

# Tayside Biodiversity Partnership



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## BIODIVERSITY EDUCATION SUB-GROUP

### Minutes of Meeting - 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2004

**Present:**

Lesley Wood (LW)	Angus Countryside Ranger Service
Daniele Muir (DM)	Perth & Kinross Ranger Service
Ann Lolley (AL)	Broughty Ferry Environment Project
Morag Clooney (MC)	Dundee City Council Education Department
Gill Lawrie (GL)	Royal Highland Education Trust Angus Countryside Initiative
Mark Simmons (MS)	Perth & Kinross Council Museum Service
Grant Adam (GA)	Member of Public
Catherine Lloyd (CL)	Biodiversity Co-ordinator

**Apologies:**

Rob Bushby	John Muir Award
Alasdair Hood	Dundee Botanic Gardens
Bill Kirkpatrick	Perth & Kinross Council Education Service
Audrey Edgar	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
Penny Martin	Grounds for Learning
Sue Warbrick	Scottish Natural Heritage

#### 1. Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes of the last meeting were taken as read, except that Penny Martin had pointed out that on page 5 (para. 5) it should have read 'Scottish School Grounds Week' (not 'gardens').

CL wrote an article for 'Primary Times' for the Christmas edition on the subject of 'holly and ivy'. CL will circulate future copy dates in due course so all can contribute in 2005.

**ACTION: CL**

2. **Dr Martin Price** - Director of Mountain Studies at the UHI Millennium Institute (Perth College) is the new Partnership Chairman. The six Habitat Sub-Groups and the Education Sub-Group report to the Partnership's Steering Group. This next meets at the end of January 2005.

#### 3. Tayside Biodiversity Website

This is currently being set up and will be launched in the New Year ([www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk](http://www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk)). There will be opportunities to regularly update the website, so any contributions and ideas for links with organisations welcome.

**ACTION: All**

#### 4. Tayside Biodiversity Awareness Raising Programme

MS said that the Steering Group had requested an awareness raising programme to be developed by the sub-group; this needs to be added to our remit/objectives. It was agreed to make this a priority for early next year. CL agreed to highlight it as an item on the agenda for the next meeting. CL will circulate the Partnership's Business Plan with the minutes.

**ACTION: CL**

## 5. Biodiversity Schools Calendar

Doug Flint, PKC and SNH may hopefully be able to assist with funding. We will then be looking for more money from partners. Clackmannanshire BAP is planning a 2<sup>nd</sup> calendar; more information will be available for next meeting. We have 8 months reserved by Partners so far.

## 6. MC – Brief Overview of Dundee Education Services: Eco Schools

Uptake by schools has been quite slow initially. 41 Primary Schools and 10 Secondary Schools have now registered (only 3 this time last year) – though none have yet applied for an award (bronze, silver, green flag). The scheme ties in with citizenship/pupil voice with Pupil Council. Social subjects also encompass eco schools as does the science programme, e.g. sustainability work with the One World Centre, SNH, Grounds for Learning, Eco Schools. Health issues also link in. It had been hoped to appoint an Eco Schools tutor, but that is on hold just now – it will be the main thrust for the next year or so. Angus Council may have two people working on Eco Schools. LW has been approached by Eleanor Love to take part in the 'March into Science' event. Fife Council now has an ES Co-ordinator and is setting up a web site.

## 7. Harris Moore Award and the Proposed Tayside Schools Environment Award

CL had a meeting with Kate Barlow, PKC (she has since left) to see how a similar scheme could be set up throughout Tayside. In the past the Harris Moore Award consisted of just one prize of £200 with a plaque and trophy. Certificates were awarded to all other applicants. However, last year £1,200 in prize money was made available – 3 prizes (joint first and an Award of Excellence) and 5 Highly Commendable Awards plus Certificates of Merit to all winning applicants. 21 schools entered, 6 withdrew, and 15 were judged. CL was involved in the judging – and in the process made some very good community contacts. PKC had now agreed that as from 2005 each applicant had to be Eco School registered.

Kate Barlow told CL that no teaching experience was needed to run the scheme and that the administration was covered in-house. There was no need for an additional member of staff, although administration time had to be planned for sending out applications, collating them and arranging a Judging Timetable; it was not onerous. The Awards Ceremony was also handled in-house with the refreshment costs sponsored by a local supermarket. The ceremony is held at the end of the summer term and is seen as a major event amongst the schools who apply. Excellent media coverage is achieved.

CL contacted AC and DCC Education departments to see if it would be feasible to run a similar scheme elsewhere in Tayside – there had been no reply from Angus Council, but Dundee City Council felt it would be suitable, but as an 'add-on'. MC commented that the perception of extra work would be difficult to overcome. The new 3-18 curriculum will be in place by 2007. MC thinks DCC might be able to take such an Award on board for 2006 (though not confirmed) but not for 2005 [it would need to be planned during 2005]. AL said that a community element would be important, perhaps getting the PTAs on board. It would be worthwhile trying to get projects started that way.

**ACTION: MC to follow up potential for DCC Award  
CL to follow up Angus Council**

## 8. AL - Broughty Ferry Environment Project: Linking Community Projects to the Local Biodiversity Process

AL gave a presentation on the work BFEP has been carrying out in the past year. Their community project "Still Changes" involved time lapse photos taken every 2 weeks (using disposable cameras). The end result, a video, has been widely seen all over the area. Following the Silvery Threads initiative, some of the work was used as a centrepiece in the Perth Museum's Biodiversity Exhibition. The highly successful Sand Martin 'Safe Homes' Project spawned the Hourglass Project with funding from the Scottish Executive's Biodiversity Action Grant Scheme – this will include coastal protection works. Next year an education pack on sand dunes is planned. 'Zoom' – another very successful initiative which resulted in a map annotated with labels showing the community viewpoint. A new DVD is available of Reres Hill – a collection of views for SNH. BFEP also has a wildflower project on the dunes planned, plus a wildlife orchard at Orchar Park. It will be continuing with the 'Zoom' project and pavement surveys.

