



TAYSIDE BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP

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SWIFT & HIRUNDINE INTEREST GROUP

Tuesday, 20th June 2006 – Perth & Kinross Council Offices, Pullar House, Perth

NOTE OF MEETING

Present:	Clare Darleston (CD)	Concern for Swifts (Scotland)
	David Shepherd (DS)	Dundee Ranger Service
	Daniele Muir (DM)	Perth & Kinross Ranger Service
	Charlie Macpherson (CM)	Scone resident (and Perth Area Survey Co-ordinator)
	Esther Rogers-Nicoll (ERN)	Perth & Kinross Council (Planning)
	Vicky Hilton (VH)	National Trust for Scotland (N E Scotland, Dunkeld)
	Thalia Whatmough (TW)	National Trust for Scotland (Highland, Inverness)
	Catherine Lloyd (CL)	Tayside Biodiversity Partnership
1. Apologies:	Craig Borland	Angus Ranger Service
	Ron Youngman	Bird Recorder, Perth & Kinross
	Ian Ford	Broughty Ferry Environmental Project
	Andrew Rodger	Andrew Rodger Associates (Architects)
	Doreen Bell	Scottish Water

Copied to: Tom McGrath, Angus Ranger Service; Pam Coutts, Angus Council (Planning); Dan Carmichael, Angus Bird Recorder; Alistair Godfrey, P&KC Ranger Service, Mark Simmons, Perth Museum; Norma Robson, P&KC (Housing); David Williamson, P&KC (Environment Service); Andy Mulholland, Dundee City Council (Planning); Alison Anderson, DDC (Urban Sub-Group Leader); Ian Whitehead, DCC Greenspace Officer; Dundee Sustainable Construction Working Group; Ann Lolley, Broughty Ferry Environmental Group; Kate Farrer, SEPA; David Crabbe, Aggregate Industries; Scottish Wildlife Trust (Loch of the Lowes); SWT (Montrose); Polly Freeman, Atholl Estate Ranger Service; Ailsa Reid, Murton Trust; Shona Hill, SNH (Airlie); Carolyn Warwick (SNH Battleby); Carol Littlewood, Angus FWAG; Bruce Anderson, RSPB; Morag Green, Eco Congregation (St Matthews, Perth); Louise Bond, Clackmannanshire Biodiversity Partnership; Helen Dunlop, Business Environment Partnership.

2. Matters Arising from the Last Interest Group Meeting (12.4.05)

2.1 HorseCross Area (Perth Concert Hall) - CD said she was still interested in surveying the area and to consider which of the surrounding buildings might be suitable for nestboxes. CL advised that Perth & Kinross Council own the Blackfriars Centre nearby

ACTION: Colony survey required

2.2 Tayside Planning Manual and Leaflets - CL said that two leaflets were about to be published: a householder's guide to biodiversity, the other a developer's guide to biodiversity. The delay in completing the Planning Manual was proving to be positive as new legislation and a better selection of case studies could be incorporated. The Manual will be made available to planners, developers and land managers.

Individual Biodiversity Advice Notes would be provided, including one on Swift Conservation. All publications will be put on the Tayside biodiversity website in due course (www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk).

2.3 Awareness-Raising

2.3.1 *Concern for Swifts (Scotland) leaflets*: CD confirmed that Taylor Woodrow, the house building company, has funded the CfSS leaflet. Copies will be available soon.

ACTION: ALL - please contact CD for a supply of leaflets

2.3.2 *CfSS tabletop display*: still available for loan, together with swift nestbox examples. It is hoped this display can be made into a poster for wider distribution (if funding can be found).

ACTION: ALL - Contact CD if you would like to borrow the tabletop display

2.3.3 *The "Swifts and Flight" Education Pack*: copies available on request.

ACTION: ALL - Contact CD if you would like a copy of the Education Pack

2.3.4 *Educational Video*: available on loan from CD (Broughty Ferry Library has a copy).

ACTION: ALL - Contact CD if you would like to borrow this

2.3.5 *Swift Nest Site Conservation Guidance* - CD is still hoping to publish her case study notes and swift nestbox designs in an A5 ringbinder format (once funding is in place).

