

Tayside Biodiversity Partnership



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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



BIODIVERSITY EDUCATION SUB-GROUP

Tuesday, 26th May, 2009

Stanley Mills Education Room, Stanley, Perthshire
(meeting hosted by Historic Scotland)

Present:	Catherine Lloyd (CL) (Chair) Martyn Jamieson (MJ) Daniele Muir (DM) Sandra Penman (SP) Mark Simmons (MS) Iain Campbell (IC) (Minute Taker)	Tayside Biodiversity Partnership Kindrogan Field Studies Centre Perth & Kinross Ranger Service Scottish Natural Heritage Perth & Kinross Museum Service Tayside Biodiversity Partnership
Apologies:	Morag Cooney Julie Campbell Norman Greig Gill Lawrie Ann Lolley Lesley Wood	Dundee City Council Education Department Dundee City Council McManus Collections Angus Ranger Service RHET Angus Countryside Initiative Broughty Ferry Environment Project Angus Ranger Service

- Welcome, Introductions and Apologies**
CL welcomed everyone to the meeting and round-the-table introductions were given. Apologies as above.
- Minutes of the Last Meeting (10th March 2009) and Matters Arising**
The minutes of the last meeting on 10th March were taken as read. No matters arising.
- Tayside Biodiversity Festival 2009 - Feedback**
CL confirmed that Iain Ballantyne's feedback report would be given to the Steering Group meeting, but was not available in time for the Education sub-group meeting. However, she reported that initial feedback was very good - two events: the Pollination Workshop and the NHS Biodiversity Seminar were cancelled, heavy rain resulted in a poor turnout at Kindrogan, and around three other events didn't work very well, but otherwise there were a great number of successes. Trevor Rose's reptile walk at Glen Esk received a particularly good response with much enthusiasm and excitement from participants, and the sighting of slow worms mating, which is not often seen.

SP reported that events she was involved in, Show Nature in particular, went well, although rain caused some problems. In hindsight, some things should have been done differently - there was no Veggitastic banner, the marquees were still being set up as people arrived - but these can be learned from. MS added that no one involved had any identification, which is perhaps a lost

opportunity. SP also noted that there was no publicity after the event, with no coverage in the local newspapers - MS noted that the local photographers were at a football match. CL suggested looking into whether PKC has its own photographer, as Angus Council does. MS suspected that it was a PA choice to not visit the event, but as participants took their own photos there is material to use for promotion of future festivals.

ACTION: MS/SP to e-mail CL promotional photos for future use

MJ asked how people found out about the events - CL noted that the main sources were articles in the Perthshire Advertiser, Courier and the Evening Telegraph, together with publicity via BBC Radio Scotland, Radio Tay and Scottish Television - so a larger print run next year is vital. CL added that funding printing of posters next year could solve some of the problems of being unable to freely distribute programmes. CL also noted that Angus Council publicised the festival extremely well (including sending an in-house photographer to key events), but that a PKC PA contact is required. CL highlighted the fact that Felicity Martin's April "page" in the Perthshire Advertiser was excellent as she focussed solely on the Festival. However, MS pointed out that beyond this she wasn't contacted for newspaper coverage because she is freelance and there is no guarantee her articles would be used. Instead, the PA covered the Festival within its Arts column. SP added that an e-mail notice was distributed; CL said that Dundee and Angus Councils, Dundee University and NHS Ninewells put the programme link directly on to their intranet; VisitScotland also received Festival details for their website. MS and DM added that further e-mail/intranet publicity would be easy to do.

SP asked if payment had been made to David Boag by ArtSpace yet - CL to look into.

ACTION: CL

CL also confirmed that there is great interest in having another festival next year, with DCC suggesting applying for major funding - this year's festival had minimal SITA promotional funding (with key funding from SNH for the Veggistic event and David Boag's photographic workshops). Regarding the 2009 programme, MS noted that he only received programmes a week before the festival, and that with 900 people attending Show Nature alone, he could have distributed many more. CL responded that there had been serious issues regarding the printer, and that funding only permitted 4,000 copies in total - 15,000 would have been a more appropriate figure. For next year, a minimum of 10,000, with around 20,000 being preferable, should be aimed for, which would allow, for example, a batch to all libraries rather than only key libraries. SP added that the pale green colour scheme of the programme may have been difficult to read for those with colour blindness and other eyesight problems.

