

Tayside Biodiversity Partnership



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BIODIVERSITY EDUCATION SUB-GROUP

Minutes of Meeting – 24th February 2005

Present:

Lesley Wood (LW)	Angus Countryside Ranger Service
Daniele Muir (DM)	Perth & Kinross Ranger Service
Gill Lawrie (GL)	Royal Highland Education Trust Angus Countryside Initiative
Mark Simmons (MS)	Perth & Kinross Council Museum Service
Rachel Bower (RB)	Dundee Ranger Service
Mike Flinn (MF)	Forestry Commission
Pandora Gill (PG)	Perth College (work placement)
Catherine Lloyd (CL)	Biodiversity Co-ordinator

Apologies:

Rob Bushby	John Muir Award
Ian Mason	Perth & Kinross Council Education Service
Penny Martin	Grounds for Learning
Ian Montgomery	Perth & Kinross Council
Morag Clooney	Dundee City Council Education Department
Grant Adam	Member of Public
Ann Lolley	Broughty Ferry Environment Project

1. Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes of the last meeting were taken as read.

CL agreed to follow up DCC Education Dept. to ask their progress in setting up a similar scheme to the Harris Moore Environmental Education Award. There had been no reply from Angus Council as to whether they would be considering a similar project.

ACTION: CL

MS said c21,000 visitors may have seen the Wild and Wonderful Exhibition last year. CL mentioned she was in discussion with Perthshire Tourist Board about possibly running a Wildlife Festival next year. She had proposed calling it "Wild and Wonderful" too, but MS warned this might not be possible. Angus and Perth & Kinross Council Rangers had supported the idea for such a Festival; CL was waiting to hear back from the DCC rangers and Dundee & Angus Tourist Board before going to the Steering Group. She confirmed she would liaise with MS as regards a suitable name for the Festival before further plans were made.

ACTION: CL/ MS

The Partnership's website should be finished soon. News can be added on a quarterly basis, so please send copy to CL regularly.

ACTION: All

Funding – the next deadline for the Biodiversity Action Grant Scheme would probably be the end of March, but there are still no details. Everyone is encouraged to apply for funding; the Broughty Ferry Environmental Project was one of just 30 successful applications in the last round. Neither is there news regarding the possible £100k for local biodiversity projects from SITA. CL will circulate details of both funds when available.

ACTION: CL

2. Education Sub-Group Remit

The objectives of the draft Review prepared two years ago were reviewed. It was agreed that two items should be added: Scotland Biodiversity Week, and preparation of a draft Awareness Raising Strategy. The item regarding the website will need to be retained as management/maintenance will be required.

CL agreed that the sub-group's membership list needed updating: John Muir Award, Grounds for Learning, the RSPB, Perth Museum, and Forestry Commission Scotland to be added.

ACTION: CL

3. Scottish Biodiversity Week - 21st May to 29th May

Please pass details of any events to CL so that she can publicise them nationally as well as locally. The Scottish Biodiversity Forum website will be advertising both BBD and SBW, so CL asked for details of events to be sent either to her or direct to Jo Lenthall.

ACTION: All

Backyard Biodiversity Day - 9th June.

CL asked for details of any events taking place to celebrate this Day.

ACTION: All

Details of events to CL ASAP

4. Round the table projects

Sheltered Housing Biodiversity Projects (Angus)

LW said that 6 sheltered housing complex projects are underway – each receives binoculars, ID charts, bird tables and bird food, all funded by SNH. It is a two-way process: the Rangers pass on their wildlife knowledge to the pensioners and often in return they discover local history information. There is potential for other groups, e.g. scouts, to visit the complexes after the rangers to help make bird boxes, etc. CL to approach PKC and DCC to see if they can take up the project.

Action: CL

Eco Teams (Angus Council)

LW said she would approach Rosie Manson in Angus Council's Planning Department to find out more about the Eco Teams and to see if projects could be linked to them.

ACTION: LW

Dundee Ranger Service

RB reported that the Red Squirrel Project is ongoing with grey squirrel trapping taking place on a regular basis. Nationally there is a new Red Squirrel Co-ordinator – Mel Tonkin.

There will be a wildlife sculpture trail through Templeton Woods, with groups working alongside artists, undertaking habitat improvement - wildflower planting, etc.

Various biodiversity events are being planned: 'Red Squirrels at Victoria Park', 'Castle Green Festival' (19th June), Biodiversity in Ardler (20th June), Trottick biodiversity event, a Canadian Canoe event, and the Seashore Festival. LW confirmed that the Angus Rangers have planned some events around Backyard Biodiversity Day.

RS also confirmed that the DCC Ranger Service is involved in 'Natural Connections', a scheme similar to the John Muir Award.