2.3.6. CD needs a photograph of a Swegler box for her display.

2.3.7. CL said she would ask the Scottish Rural Properties and Business Association (formerly the Scottish Landowners' Federation) if an article could be included in their journal (SRPBA are Partners in the Tayside Biodiversity Partnership).

ACTION: CL to contact SRPBA

2.3.8. *Housing Policy* - Proposed Generic Committee Report - there is a generic draft Committee Report available for adaptation. If anyone would like to see the draft, please contact CL.

ACTION: Local Authorities

3. Ranger Services - Proposed Action

CL confirmed that she gave a presentation and workshop at the last Tayside & Clackmannanshire Rangers' Network Session, hosted by SNH. An Action Plan for 2006-07 has since been agreed, enabling the Ranger Services to take forward the following actions:

Ranger Action Proposed (all Ranger Service areas)
Identify location of existing swift colonies - promote survey through Council's Intranet and Internet.
Continue to support Tayside Swift Interest Group (2 meetings) - DM to attend.
Press release re. areas where there is a lack of data. Usual outlets. Liaise with C. Lloyd.
Awareness raising events throughout Tayside. Promote already "good practice" re-development of housing.
Continual survey work and sharing of data. Learn from English experience.
Objective 1 Monitoring:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out swift surveys in four Angus towns and along the coastline from Easthaven, Carnoustie to Montrose. • Identify location of existing swift colonies within the Angus area of the Cairngorms National Park. Continue to actively support the Tayside Swift Interest Group. Produce report and distribute appropriately.

<p>Objective 2 Promotion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness through nature clubs, guided walks, talks, displays, leaflets, posters and other available literature. • Promote the 'Save Our Swifts' campaign throughout Angus. • Angus-wide press release inviting public to report swifts nesting, feeding near their homes or work. Raise awareness of swifts within Angus Council's Housing, Roads and Planning Departments and maintain contact. In particular try and influence the Council's new building programme at the Orchardbank development, Forfar. • Encourage field workers to record occurrence of swifts. • Liaise with Cairngorms LBAP Officer with the view to promoting the erection of swift nest boxes within the National Park.
<p>Objective 3 Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Source training courses, conferences regarding swifts to develop staff knowledge, experience and to encourage networking and the sharing of information.
<p>Dundee Ranger Service Swift survey.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build up the numbers of volunteers involved and amount of information gathered. • Promotion of swift conservation to public and schools. Ongoing. • Liaise with the Planning Department to get as strong a consideration as possible for swifts in the planning process - probably as part of a Supplementary Planning Guidance Note on biodiversity. • Liaise with the Housing Department (the Housing Investment Unit is very likely to run a small trial provision of swift nest sites during roof repairs subject to favourable tenant participation). • Liaise with Housing Associations in Dundee and try and persuade them to make provision for swifts in new build, conversions and planned maintenance. This would be following Hillcrest's good example. Liaise with the Architects' Section of the Council. • Produce leaflets to promote swift surveying.
<p>Clackmannanshire Rangers - Identify location of existing swift colonies. Liaise with C Lloyd on good practice re swifts.</p>
<p>Atholl Estate Rangers - Work with the public to promote P&K swift survey and hopefully identify the location of any existing swift colonies.</p>
<p>NTS - Carry out swift surveys in Dunkeld to continue to contribute to the Tayside swift survey. Install swift boxes as part of Dunkeld roofing project (subject to funding). Attend Tayside Swift Interest Group meetings.</p>

4. Project Updates

4.1 National Trust for Scotland (Highland)

Thalia Whatmough (TW) is a Project Scotland volunteer researching how best to undertake a pan-Highland survey of swifts. She's planning a 1-day conference in Inverness (for planners/developers).

CD mentioned that it is often better to write to the Letters Page in local newspapers rather than ask for a specific article to be included which can get severely edited.

