



# SCOTTISH LOWLANDS BARN OWL FORUM

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*The Forum currently covers the LBAP areas of  
Tayside (Perth & Kinross, Dundee, Angus), Stirling, Clacks, and Fife*

## **Notes of Meeting held on Friday, 16<sup>th</sup> June 2006** **Vane Farm Nature Reserve, By Kinross**

### **Present:**

Catherine Lloyd (CL)	Tayside Biodiversity Partnership (TBP)
Carol Littlewood (CL-w)	Angus Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG)
Julie Horsburgh (JH)	Fife Biodiversity Partnership
Mark Oksien (MO)	Fife Barn Owl Monitor
Louise Bond (LB)	Clackmannanshire Biodiversity Partnership (CBP)
Keith Cohen (KC)	Barn Owl Conservation Network (Fife Local Adviser)

### **Apologies**

Shirley Paterson	Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (Fife & Kinross)
Elsbeth Christie	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (Vane Farm)
Richard Lockett	Perth FWAG
Christine Hall	Scottish Agricultural College (Perth)
Chris Waddell	Stirling Biodiversity Partnership

Notes also circulated to: Norman Elkins, British Trust for Ornithology (Fife Representative); Richard Paul, BTO (Perthshire); Les Hatton, Tay Ringing Group; Mike Steward, Licensed Worker; Scottish Ornithological Society (Edinburgh); Alan Leitch, RSPB; Mark Simmons, Perth Museum; Angus Ranger Service; Dundee Ranger Service; Perth & Kinross Ranger Service; Fife Ranger Service; SNH (Battleby and Airlie); Forestry Commission (Perth); National Trust for Scotland (Dunkeld office); Helen Dunlop, Business Environment Partnership (Dalkeith), Fiona McIntyre, Scottish Golf Environment Group (Dalkeith).

### **1. Welcome**

Carol Littlewood and Keith Cohen were welcomed to the meeting.

Everyone unanimously thanked Julie Horsburgh (JH) for taking on the task of completing the BAGS application and for successfully steering the Forum through to it receiving a grant of £25,000 over two years.

### **2. Notes of the Last Meeting and Matters Arising - Action Point Reports**

JH (Fife)

- As per no. 1 above.

MO (Fife)

- Still to contact the Raptor Groups in the Scottish Lowlands area to ask if they would like survey records.
- Now that funding has been confirmed, MO will advise JH and SP on gaps in current Fife and Kinross nestbox programme which need to be filled. He is willing to act as adviser to anyone else in the Forum (where there are no other experts available).

EC (Kinross-shire)

- Still to liaise with all Forum members in the proposed RSPB project area.

SP (Fife and Kinross)

- In SP's absence, Carol Littlewood (CL-w) brought a FWAG Landwise report to show Forum members – the proposed template for a Barn Owl Management Advice Note will be along these lines. Both FWAG and SAC will use this template throughout the Forum area.

CL-w (Angus) said she would check with Alan Leitch, RSPB, how far his licence extends.

LB (Clacks)

- Liaise with Mike Steward regarding licence.
- LB passed over the draft Scottish Lowlands project poster to MO to check details.

CL (Tayside)

- publications/ national advice listing completed and circulated with notes of the first meeting.
- Within Tayside the SITA/Tayside Biodiversity Action Fund must be site-specific and UKBAP or LBAP species/habitats must receive direct management.
- CL still to contact SITA Environmental Trust to ask about potential Scottish Lowlands-wide project funding.
- Still to contact BTO Nest Records Officer regarding the BTO Monitoring Programme.

### 3. **Monitoring**

Keith Cohen (KC) confirmed his interest in helping the Forum and offered to create links via the Barn Owl Conservation Network.

CL confirmed that SNH is unable to provide a list of licensed ringers in the area as the information is confidential. However, members of the Tay Ringing Group have been approached and if Forum members work via them and MO, we can ensure that licensed ringers are aware of our proposed projects. These notes will be sent to Les Hatton (Tay Ringing Group) and Alan Leitch (RSPB).

