

7

People & Communications



Surveying for Small Blue butterflies, Angus coast © CAG Lloyd

Background

An understanding of biodiversity is essential to ensuring its conservation – and enjoyment. We are long past the stage where the word itself was once a hindrance. It is now widely used from travel brochures to gardening magazines, from children's books to television news. And it is becoming 'big news'. The RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch regularly attracts more than half a million people who between them count well over 8 million birds each winter. They are asked to help for only one hour on the last weekend of January.

Community bioblitzes are increasingly discovering what species are found on specific sites and this paves the way for future management with biodiversity in mind. The national Garden BioBlitz surveys are capturing everyone's imagination - set up in 2013, this June event focuses on 24 hours over a weekend and encourages anyone with a minor interest in the wildlife around them to find out more. It has been described as a virtual field trip with people scouring their gardens and sharing their findings and photographs on social media, experts helping with identification and all the information being logged via iRecord. Something similar has happened with the Wildlife Trust's '30 Days Wild' Facebook campaign which recently attracted 8,000 contributors for the thirty days of

June but proved so successful the campaign will continue for the rest of year.

With an increased interest in wildlife comes recognition that health and well-being is intrinsically linked with the natural environment and with it our sense of place and belonging. Access to greenspace and increased physical activity leads to better health outcomes, including shorter hospital stays and less anti-social behaviour in children and young people. Positive effects include a variety of physical and mental health benefits - better mood, blood pressure and concentration and less stress, depression and anxiety. There are many opportunities to improve our health, bring local communities together and collectively improve our commitment to caring for it.

Tayside Biodiversity partners are focussing on a variety of aspects to help raise awareness:

- Public engagement through events and community-based projects involving volunteers and people of all ages and abilities
- Engaging people of all ages to find out about species and habitats with citizen science surveys and projects such as Capturing our Coast and Tayside Swifts
- Life-long learning, education and natural play



- Professional guidance to raise awareness of biodiversity priorities and legislation, how to manage sites proactively and how to minimise negative impacts

There is continuing pressure on Ranger Services in Scotland and in some cases they no longer contribute to biodiversity targets or offer school visits. Without access to their expertise more pressure is put on NGOs (non-governmental organisations) who are themselves struggling to keep up with growing demand.

It has been seen that children learning about their local wildlife at an early stage results in a greater understanding of biodiversity through life. This does not have to be just via the curriculum, but out-of-school events involving the family, taking part in the John Muir Award scheme or enjoying woodland or coastal activities can all give a healthy regard to biodiversity that can pay dividends in the future.

The main drawback in Tayside is the lack of a Biodiversity Information Centre. Elsewhere in Scotland there are vibrant records centres which not only collate wildlife sightings and respond to queries from developers and planners, but also raise awareness of the subject with specialist and not so specialist training sessions. The Tayside Recorders' Forum fills the gap in a small way by

bringing people together at its annual event, but without a dedicated centre little progress is possible beyond this.

There has, in the meantime, been a very welcome increase in local community action groups contributing directly to safeguarding sites and this fits well with key outcomes in the 2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity:

- Health and well-being improved through physical activity and contact with nature
- Communities involved in decision-making take pride in their local environment
- Healthier local environments more widely understood and supported by communities

Objectives

1. **Increase awareness, understanding and appreciation of biodiversity and ecosystem services throughout Tayside**
2. **Provide opportunities for residents and visitors alike to actively engage in biodiversity conservation action**
3. **Mainstream opportunities for everyone of all ages and abilities to take part in citizen science projects and biological recording**



Community Churchyard Lichens training © CAG Lloyd

Tayside Local Recorders' Forum

Set up in 2007, it has been tradition for each Tayside Recorders' area to host the annual event in turn, so well-attended Recorders' Days have taken place at Perth Museum & Art Gallery, The Meffan in Forfar and McManus Art Gallery & Museum (hosted by Leisure & Culture Dundee). The aim of the day is not just to hear updates from the many County Recorders and species experts in the area, but also to discover what is happening

elsewhere in Scotland. There have been debates on a number of issues and practical demonstrations on how to use recording schemes such as iRecord or the Atlas of Living Scotland.

There is an extensive Tayside Recorders' Forum section on www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk. It includes advice on how to record species, who to contact locally, and which surveys and projects need help.



Capturing our Coast fieldwork - in the rain!
© CAG Lloyd



Bee on allium © CAG Lloyd

Tayside BeeWild Initiative

Many of the projects being actively taken forward by the Tayside Biodiversity Partnership involve local communities contributing directly to national targets. The Tayside BeeWild Initiative is one such project. It is exploring ways to safeguard our local pollinators – the bumblebees, butterflies, solitary bees and honey bees, beetles, moths and hoverflies which all play a part in pollinating our fruit, vegetables and crops. The premise is that small changes in how we manage our greenspace and gardens can really help and this can involve a wide variety of businesses, community groups, individuals and volunteers.