4.2 National Trust for Scotland (Dunkeld)

Vicky Hilton (VH) said there are no swift nests in Cathedral Street, but plenty of colonies (they may be coming from Birnam). The NTS Clerk of Works has delayed roof work on the properties, however, until September in case there are any nesting swifts. VH meets the Clerk of Works twice a year to undertake building surveys for bats (and now swifts). N E Scotland (NTS) is leading the way with this approach and is hoping to roll it out to other NTS regions. An NTS Swift Policy is needed; there is one for Bats already.

4.3 Dundee Ranger Service

David Shepherd had a lot to report -

He created a leaflet for the public; this needs updating. CD said she would comment on it. It was suggested the improved leaflet is put on various websites.

ACTION: CD/DS/CL

In-situ Burnside nestbox: DS to send copy of photograph from the leaflet to CL/CD.

ACTION: DS - CD/CL

Hillcrest's shelter for homeless people has a multi swift box on it - include details in leaflet. The Rangers took a stand at the Tenants' Day and ran children's activities.

Pilot projects are including swift nests in council tenancies.

Discovery homes, Trottick - although the developer had agreed to incorporate swift boxes, this has not happened. There is a problem with swifts and bird flu perceptions - several housing associations are currently concerned about potential negative publicity.

The Dundee Rangers are still working with the Council's Planning Department to encourage incorporation of nestboxes into the building programme. However, there is little interest in swift conservation within the Planning Department at present and a DCC Advice Note was decided against.

Helen McQuillam of the DCC Housing Dept is, however, very sympathetic - she is responsible for maintenance of housing in Dundee. CD said that North Lanarks and Glasgow Councils do not consult with tenants; DS confirmed that DCC does.

Janet Brougham Sheltered Housing Project (DCC) - the building is not in a Swift Priority Area (a hotspot where there are plenty of swifts already). Very positive approach at the initial planning phase.

DS mentioned that a timber preservation worker keeps records of swift nests during his work. Consider a Swift Hotspot Project here to focus on "where are they"? Adapt Craig Borland's new poster? CL suggested that the Partnership could circulate this with basic advice on scaffolding/ timber work, etc.

ACTION: DS/CD/CL - Consider a Dundee Priority Areas Project to highlight direct conservation work.
ACTION: DS/CL - Consider an Information Sheet for scaffolding/ timber preservation companies

The Dundee Rangers had achieved a front-page article on the widely circulated Green Diary. An article was also included in the DCC Communities Newsletter. CL contributed to the Hillcrest press release.

ACTION: DS to send CL a copy of the Communities Newsletter to circulate

This year the Ranger Service has taken Swift displays to the Balgay Blossom Day, Seashore Festival and the Spring Flower Show. School swift sessions have also proved very popular.

An OU student is undertaking a short project on nest sites in Dundee - examining records of nest sites in Dundee and checking if they are still used and the type of house involved. There is also a baseline survey underway in Invergowrie (PKC area) - details to be sent to D Muir.

ACTION: DS to send Invergowrie details to DM

DS sent 'thank you' Christmas cards to volunteers, planning contacts, housing department and housing associations contacts.

Everyone at the meeting thanked DS for all his work.

4.4 Perth Ranger Service

Daniel Muir (DM) is taking a swift display to various shows/events. She is running a Comrie swift walk in July to look for nest sites. She is also planning a press release in July to ask for sightings.

Charlie Macpherson (CM) confirmed he had a list of 6 surveyors - inc. Birnam, Amulree, Scone, and Perth. He confirmed he would put a letter in to the Perthshire Advertiser following the Evening Walk.

ACTION: CM

CD asked someone to check the Breadalbane Arms Hotel in Aberfeldy - the hotel left a hole on the side of the building for the swifts when they repointed. Photo needed.

ACTION: ALL (Aberfeldy area)

CL confirmed that four swift boxes are still in the Ranger store. She suggested Eco Congregation might be able to use them (within the Perth and Kinross Council area).

ACTION: CL to contact Morag Green, St Matthews Church

Proposed Directory of Active Projects - CD pointed out that we need a Student project to undertake this (it is already being done in Ireland). The results could be put on the Concern for Swifts Scotland website - with a link to the TBP website.