Mark Oksien (MO) outlined details of the RPMR recording programme and said it might be possible for the Forum to adapt it and use it for records in the future. It was agreed to compile a list of BTO local representatives, Raptor Groups, Bird Clubs, SoC members, etc.

CL-w said it would be necessary for all those who receive a nestbox from the Forum project to "monitor" them and report back. Clear information would need to be made from the start concerning the extent of such monitoring and the need for licensed ringers to be involved.

### 4. **Scottish Lowlands Barn Owl Project (Biodiversity Action Grant)**

JH confirmed that Elspeth Christie is hoping to approach a trust which has previously helped them. The 50% funding for the RSPB project is therefore looking hopeful.

As regards the BAGS project, JH reminded the other 3 LBAP areas that we included in the bid £500 from each LBAP on the hope that they could find it. JH can invoice each Partnership when required, but this should be sooner rather than later.

The two-year BAGS project would be split into the following project areas:

<b>LBAP Area</b>	<b>Project Manager</b>	<b>RSPB School Visits</b>	<b>Farm Conservation Advice</b>	<b>No. of Farm Visits</b>	<b>No. of Boxes Year 1</b>	<b>No. of Boxes Year 2</b>	<b>Licence Holder</b>
<b>Clacks</b>	Louise Bond	Elspeth Christie (EC)	Scott Nisbet, FWAG	6	3	8	Mike Steward
<b>Stirling</b>	Chris Waddell	EC	Scot Nisbet, FWAG	10	3	13	Mike Steward
<b>Fife</b>	Julie Horsburgh	EC	Shirley Paterson, Fife & Kinross FWAG	6	1	6	Mark Oksien
<b>Tayside (Kinross-shire)</b>	Catherine Lloyd	EC	Shirley Paterson, Fife & Kinross FWAG	6	1	6	Mike Steward / Mark Oksien
<b>Tayside (Perthshire)</b>	Catherine Lloyd	EC	Richard Lockett, Perthshire FWAG	5	1	5	Alan Leitch / / Mike Steward
<b>Tayside (Perthshire)</b>	Catherine Lloyd	EC	Christine Hall (SAC)	5	0	5	Alan Leitch / / Mike Steward
<b>Tayside (Angus)</b>	Catherine Lloyd	EC	Carol Littlewood, Angus FWAG	18	1	18	Alan Leitch / Mike Steward
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>68</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>68</b>	

A copy of the final BAGS application is available from JH. Extra nestboxes have been allocated to some areas - any queries regarding specific details of the application to JH.

#### Advice Note

Each farm visit would be completed with a 2x page laminated Barn Owl Advice Note showing appropriate habitats on a map with specific 'boxed' advice, photographs of species benefiting from the change in management, and a short table profiling specific UKBAP (or LBAP) species. This would be multi-use – either for the farm office, or to display in farm shops, nature trails, etc (where it was sure there would be no disturbance to the birds).

It was agreed that the Advice Note template would feature the biodiversity official 'footprints' logo on the front page and carry all Forum members' logos and funders' logos at the bottom of the back page. These would be kept as small as possible so as not to dominate the document. FWAG's logo could be kept separate from the rest of the members' logos with the words "this template is FWAG copyright" added. MO reminded everyone that the separate needs for barn owls need to be included in the template, i.e. 'maternity' roosting site; separate roosting site for the male; winter roosts.  
(AP – SP/CL-w)

(AP = Action Point)

It was agreed that each FWAG/SAC adviser would liaise with MO (or Mike Steward) and EC regarding specific farm sites and which ones would be suitable for educational purposes – or for running a farm advisory event.  
(AP – All)

#### Nestbox Monitoring for the Project

We need to resolve the collection of data, as MO suggested that if he made available information on nesting sites, we had to ensure it was kept confidential. It will be necessary to check this for each of our areas.  
(AP – All)