4. Tayside Biodiversity Festival 2010

CL said that 10 to 15 events had to be dropped this year at the last minute, so were not included in the Programme, but there were still 60 events listed this year. It would therefore be easy to aim for at least 100 events next year. Further planning ahead next year could allow for a biodiversity book festival, which wasn't possible this year - the Watermill agreed to schedule the event well in advance and to look into inviting a famous speaker. CL had contacted Waterstones and Borders but only the latter was interested in being involved in the future; she would also contact smaller booksellers with proposals for events.

CL noted that, generally, there was insufficient publicity due to a lack of time and resources; Iain Ballantyne and Kalina Kasprzyk had been extremely helpful in making initial contact with prospective organisers and in compiling the draft programme, but did not have time to follow it through. MS added that the key for next year is acquiring funding to allow someone to focus on it. CL further reported that Events Scotland had asked if we'd like to apply for 25% funding - it is, therefore, important to plan ahead and get a lot done in advance.

MJ asked whether the festival should be allowed to grow, or if keeping it at a reasonably fixed size would be a better move. CL noted that there were different aspects that could be worked independently - this year the DCA's biodiversity film festival was very much "stand alone"; a book festival could easily see a further 10-20 independently organised and publicised events. It could also be tied in better with Scottish Biodiversity Week, although there is the problem of never knowing much in advance if or when this is going to take place (it is generally scheduled to coincide with National Biodiversity Day).

It was agreed to widen TBF to cover at least three weeks and coincide it with National Biodiversity Day. MS asked if this would be easier or harder to plan - CL suggested it would be much easier, as

it would be coinciding with events already organised and publicised by other parties. MS noted the problem of event dates often being decided at a late juncture, with DM adding that the rangers will often have vague details but specifics only being finalised shortly before events. CL suggested that if people knew the TBF dates in advance, they can organise their events to coincide. SP also noted there was little collaboration between sub-groups this year - something which could be improved upon.

MJ suggested that it could be relatively easy to turn a three week festival into Biodiversity Month - CL noted that she had done this in Fife ten years ago (the first such event in Scotland), and that it had been easier to organise owing to the longer span of time. MS also noted that it would be easier for individual parties to slot their events in, with less pressure in organising multiple events. CL added that it had been difficult to contribute to Scottish Biodiversity Week this year, and that a wider TBF coinciding with it would help. DM noted that a larger time frame involved would make ranger involvement easier. CL suggested that major decisions regarding next year's festival should be made by the autumn at the latest to enable organisers to be contacted pre-Christmas.

The possible scheduling of TBF 2010 was discussed: May 1st to May 31st covers five weekends and covers National Biodiversity Day on the 22nd. MS suggested covering as wide a variety of holidays as possible, such as the weekends of the English bank holidays on the 1st and 24th of May. DM asked if having a full month would result in people who would come on holiday for the festival missing out. MS suggested that if specific events are publicised in advance people could still schedule this. DM asked if there was any way of borrowing the SWT week format - CL noted that while SWT have generally tried to keep their events separate, this year they participated in TBF through the Dawn Chorus and a walk beside the reed beds and, as MS added, the Show Nature event. CL noted potential in working with them, and suggested it be followed up. MJ added that if May is to be Biodiversity Month, it doesn't matter if there are only a small number of events early and late in the month - if preparation is done early and it is ensured there is something every week it would be acceptable as a Month.

CL enquired as to plans for the street theatre. SP reported that Perth Youth Theatre requires £3,000 for a tree play which could be linked in to orchards. If a quick start is made on organising this, they can look into getting grant funding. SNH grants could be found, but only covering a small amount. CL noted that it would be good to do this, as having no event this year left a huge gap: they were sorely missed! SP suggested linking to the Perth 800 celebration, and noted that Keep Scotland Beautiful could help with funding. CL said that PKC has been looking to roll out greenspace art projects and there would be funding for this. It would be good to link in with their plans. SP noted that possible dates for plays have already been decided for 2010: they just need funding. As Perth Theatre will be closed for refurbishment there will be many opportunities for street theatre - something we should tie into as soon as possible.