The pilot project in 2016, funded by the Angus Environmental Trust and jointly led by the Tayside Biodiversity Partnership and Volunteer Action Angus, is involving nine care homes, a day care centre and a sheltered housing complex. Each chose from a suite of wildlife kits to suit their surroundings – pond and bog gardens, wildflower meadow plantings, wildlife trees, biodiversity banks and orchards. All participants were given a Patios for Wildlife and People kit which included bat boxes, bee hotels and bird nest boxes, as well

as wooden tubs, all expertly made in the Volunteer Action Angus workshop.

As part of the project, the Partnership provided a comprehensive Site Management Plan which not only highlighted potential biodiversity enhancements for each site based on the wildlife kits, but also a citizen science section on opportunities for an enhanced activities programme. A regular bulletin outlining potential citizen science surveys to join, together with a series of occasional workshops will help Activities staff, relatives and residents alike enjoy their improved surroundings – and contribute towards key biodiversity targets.

As part of the project, the ‘Making Way for Nature - in our gardens, allotments, orchards and community spaces’ booklet was revised and re-printed. This will be distributed to business and industrial parks throughout Tayside, as well as local schools, allotment and community groups who will all be invited to take part in the BeeWild Initiative.

People & Communications Actions Schedule

Key for timescale Short: 1-3 yrs **Medium:** 4-6 yrs **Long:** 7-10 yrs

Actions will be input into the UK Biodiversity Action System (UKBARS) where Lead Partners will be outlined

Maintaining & Improving Habitats			
Action	Action breakdown	Who needs to take the action	Timescale
1 Encourage community groups to manage local areas for biodiversity.	<p>Expand the Tayside BeeWild Initiative.</p> <p>Support the setting up of a Tayside Biodiversity Village Initiative, exploring the potential for a series of pilot projects in Stanley, Forteviot, Inchtute and Monifieth.</p> <p>Support the setting up of the Castle Huntly Biodiversity Project to improve an area of prison grounds.</p> <p>Expand the Angus 'Going the Whole Hog' project into Perth & Kinross.</p> <p>Work with partners to set up the Tayside Church Yew Project, sharing yew tree cuttings with churches and Eco-Congregations across Tayside.</p> <p>Prepare and publish the A to Z Green Graveyard Guide (as part of the Tayside Green Graveyard Initiative).</p> <p>Work with ScotRail in the Community to expand the Nature on Track project to re-write and expand on the first Nature on Track leaflet (highlighting the biodiversity seen from trains between Perth and Montrose) and support a pan-Partnership project across other biodiversity partnerships areas in Scotland.</p>	<p>Tayside Biodiversity Partnership</p> <p>Volunteer Action Angus</p> <p>Perth & Kinross Association of Voluntary Service</p> <p>Angus Council</p> <p>Perth & Kinross Council</p> <p>Perth & Kinross Countryside Trust</p> <p>Keptie Friends</p> <p>East Haven Together</p> <p>Eco-Schools</p> <p>Tay Landscape Partnership</p> <p>Scottish Prison Service</p> <p>Scottish Natural Heritage</p> <p>Broughty Ferry Environmental Project</p> <p>Perth & Kinross Tree Wardens' Network</p> <p>Conservation Foundation</p> <p>Eco-Congregation Scotland</p> <p>A Rocha</p> <p>ScotRail</p>	Short

Maintaining & Improving Habitats

Action	Action breakdown	Who needs to take the action	Timescale
2 Contribute to the setting up of a North East Green Network (NEGN) to strategically increase environmental, recreational, educational and tourism benefits across the North and East of Scotland.	<p>Continue to promote discussion between all interested parties to scope out issues relating to the successful establishment of a collaborative North East Green Network, including geographical extent, project delivery and funding.</p> <p>Disseminate the gap analysis on the first proposed project 'From Frogspawn to Flood Prevention' for comment and possible action.</p> <p>Contribute to a second gap analysis on a further project (e.g. the proposed Coast Path Links).</p> <p>Whilst acting as Interim Chair, the Partnership to set up and host the NEGN website.</p>	<p>Scottish Environment Protection Agency</p> <p>Scottish Natural Heritage</p> <p>Forestry Commission Scotland</p> <p>Tayside Biodiversity Partnership</p> <p>River South Esk Catchment Partnership</p> <p>North & East Scotland Biodiversity Partnership</p> <p>Angus Council</p> <p>Perth & Kinross Council</p> <p>Highland Council</p> <p>Cairngorms National Park Authority</p> <p>Aberdeenshire Council</p> <p>Aberdeen City Council</p> <p>Dundee City Council</p> <p>Fife Council</p> <p>VisitScotland</p>	Short