CL-w confirmed she would check with Alan Leitch as to how far his licence extends.  
(AP- CL-w)

*Subsequent to the meeting, Mike Steward confirmed that his current SNH licence covers him to examine nests and nest contents of barn owls and some other raptors in Stirling, W and E Dunbartonshire, Falkirk and Clackmannanshire. His BTO ringing permit, however, allows him to undertake ringing nestlings and fledged owl species in the Tay Ringing Group area (and to supervise students/ helpers).*

#### Site Visits

It was confirmed that FWAG and SAC could now start planning their visits. However we still need to resolve landowners' commitments to monitoring.  
(AP – All FWAGs and SAC)

#### Nestboxes

It was agreed that a few different types of nestbox should be “championed” throughout the Forum area (both internal and external boxes); CL said she would circulate details of the Hawk & Owl Trust booklet; MO said he would also advise on the matter.  
(AP – CL/MO)

LB agreed to look into details from her local sawmill as it might be possible to negotiate rates for the whole Forum area. It was also agreed that all wood would be locally sourced.  
(AP – LB)

It was proposed that all members contribute to a list of Nestbox makers so this can be circulated, i.e.

- Bird Times Tables, Tayport, Fife – [www.birdtimestables.com](http://www.birdtimestables.com); tel. Gary: 01382 552475.
- ?

(AP – All – to CL)

JH to discuss with EC the nestbox designs, sources of wood, and the timetable for making the boxes. JH to also check with EC re the details of nestbox making and to ask if anyone else can help make them to ensure sufficient are available for Year 1.  
(AP – JH/EC)

LB suggested we look into Scottish Executive “Enterprise Money” for schools – this can fund biodiversity projects.  
(AP – LB)

It was agreed we should look into labelling each nestbox with the Forum details and a reminder that a licensed ringer is required to monitor the box. KC to action, and to look into a suitable laminated design for the Forum to use throughout its area.  
(AP – KC)

CL confirmed that Dallas Seawright of Fife Ranger Service had suggested one of his adult conservation groups could help make nestboxes. She will check the timing of this.  
(AP – CL)

LB and CL-w had already made contacts with their local Prison Services. It was suggested this additional resource should be looked into across the Forum area.  
(AP – All)

#### Education and Publicity

CL-w circulated copies of the latest FWAG journal which features an article she prepared about the Tayside Barn Owl Survey and the Angus FWAG barn owl project. Additional copies are available on request (direct from CL-w).

CL-w highlighted the Royal Highland Education Trust (RHET) and suggested we work with them throughout the Forum area. CL will be attending the RHET ACI (Angus Countryside Initiative) meeting in September and would bring up the matter then.  
(AP – All/CL)

C-Lw would follow up Karen Cunningham, RSPB, re the Farmer and Volunteer Alliance.  
(AP – CL-w)

Yet to confirm, but JH thought that EC's educational project will focus this year on Kinross-shire and Clacks.  
(AP – EC)

LB said she would give CL details of printers she uses in Glasgow.  
(AP – LB)

CL confirmed that the Tayside Barn Owl Interest Group would be publishing its own Newsletter/Project Report this autumn. This would be separate from the proposed Forum Newsletter.

#### **5. Any Other Business**

CL thanked the RSPB for providing the meeting room at Vane Farm free of charge; she confirmed that refreshments would be paid out of the Tayside Biodiversity Partnership's budget.

#### **6. Date of Next Meeting**

Much of the work in setting up the Forum BAGS Project can be done via e-mail or by meeting in smaller area groups. A date has been proposed for a Forum progress meeting in September – Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> September, venue t.b.c.

*(subsequent to the meeting, JH confirmed a separate meeting with EC and SP in early July to progress the Fife project and Education aspects)*

#### **CONTACT DETAILS** *(Please advise CL if there are additional names to add to this list)*

	Name	Organisation	Contact Details
	Tayside Area		
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