ACTION: ALL - if anyone can suggest a volunteer who could help, please contact CD or CL.

CD said that the swift boxes had been erected at the Monax development, but the holes may prove to be too big. There is a need to follow up the nestbox manufacturer to advise them to change the size of the hole, otherwise starlings might gain access to them.

ACTION: CD to liaise with E-RN

CD said there is an urgent need to make a Swift brick within British breezeblock dimensions (continental ones do not fit). She suggested that architects could advise on this issue as integral swift nest sites do not need to be brick/concrete (it could be plywood or plastic and rendered over). The cavity could be lined with 9mm plywood; it would not be open to the elements so would be waterproof.

ACTION: DM to contact her brother who is an architect.

ACTION: CL to contact the Scottish Sustainable Construction Group.

ACTION: ALL - comments/contacts appreciated.

5. Tayside Town Swift Survey

CL reported on the 2005 Survey. A mapping session was held last September to bring all surveyors together to "put dots on maps". Areas of definite swift interest were noted so that re-surveys can be undertaken this year to check the details; gaps in survey areas were noted so that specific surveys can be carried out this year to see if there are any swift colonies present. One such area will be the Angus coastal towns - surveys will be undertaken in Arbroath and Carnoustie.

The results of the mapping session were passed to Angus Council who kindly transferred the details to their GIS and gave a CD version to the Partnership. Copies were sent to all three local authority planning departments, the Ranger Services, and CfSS.

Esther Rogers-Nicoll (ERN) pointed out that Perth and Kinross Council cannot use the CD as they need a student to input specific OS numbers. CL to ask if Angus Council could arrange to do this - it should take less than a day.

ACTION: CL to contact Pam Coutts, Angus Council

It was suggested that a paper copy of the map could be displayed in each Planning Department and Ranger Service office (Dundee Ranger Service is already doing this; there is no room in the PKC office).

CL thanked everyone who was involved last year, including Ron Youngman who publicised the survey in local community newsletters in Pitlochry and Aberfeldy. CM also undertook a lot of voluntary work in and around Scone and ensured wide newspaper coverage.

Tayside Town Swift Survey Form - supplies of this updated form are available from CL. Electronic copies of the form and volunteer poster were circulated to all Ranger Services in Tayside, together with a copy to CfSS for wider distribution across Scotland as required. Groups are encouraged to use either these forms or to make up their own (with their own contact details). If anyone can place survey forms in local shops, post offices, etc., further supplies are available from CL.

ACTION: ALL - offers of assistance to carry out surveys in specific towns to CL as soon as possible

Craig Borland had circulated his Swift Sightings poster for adaptation by others. CD offered to email her CfSS logo to everyone so that it can be added to joint TBP/CfSS posters, documents, etc.

**ACTION: Contact Craig Borland for a copy of his poster
CD - to send CL the CfSS logo to circulate**

It was agreed the 2006 Survey would continue along the same lines. CD confirmed that the best time for such town surveys would be the last 3 weeks of July and the first week of August (although there may be confusion by early/mid-August with migration 'swarms' of swifts). She suggested surveys should take place at around 9.30pm, or if this is not feasible, mid-day.

CD circulated her new Survey Advice paper and asked to be reminded to add GIS information. Copies are available on request from CD.

ACTION: CD to add GIS information

CD suggested that a proper Kindrogan Field Centre survey could be undertaken - staff could watch for c2 hours in the late evening to find out exactly where the swifts are nesting.

ACTION: CL to contact Martyn Jamieson, Kindrogan

It was agreed that a second Mapping Session would take place at the Dundee Botanic Gardens on Monday, 18th September - all welcome.

ACTION: Swift Mapping Session - 18th September, Dundee

6. Consultative Draft Swift Species Action Plan (SAP)

Everyone is asked to provide a short bullet point list of their projects to CL by mid-July so that they can be included in the proforma for an overall Swift Project in Tayside for the period 2007 to 2010. It is important to list as many different types of projects across Tayside (and name the Lead Partner) and include current projects, or those planned for the future.