9. 9<sup>th</sup> June is now officially 'Backyard Biodiversity Day'. CL said it would be excellent if events could be arranged around that date. DM confirmed that the Perth and Kinross Ranger Service were planning another School BBD at Battleby and an additional family 'drop in day' that weekend.

**ACTION: All**  
**Details of events to CL ASAP**

10. **Wild and Wonderful Exhibition**

No up to date on figures from last time; at least 21k people have seen the exhibition. There has been very good feedback. The exhibition now finishes on 15 January. Anyone is welcome to re-use the panels - contact MS at the Museum. Props such as bird and bat boxes are also available on a first come, first service basis.

**ACTION: All**  
**Contact MS direct**

11. **Woodland Trust Trees for All**

All children in Scotland are invited to plant a tree through this initiative. Perth & Kinross Eco Schools have already arranged for trees to be supplied. CL raised the point that the LBAP Officers queried the provenance of the trees. Those supplied to Scotland by the Woodland Trust will come from the Midlands. Other more local sources are available and it would be appreciated if local Scottish provenance was requested in future.

12. **Funding**

GL said that many organisations which applied for funding from Scottish Biodiversity BAG monies were disappointed. Funding of in excess of £1.3m was requested (which was estimated as being only a third of those interested who bothered applying), but only £200-275K was available. CL said that the BFEP had been very fortunate in being given funding from the Scottish Executive and was only one of around 30 organisations which had benefited. A further funding round would be available in 2005.

CL outlined the proposed Visitor Payback Scheme that may be set up with the Perthshire Tourist Board. This would encourage local biodiversity projects, including trails linking biodiversity and access.

A general discussion regarding awareness levels of biodiversity followed, how low it is and how to raise it through marketing –e.g. book marks etc. CL believes the Tayside biodiversity website will be the beginning of this and if SITA funding is forthcoming more will be done. She felt it all boils down to a lack of resources as well as a national lack of awareness. The discussion included how the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy will be publicised and how the local Partnerships will link into this. We all need to be repeating the same message.

CL is keen to see funding available for general marketing items: wall planner, bookmarks, carrying bags, postcards, pens and pencils. She is frequently asked to supply such items for events. It was agreed that CL would ask the Argyll and Bute Biodiversity Officer for costings of publicity items so that the matter can be discussed at the next Steering Group meeting.

**ACTION: CL**

It was agreed that sub-group members would bring ideas on how we can best promote biodiversity to the next meeting. Some projects are already being set up as pilots in one area so that ultimately some Tayside-wide projects will be up and running. This has happened with the Barn Owl, Swifts and Sand Martin projects, as well as the Green Graveyard Initiative. It is hoped that the Angus Nursing Home Biodiversity project will be taken up elsewhere. CL felt that a Tayside-wide Wildlife Pond Project would be beneficial as this had the potential of involving a large number of different sectors, i.e. schools, garden owners, businesses, local authorities, etc.

GL said that RHET supplies information to out-of-hours school groups. She thought a pack with lots of ideas would be good to send out to groups such as the Scouts etc. A Biodiversity Education Pack was discussed. SITA's landfill tax monies may hopefully be available for projects in future that partners can link into. The Partnership should know details of available funds in January.

13. 'Red Bush Telegraph' and Barn Owl Newsletter

CL reported that there may be funding available from the Forestry Commission for a similar newsletter to that of the Scottish Borders Red Squirrel Newsletter (the 'Red Bush Telegraph'). It is also planned to produce a newsletter for the Tayside Barn Owl Project (SNH has already confirmed funding). CL said that she was producing a simple Newsletter which would initially be put on the new website. She felt it would be good if funding was also available so that it could be distributed via libraries, local authority offices, Partner organisations, etc.

14. Grounds for Learning Update

Penny Martin had sent on her report as she could not be present at the meeting. The Scottish Schools Grounds Week would be held in June 2005. The activity pack is available to download from the website – [www.gflscotland.org.uk](http://www.gflscotland.org.uk).

GfL ran a workshop at Battleby in October: "Biodiversity at the Chalkface" – teacher training. There was very positive feedback. Penny has also given a presentation at the Early Years In Service Day (Dundee) and run workshops on practical activities in school grounds.

The GfL National Conference takes place at Battleby on 18 March 2005 and will be on the theme of healthy school grounds.

15. AOCB

Angus ACI – GL confirmed that there were new Community Education workers in Angus.

LW gave an update on the red squirrel work at Crombie Country Park and how active various Local Authorities are with the biodiversity process. CL said that she had seen a change within the local authorities in that she is now being involved a lot more at the start of projects that have potential biodiversity benefit.

Scottish Biodiversity Week will be 21<sup>st</sup> May to 29<sup>th</sup> May 2005. Please pass details of any events to CL so that she can publicise them nationally as well as locally.

**ACTION: All**

16. Date of Next Meeting

10am, Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2005, Battleby (t.b.c.)

Spring – Eco School visit proposed

CL thanked the Dundee Botanic Gardens for hosting the meeting and for providing refreshments. She also thanked DM for taking the minutes and Grant Adam for attending the meeting.



*Education Sub-Group Remit*

*Aim*

*To support the implementation of practical biodiversity actions to the wider local community through education – by means of both formal education and informal lifelong learning*