ACTION: SP to liaise with Perth Youth Theatre

CL reported that while there were a lot of initial problems in organising David Boag's visit (he eventually provided excellent presentations/workshops to both Dundee Sensation and Monikie Country Park), many opportunities were lost. He has expressed an interest in returning next year, but as May is generally a busy month for him asked that we plan ahead. CL has suggested a public or professional weekend photography course at Kindrogan with an additional one day course for children or a group such as the John Muir Awards or tying it into scout and other youth groups. CL noted that he charges £250 per day plus accommodation and travel expenses, so it would be good to offer him a full week of different events for the festival. CL also added that while Aggregate Industries withdrew funding due to cash flow problems in 2009, they may be able to help with future events.

A general agreement was reached on TBF 2010 being a Biodiversity Month, linking into national projects. CL to take to Steering Group.

5. Brief Priority Project Updates

Sheltered Housing

DM reported meeting Dave McIntyre of Vars Scotica regarding Muirton House. After a £100 grant from SNH there are plans to finish the sensory garden soon. The producers of the BBC Beechgrove Garden are expressing interest in covering the project when work is complete. CL noted that the project had been mentioned in the Summit to Sand newsletter. DM further reported that Scone Nursing Home is looking to get something structured at their upcoming meeting.

Mammal Atlas and Tayside Recorders' Forum

MS reported that a volunteer has put together a Squirrel database, but that all current proposals are from old action plans - what's happening from 2010 has to be looked in to. CL noted that there will be an Autumn task of reporting back on all projects for the 2007-2010 proforma, reviewing those going nowhere and potentially deciding on a new list to work with.

MS reported on the Tayside Recorders' Forum - this year organised by David Lampard, it was well received and well attended, with all looking forward to next year's event. CL reported on NESBRC, noting that there is still a gap in recording in "lowland" Tayside. A Dundee University student placement will be undertaking work for the Partnership in pulling together the list of recorders, areas, etc., and preparing a page for the TBP website. This will be useful for contacts and for allowing people easy access to current progress and opportunities to help. A more cohesive approach is seen as important. NESBRC training courses aren't coming into this area yet, but through working with them we can fill gaps or encourage others to do so. MJ added that FSC Kindrogan is putting together a course on Modern Methods for Recorders for next year - CL suggested linking this through to the next recorders' meeting. Although it should be Angus Museums' turn to host the next meeting, MS doubts they would be willing to take on the next meeting. Perth Museum would be happy to take it forward.

ZOOM and ZOOM In2

CL reported that the ZOOM Bumble Bee survey is being continued, with a reprint of the survey form having been requested. It would have been good to continue with the ZOOM packs too, but there is no funding.

SNH funding has enabled the new ZOOM In2 project to be started. ZOOM In2 was launched by David Boag in Dundee (3rd May) and Angus (4th May); CL launched the project in Perth and Kinross at events on 2nd May (Show Nature) and 24th May (Discovery Day); it is going well with around half of the 600 cameras already allocated. Bulletins will be prepared and circulated (mostly by e-mail) to keep people up to date and enthusiastic. Connections will be drawn to the original ZOOM. It is seen as a good project, which has the potential for good closure. SP suggested linking it in with Kirsty Duncan at PKC, who works with photography and art.

ACTION : SP to look into links with Kirsty Duncan

Building Better Biodiversity Programme of Training Events

CL reported that there has been a lot of training events in the past few months, with the PKC lunch time seminars going well as did the Angus events (which included a full day's greenspace and biodiversity conference as well as a series of lunch time seminars). Two events were held in Dundee: the DIY Green Roof Workshop and the Swift Workshop. Three orchard training courses were also held. In total (2009-10) there were 360 attendees to TBP training events. There will be more training events later this year.