Surveying & Monitoring

Action	Action breakdown	Who needs to take the action	Timescale
3 Encourage community groups to manage local areas for biodiversity.	<p>Support communities in undertaking a wide range of surveys to report back nationally, e.g. Tayside Town Swifts, Annual Moth Nights, International Bat Weekend, Garden Butterfly Survey, RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch, Insect Week, Dolphin Watches, Nurdle Counts, National Mammal Week.</p> <p>Support community bioblitzes across Tayside.</p> <p>Encourage community groups and individuals to take part in the annual National Garden BioBlitz.</p> <p>Set up a series of camera trap projects to engage all ages in confirming the distribution of specific species and to engage as wide an audience as possible. Ensure training is made available to community groups and schools.</p>	<p>Tayside Biodiversity Partnership</p> <p>Tayside Recorders' Forum</p> <p>Cairngorms National Park Authority</p> <p>Angus Council</p> <p>Perth & Kinross Council</p> <p>Bat Conservation Trust</p> <p>Butterfly Conservation Scotland</p> <p>Royal Society for the Protection of Birds</p> <p>Buglife Scotland</p> <p>Scottish Association for Marine Science</p> <p>MarineLife Angus</p> <p>Mammal Society</p> <p>North East Scotland Biodiversity Partnership</p> <p>Local community groups</p>	Long
4 Review Local Nature Conservation Sites (LNCS) to contribute to better habitat connectivity, public access and outdoor education opportunities.	<p>Across all habitats, review existing Local Nature Conservation Sites and consider their inclusion in the Local Development Plans.</p> <p>Identify and recommend a suite of potential new Local Nature Conservation Sites.</p>	<p>Scottish Natural Heritage</p> <p>Angus Council</p> <p>Perth & Kinross Council</p>	Medium

Education & Awareness Raising

Action	Action breakdown	Who needs to take the action	Timescale
5 Prepare a Tayside Biodiversity Awareness Raising Strategy.	Outline a suite of costed awareness-raising actions to undertake within the Tayside Biodiversity Action Plan to strengthen the understanding of biodiversity issues.	Tayside Biodiversity Partnership	Short
6 Promote the Tayside Recorders' Forum.	<p>Maintain an up to date database of local County Recorders and specialist groups/organisations on the TBP website.</p> <p>Utilise the skills of local recorders and specialist groups/organisations to target specific projects.</p> <p>Support a programme of events to promote the Forum.</p>	<p>Tayside Biodiversity Partnership</p> <p>Tayside Recorders' Forum</p> <p>Angus Council</p> <p>Perth & Kinross Council</p> <p>Angus Alive</p> <p>Culture Perth & Kinross</p> <p>Leisure & Culture Dundee</p> <p>North East Scotland Biological Records Centre</p> <p>Scottish Wildlife Trust</p> <p>Butterfly Conservation Scotland</p> <p>Scottish Natural Heritage</p>	Medium

Education & Awareness Raising

Action	Action breakdown	Who needs to take the action	Timescale
7 Research the setting up of a Tayside Biodiversity Information Centre.	<p>Support the introduction of a Tayside Counts Citizen Science project.</p> <p>Collate existing survey data and undertake new biodiversity audit of Tayside (building on the original 1999 audit).</p> <p>Support the production of atlases in Tayside to meet gaps in existing species atlases.</p> <p>Create a series of GIS map layers for key species to assist planners, developers, landowners and businesses in adhering to wildlife legislation.</p>	<p>Angus Council</p> <p>Perth & Kinross Council</p> <p>National Biodiversity Network Scotland</p> <p>Biological Recording in Scotland</p> <p>Tayside Biodiversity Partnership</p> <p>River South Esk Catchment Partnership</p> <p>Tayside Recorders' Forum</p>	Medium
8 Promote Scottish Species Champions.	<p>Encourage MSP Species Champions to visit Tayside to showcase projects taking forward specific species conservation, e.g. Small blue butterfly, Freshwater pearl mussel, Bottle-nosed dolphin.</p> <p>Identify Local Species Champions to help raise awareness of Tayside species.</p>	<p>Tayside Biodiversity Partnership</p> <p>Scottish Environment Link</p> <p>Angus Council</p> <p>Perth & Kinross Council</p>	Medium
9 Disseminate advice to planners, developers and householders.	<p>Continue to make available the 'Tayside Incorporating Biodiversity into Development Planning Manual', the 'Biodiversity: A Developers Guide' and 'Householders' Guide to Biodiversity' leaflets - online and in paper format.</p> <p>To support implementation of the Angus Local Development Plan, prepare, consult and publish a Planning Advice Note for Protected Sites and Species and their influence on development. Consider a similar Advice Note for the Perth & Kinross Local Development Plan.</p> <p>Ensure Supplementary Planning Guidance for Biodiversity is available across Tayside.</p>	<p>Angus Council</p> <p>Perth & Kinross Council</p> <p>Tayside Biodiversity Partnership</p> <p>Royal Society for the Protection of Birds</p> <p>Scottish Wildlife Trust</p>	Long

