafts on website)

SBF: Scottish list of species to be published by end of January – over 2000 species. Concerns already aired as to accuracy.

8. Website/Publications – Catherine Lloyd

Summary Booklet – great interest. Using the 2nd print run as quickly as first. CDs still being circulated to help with projects and general consultation.

Barn Owl Newsletter a possibility (Tayside Red Squirrel Newsletter completed and widely circulated).

2nd Tranche – much behind-the-scenes work going on.

Website needs to be updated again – quarterly update due. CL updating as requested (incl. TBAP awards/announcements when official).

CL

CL to e-mail the spreadsheet detailing the number of hits to the TBP Website to all members. CL advised that there has been a huge interest in project funding.

CL

9. **2nd Tranche HAPs & SAPS Progress Report – Catherine Lloyd**

CL tabled an update paper to the meeting and went through this in detail. 19 SAPs and 12 HAPs are nearly complete and should be put on the website as consultative drafts during the first half of 2006.

Handed back to the sub-groups to update respectively and pass back to CL who will provide revised list for next meeting on 23 February 2006. **Sub-Group Leaders/CL**

10 **BARS (Biodiversity Action Recording Scheme)**

CL confirmed she would be attending BARS training on 25 November 2005 and gave an update advising of some problems experienced in accessing the website system. CL aware of the need to meet national deadline by end of December, but difficulties being experienced as 1st Tranche LBAP Review not complete. DF advised that we need to SMARTen our actions. Deadline may be extended due to problems being experienced by all, but as it is not compulsory, we should not be driven by deadlines. More important is realism and getting it right.

Once all the actions are input into BARS all Lead Partners will be requested to feedback on reports but if UK deadline missed we can still use the system for our own local monitoring. CL confirmed she would still complete the 2005 UKBAP Report as this did not require completion of BARS. The deadline for this is end December. **CL**

11 **Local Record Centre Issues**

CL gave an update and referred to the draft minute of the Local Record Centre meeting of 31 August 2005, as previously circulated.

No local record centre as yet been set up in Dundee.

North East and Cairngorms & Angus – PC not quite sure how far they have got. **PC**

LBAP Partnership Boundaries/National Park Boundaries – NESBREC providing the survey.

MS advised that PKC do not have a system, as yet.

It was agreed to leave this issue on the Agenda for the next meeting on 23 February 2006.

12 **Sub Group Meetings : How function/Time Allocation**

Coast & Estuary: replacement Group Leader discussed. MP to **MP**

write to individual organisations to ask if they are willing to chair the Group. It was felt that SNH should still be represented on the group.

Farmland – Carol Littlewood: Projects are going on. Sub-groups are progressing and don't feel need to meet very often; a lot of e-mail contact. Meeting date to be set for the Barn Owl Interest Group.

Uplands – Martyn Jamieson: Martyn has helped to get the group up and running again. There has not been a meeting for about a year, but one being planned in New Year. Link to what is going on in the Cairngorms.

Water & Wetlands – Jo Long: Group does not meet very often but Members are very focused. Seminar in Birnam very helpful in getting more interest. A lot going on behind the scenes.

Urban – Alison Anderson: Group meets 4/5 times per year to discuss projects. Quite a good attendance. Not experiencing any problems. The separate Swift Interest Group meets 1 or 2 times a year; very varied pro-active membership.

Woodlands – Mike Strachan: Members keep in touch but do not meet very often. Red Squirrel issues coming to the fore and a separate Red Squirrel Interest Group being proposed. Next sub-group meeting planned for 11 January 2006 and a summer visit provisionally planned.

DF made a general point that all Sub-Group Members are extremely busy, and there are so many actions to deliver on. He suggested streamlining actions and that focusing on a few deliverable priorities might be more effective and increase energy and enthusiasm.

Education – Catherine Lloyd: Members meet twice a year and CL keeps in touch by e-mail on a wide range of issues.

13 Ways to Widen the Partnership Membership/Key Priorities

DF advised that we are approaching the end of Year 2, coming into Year 3 with funding until March 2007. DF asked, as a Partnership, where do we need to be after 2007 and how do we propose to get there? We really need to start thinking about it now. Agreed that all Members give this matter their consideration for discussion at the next meeting on 23 February 2006. It was further agreed that SNH require to be present when this matter is discussed. These issues would all be relevant when developing a new Business Plan for beyond March 2007.

ALL

DF to draft an issues paper for the next meeting on 23 February

DF

2006. He welcomes any suggestions from the Steering Group to this paper.

14 AOCB

MP gave an update on a recent presentation he had attended regarding the BBC Breathing Space programme and handed out copies of the presentation to the meeting.

15 Date of Next Meeting

To be held on 23 February 2006 in the Board Room, St James' House, Forfar.

MP thanked all for attending the meeting.
Thanks to Lesley Campbell for taking the minutes.