ACTION: ALL - project lists to CL by 14th July

The updated draft of the Swift Action Plan will be put on the biodiversity website later this year for public comment. Case studies are still needed from Tayside: a variety would be appreciated - perhaps from a private householder or architect, a large building company, and a local authority housing department.

ACTION: Proposals for Case Studies to CL by 14th July

7. Sand Martin Projects

DM raised the issue that a number of sand martin sites in Perthshire have been damaged recently. Information regarding exclusion or damage to nesting areas should be given to the Tayside Police Wildlife Liaison Officer.

CL mentioned that there has been a great deal of interest in Tayside in providing artificial sand martin walls. The Tayside Biodiversity Action Fund has funded a new wall at Crombie Country Park, Angus, and an extension to the Broughty Ferry dune sand martin wall has been achieved this year. The Murton Educational Trust (Fledmyre, Forfar) has also made a new wall.

She suggested it might be appropriate to run a lunchtime seminar or meeting in the coming winter to bring together all those with a specific interest in sand martins. There is a draft Sand Martin SAP available and everyone is welcome to comment on it and make suggestions to add actions. CL will approach Mr. Cowley of the Sand Martin Trust to update him on the Tayside projects - www.sandmartintrust.org.uk. CL will circulate the SAP and proposed meeting details to gauge interest: local authority planners, engineers, quarry companies, the Murton Trust, Broughty Ferry Environment Project and the Tayside Ranger Services.

ACTION: CL to look into hosting a Sand Martin Meeting

8. Any Other Business

CL thanked Clare Darlaston for giving up so much of her personal time to advise everyone in Tayside on swift issues.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The Tayside Mapping Session will take place at the Dundee Botanic Gardens on 18th September at 10am; an agenda will be circulated nearer the time.

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LUNCH-TIME WORKSHOP (PERTH) SWIFT NEST SITE CONSERVATION

Tuesday, 20th June 2006

Twelve people attended the workshop, including Perth and Kinross Council Planning and Housing Departments, Access officers, NTS, Perth and Kinross, and Dundee Ranger Services, Clare Darlaston of Concern for Swifts Scotland, and Catherine Lloyd, TBP.

Clare Darlaston outlined the legislation pertaining to birds, including swifts, and the work other organisations and local authorities are undertaking:

- Legal protection for nesting birds - CD is proposing to prepare a 1/3 A4 advice note to give to contractors and planners.
- Demolition British Standard 6187 (published 2000). Esther can supply a copy.
- CL distributed copies of the new Scottish Executive leaflets outlining the Nature Conservation Act (Scotland) 2004. Further advice in respect of specific species is available from Lorna King, the Scottish Executive's Licensing Officer (Wildlife Crime and Species Management) - tel. 0131 244 7140.
- CL to circulate the Tayside Developer's Guide to Biodiversity and Householders' Guide to Biodiversity leaflets as soon as they are published.
- Legislation - Glasgow Housing Association has a policy in place to replace swift sites when necessary.
- Hillcrest is preparing a Sustainability Policy - other Housing Associations may be doing something similar - how do we link in to these?
- North Lanarks - draft clause for Swift Priority Area - CD can supply a copy.
- Glasgow Sustainability Neighbourhood Quality: this includes "working with Concern for Swifts Scotland" and gives details about enhancing biodiversity, planting gardens, etc.
- Tayside Planning Manual - CL will prepare a separate swift chapter (in conjunction with CD and the planners).
- CD to keep in touch with Norma Robson, PKC Housing.
- CL to contact the Bat Conservation Trust and local Bat Groups and ask them to note swift colonies or even swift nest sites if they find them. Make sure we help them too re. bats. CD had already prepared a leaflet; this should be reviewed to take this into account.

- Swift surveys are under way in Tayside, Stirling, N Lanarkshire, Cairngorms, and Highland Region. Should be Glasgow. In D&G there is a swallow and house martin survey; however an RSPB member is carrying out a swift survey in the area.
- CIRIA, the construction advisory organisation, has published advice on swifts - further details via www.ciria.org.uk.