Education & Awareness Raising

Action	Action breakdown	Who needs to take the action	Timescale
10 Assist local authorities and public bodies in Tayside to regularly report on their Biodiversity Duty.	Revise and re-publish the Tayside Biodiversity Partnership booklet "A Guide to Incorporating Biodiversity into Local Services".	Tayside Biodiversity Partnership Angus Council Perth & Kinross Council	Short
11 Provide a programme of professional training opportunities.	Continue the 'Building Better Biodiversity' series of professional lunch-time seminars and training events, practitioners' conferences and workshops to enhance knowledge on the Biodiversity Duty and specific habitats and species.	Tayside Biodiversity Partnership Scottish Natural Heritage Angus Council Perth & Kinross Council Non-governmental organisations	Short
12 Support the work of education professionals and the formal and informal education processes in raising awareness on biodiversity issues.	Publish the Tayside Teachers' Biodiversity Education Guide 'Signposts to Biodiversity and the Curriculum for Excellence'. Add an Education Information Hub to the Tayside Biodiversity website to host the Education Guide.	Tayside Biodiversity Partnership Angus Council Perth & Kinross Council Grounds for Learning	

Education & Awareness Raising

Action	Action breakdown	Who needs to take the action	Timescale
13 Work in collaboration with partners and neighbouring Biodiversity Partnerships to support Business and Biodiversity events and projects.	<p>Support an annual North & East Scotland 'Business Counts' week of events and workshops.</p> <p>Support the publication of a 'Business of Biodiversity Best Practice' advisory booklet.</p> <p>Distribute the 'Making Way for Nature' booklet to business parks and industrial estates across Tayside.</p> <p>Set up a suite of Business of Biodiversity/BeeWild best practice demonstration sites.</p>	<p>Tayside Biodiversity Partnership</p> <p>Angus Council</p> <p>Perth & Kinross Council</p> <p>North East Scotland Biodiversity Partnership</p> <p>Cairngorms National Park Authority</p> <p>Perthshire Business Enterprise Group</p> <p>Business Angus</p> <p>Chambers of Commerce</p>	Short
14 Work with specialist and cultural groups to raise awareness of biodiversity in all its forms.	<p>Support the setting up of a Tayside-wide 'Wildlife Words, Wildlife Art, Wildlife Sounds' Festival to highlight biodiversity through the medium of art, books and music.</p> <p>Support the setting up of a Scottish Coppice Festival to increase knowledge about rural skills (hedge-laying, coppice management, etc) and to bring together producers, suppliers and purchasers of sustainable woodland produce.</p> <p>Publicise the Tayside ZoomIn2 time-lapse photographic project and encourage all ages and all abilities to take part in the project.</p>	<p>Tayside Biodiversity Partnership</p> <p>Angus Council</p> <p>Perth & Kinross Council</p> <p>VisitScotland</p> <p>Perthshire Open Studios</p> <p>Angus Open Studios</p> <p>Reforestation Scotland</p> <p>Scottish Crannog Centre</p> <p>Atlantic Hazel Action Group</p> <p>Local businesses</p> <p>Community groups</p>	

Education & Awareness Raising

Action	Action breakdown	Who needs to take the action	Timescale
15 Publicise and attend events to promote the Tayside Biodiversity Partnership and Tayside's local biodiversity.	<p>Prepare local calendar featuring National Days to assist with local event planning, e.g. National Meadows Day, Garden BioBlitz, International Oceans Day.</p> <p>Take exhibition space at events such as Dundee Food & Flower Festival, the Kinross Discovery Day, etc.</p>	Tayside Biodiversity Partnership	Short
16 Provide biodiversity information to a wide audience.	<p>Encourage the publication of a variety of bulletins, e-bulletins and newsletters to increase knowledge about Swifts, Barn Owls, Farmland Birds and other species in Tayside.</p> <p>Continue to publish the Tayside "From Summit to Sand" Newsletter.</p> <p>Regularly update the Tayside Biodiversity website and contribute to Facebook and Twitter media pages to disseminate a wide range of information.</p>	<p>Tayside Biodiversity Partnership</p> <p>Tayside Recorders' Forum</p>	Long