Orchard Festival 2009

CL reported that the Carse of Gowrie orchard projects will be taken over by a new project officer due to start in July. The project officer will not, however, have time to organise the 2009 Orchard Festival although they should be able to take over the work in 2010. Glendoick Garden Centre, Cairn O'Mhor winery and Historic Scotland have already confirmed their interest in organising events this year around national Apple Day (21st October). There are now two fruit presses based at the Perth Forestry Commission office for use by communities. This year's Errol Apple Fair is likely to be fairly low key; there are plans for next year's Fair to be bigger.

ACTION: ALL to note date of this year's Orchard Festival: 17th to 25th October

6. **Round-the-table updates**

SP reported that Sarah Smyth is the new leader of the Scottish Biodiversity Forum Biodiversity Implementation Team.

CL reported that the SNH seeds were very well received at the Festival events, but that the wildlife gardening leaflets being unavailable for both TBF and SBW proved very problematic. SP noted that the SNH Publications Department has been experiencing problems because of the new branding - the Publications Director removed everything as all publications had to be redone.

SP discussed a rail station theme covering issues on the Tay, as is being done in Glasgow - CL noted that this is being covered by the Coast and Estuaries' Nature on Track project which will include Ann Lolley's idea of platform art, the potential for tying in with Perth Youth Theatre.

MJ reported that Kindrogan courses are being planned for next year, and they are looking for tutors for biodiversity training courses. People have been asking for courses on spiders and beetles. He also noted that swift boxes have been installed on the building at Kindrogan.

MS reported on the *Return of the Native* exhibition at Perth Museum, but noted that his time has been spent in areas outwith natural history.

DM reported that all survey squares available for Perth-fectly Batty have been taken up. CL noted that 25 people signed up, and, as a bonus, people are additionally surveying areas other than those assigned to them. The new project stems from the Dundee Bat Project which has already inspired five other groups in England and Wales in starting similar projects.

7. Any Other Business

Where Next for the Education Sub-Group

CL opened discussion of "where to next?" for the Education Sub-Group, with all members asked to consider the points raised on the circulated paper. A focus on the Orchard 800 project with Andrew Lear was discussed, regarding talking to PKC Parks and linking in with local schools. Mike Strachan (Forestry Commission Scotland) is dealing with this. CL also noted that a bigger role awarded to the Recorders' Forum would be appreciated. In terms of species focus, swifts, bats, bumblebee, red squirrels and wildlife crime are current areas of greatest focus; the question was raised of what else should be covered.

Regarding the Perth Lade project, a community project has involved many people. Some areas are not yet active, but the project is underway. The Wildlife Tree project has little funding so far, but Rachael Higgins has voluntarily started undertaking the artwork for it.

SNH best practice is to be further publicised.

Regarding Countdown 2010, targets will not be reached. Focus has been redirected to next year, looking towards the new targets. Historically, Wales, England and Northern Ireland have been involved in these targets more than Scotland.

Rangers are taking forward the eco-schools projects when they can, with the TBP's Bee Wild and Tayside Ponds Project linking to these, as well as to the wider community. SP suggested putting forward links to the Duke of Edinburgh Award and John Muir Award.

Regarding current membership, MS proposed that the current group should remain, and aim to move forward with the current focuses. SP suggested trying to get more people attending meetings. MJ noted that the Forest Schools are proving successful; he will keep the sub-group updated. CL added that Angus Council's Education Department have never sent anyone to the sub-group meeting, although Dundee City Council's Education Department are involved and had invited the TBP in their recent Education event. MJ suggested improving the direct link to education - schools are likely to be looking for help without an easy contact to go to. DM suggested forming an eco-schools group. CL recommended getting in touch with Jan Caldwell, Theresa Lynn and others on these matters, while SP recommended Kirsty Duncan, Kirsty Bailey, and Shirley McGregor.

ACTION: CL to update sub-group members' listing

Regarding publications, the latest "Summit to Sand" newsletter and the Tayside Orchard Management booklet have recently been printed, with no more planned for the moment. The Planning Manual's Biodiversity Advice Notes (the first suite of 23) are in the process of being distributed.

8. Next Meeting

CL thanked Kaye Finlay of Historic Scotland for providing the School Room at Stanley Mills for the meeting. The next meeting will take place at the Living Field Centre, SCRI, 10.30am, Thursday 1st September. A sandwich lunch will be included.