FEI Cluster (Forest Education Initiative)

MF introduced the FEI which has been set up to ensure 5-14 Curriculum schoolchildren are made aware of the process from seed to tree to sawmill. There is a lot of industry involvement and backing. MF wants to make links with anyone interested; he has just set up a steering group. A meeting will be arranged soon; MF would be happy to include anyone who wants to learn more: Mike.flinn@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

WIAT (Woodland In and Around Towns) - FC has money to buy woodland to link up forests especially in social inclusion areas, i.e. Glasgow, Lanarkshire, Aberdeen, and Dundee. The initiative covers the Tay Forest District area: Rannoch, Crieff, Brechin, Tentsmuir.

The 'Woodbus' mooted a few years ago is definitely going ahead and will soon be equipped. It will include FEI information.

Angus Countryside Initiative

GL said that the 'Count and Grow Project' had gone from strength to strength. The Clydesdale Bank had sponsored 13 schools throughout Scotland, but 43 Angus Schools were keen to get involved. RHET funding has enabled the project to become wider. It is a simple project – barrels and potatoes are supplied and the schools grow the plants, measure the weight and height and learn more about the plants themselves. There will be tie ins with the Science Festival – information on milk, potatoes, etc.

Such is the interest in growing food, that a similar project "The Berry Project" will start later in the year – strawberries in barrels – planting in January/February for Primary 3, 4 and 5.

Perth Museum

The Wild and Wonderful Exhibition panels are now stored at Perth Museum. If anyone wants to borrow any of them, please contact MS direct.

ACTION: All

MS said that a new recording leaflet would be available from the end of March – the subject this year will be Waterside Mammals i.e. otter, water vole, shrew, brown rat. It would only cover the Perth and Kinross Council area. A Mammal Atlas is also planned this year. CL said there would be good link with the Perth Lade survey that Perth and Kinross Council is financing.

ACTION: All

Contact MS for a supply of survey forms

ACTION: MS/CL

Liaise re potential community involvement on the Lade

Planning Manual

CL said that funding from the Scottish Executive and three local authorities has enabled the Manual to go ahead, together with two 'general information' leaflets – one for householders considering a planning application, a second one for developers. Ultimately the information will be made available on the website.

Salmon in the Classroom

The pilot project got underway in Angus last year; there has not been a report on progress yet. DM confirmed that Perth and Kinross Council will be taking the project into Auchtergaren and Aberfeldy schools. CL asked for reports so that she can update the Water and Wetland sub-group.

ACTION: LW re. Angus project

ACTION: DM re Perth & Kinross plans

Grounds for Learning

Penny Martin had sent on her report as she could not be present at the meeting. The Scottish Schools Grounds Week will be in June 2005. The activity pack can be downloaded from the website – www.gflscotland.org.uk.

With a Biodiversity Action Grant the GfL 'Biodiversity Resource Project' will be complete by September. This will include:

- A review and outline of gardening, wildlife and biodiversity resources that work well for School Ground settings
- Information about suppliers of trees and plants with biodiversity value
- Web-based case studies from on-going GfL projects and evaluation of biodiversity gains
- network of accredited practioners supporting biodiversity projects through GfL projects

The GfL team will be tapping into the LBAP network for local knowledge to provide a centralised point for resource information that is useful across the country.

GfL has an Accredited Training programme and there are plans for a one-day Foundation Course open to anyone; this is likely to be held in November. The GfL National Conference at Battleby is on 18 March 2005: its theme will be 'healthy school grounds'.

5. **Tayside Biodiversity Awareness Raising Programme**

CL reminded the sub-group that the Steering Group had requested an awareness-raising programme to be developed by the Education Sub-Group. She had circulated the Partnership's Business Plan with the minutes of the last meeting and passed round an update on what had been achieved recently by each of the sub-groups.

CL had also prepared a paper on possible headings the sub-group could follow as regards the proposed Strategy. However, it was agreed further clarification was required as the sub-group did not feel qualified to prepare an overall Awareness-Raising Programme for the Partnership. Both MS and CL believed this was what was requested, but members said they would prefer to focus on a Biodiversity Education Awareness-Raising Strategy. CL will check with the Partnership's Chairman and Steering Group.

In the meantime, CL asked for comments and suggestions on the circulated papers by the beginning of April.

ACTION: ALL (by 4 April)

6. **AOCB**

None

7. **Date of Next Meeting**

CL will ask Longforgan Primary School if the sub-group could visit it on Thursday, 2 June to learn more of its Eco-School successes. A meeting could follow at Camperdown if there is nowhere convenient to meet near the school.

CL thanked DM for taking the minutes.



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