

Tayside Biodiversity Partnership



BIODIVERSITY
THE VARIETY OF LIFE

Joint Working Group Leaders: Esther Rogers-Nicoll, Planning Officer (Planning & Regeneration), Perth & Kinross Council - tel. 01738 475380; emrogersnicoll@pkc.gov.uk
Craig Borland, Senior Ranger, Angus Council - borlandc@angus.gov.uk

URBAN WORKING-GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Thursday, 28th February 2013
Jamesfield Organic Centre, by Abernethy

Present: Catherine Lloyd (CL) Acting Chair (Tayside Biodiversity Partnership)
Daniele Muir (DM) Perth & Kinross Ranger Service
David Williamson (DW) Perth & Kinross Council
Bill Griggs (BG) Perth Lade Group
Carolyn Deasley (CD) Scottish Natural Heritage
Kate Baird (KB) Scottish Environment Protection Agency
Tim Caselton (TC) Angus Ranger Service

	Heading	Narrative	Action
1	Welcome and apologies	CL welcomed everyone. Attendees introduced themselves. Apologies had been received from both Esther Rogers Nicoll and Craig Borland (Joint Leaders), Amanda Wilson, Fergus Cook, Ann Lolley and Ian Ford. These minutes will also be circulated to Ron Downing, Forbes Brown, Greig Norman and Diane Cassidy. CL had circulated the minutes from the last meeting for information.	
2	Year of Natural Scotland 2013	CD gave an update saying the most up-to-date information was on the websites: http://www.snh.gov.uk/enjoying-the-outdoors/year-of-natural-scotland-2013/ and http://www.visitscotland.com/about/nature-geography/year-of-natural-scotland/ . <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Big Five will now be launched at the end of March with the public being encouraged to vote for their favourite species;• The View from the Train apps are about to be launched;• John Muir's 175th birthday will be on 21st April and there will be special events to celebrate this;• Naturally Inspired - artists in residence, etc. at Loch Leven;• Events - SNH will have a greater presence at events such as the Game Fair,	

Chairman: Dennis Dick Tayside Biodiversity Co-ordinator: Catherine Lloyd

TAYSIDE BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP,

c/o Perth & Kinross Council, Environment Service, Pullar House, 35 Kinnoull Street, Perth, PH1 5GD
Tel. 01738 475373 E-mail: cagloyd@pkc.gov.uk Website: www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk

		<p>Dundee Food & Flower Show, etc. There is to be a Nature Festival at Battleby (Ewen Cameron co-ordinating this) and Spring Wildlife to Watch in Tayside.</p> <p>There will be focussed grant aid for projects, i.e. Nature, Creativity & Culture, Young People, John Muir, supporting events, etc. Ewen is the first contact for this: ewen.cameron@snh.gov.uk.</p>	
3	TBP Seminar: Putting the Buzz into Biodiversity	Over 90 people attended the event at Battleby on 1 st December 2012 and the feedback was very good. The People & Communications Working Group will be analysing the training needs and project suggestions to feed into the LBAP Review.	
4	PRIORITY PROJECT UPDATES	<p>Community Gardens, Orchards and Allotments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Perth & Kinross there have been six community workshops on this subject, run by Perth & Kinross Council; all were very well attended. CL ran one for Wildlife Gardening which proved popular. There is one new allotment at Crieff, with another two awaiting planning permission (Tulloch and Letham, Perth) - further details: www.pkc.gov.uk/allotments. It was suggested a further allotment at Muirton had been proposed; DW to look into this. A new Toolbox Share Scheme is being set up. Diane Cassidy would appreciate any advice on where to site them; she has found places in Crieff and Pitlochry. If anyone can help, please contact her via DCassidy@pkc.gov.uk. CL reported on the Urban Fruit Harvesting aspect of orchards, confirming that Abundance Sheffield has been joined by a number of other cities, including Edinburgh. Transition Edinburgh is undertaking something similar. Forth Environment Link is running its Scrumpers' Network which the TBP hopes to emulate in due course. CL attended the UK Steering Group for Traditional Orchards HAP last autumn (at its first meeting in Scotland) and reported back on Tayside progress. She also presented a written report on "A Contextual Update on the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy" in relation to traditional orchards in Scotland <p>Urban Grassland Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TC said that the Monifieth Wildflower Meadow Project is currently causing problems as it is proving very expensive to set up. DW reported on the progress of the new Muirton Buzzing Project, funded by PKC and SITA TBAF and being run in conjunction with Buglife Scotland. Wildflower seeds from Scotia Seeds were sown last year and looked excellent during the season, despite the poor weather. DW and Suzanne Bairner of Buglife will be working to create bee banks this year, regular monitoring will be undertaken and the local community engaged. The first school talk in May/June will involve the children also helping plant out the plantplugs on order. CL has arranged for Buglife to also give a presentation to PKC staff on the value of brownfields for biodiversity. <p>Tayside Green Graveyard Initiative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DW reported on the ongoing progress of the Perth & Kinross Council graveyard projects, plus the Perth & Kinross Heritage Trust churchyard/biodiversity projects. The soil in many churchyards proved too rich last year, so low-growing wildflowers will be grown on this year to remedy this. 	DW

		<p>TC pointed out that Landlife, the Liverpool-based charity, employs two ecologists and will provide wildflower seeds of Scottish provenance. They tend to be cheaper than Scotia Seeds. DW to look into this.</p> <p>Green/Living Roofs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DW confirmed that Invergowrie primary school was currently being built and will have a green roof; it would be good to know of more examples within Tayside. <p>Sand Martins in Tayside</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No progress <p>Tayside Swift Survey/Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Swift Interest Group was looking into a texting survey which would fit in well with the Carse of Gowrie Swift Conservation pilot project (being run by the CoG Sustainability Group in conjunction with the TBP). <i>Following the Urban meeting, it was confirmed funding has been granted for the pilot project to go ahead.</i> DM confirmed that single species conservation would not feature in the PKC's Greenspace Rangers' work plan from April onwards, so all work with swifts would have to be undertaken on a voluntary basis. Dundee input would continue as there is a keen volunteer based in the city. Hillcrest Housing Association is still engaged with the Interest Group. DM said that numbers of volunteers fluctuated each year, the most successful year attracting 53 volunteers. The Aberfeldy walk last year proved successful with new swift nest sites being discovered. A very rainy walk in Errol for the Braes of the Carse Group (and others) led to the proposal for the citizen science pilot project during 2013. There needs to be greater use made of the two sets of swift display banners in 2013 - please contact DM or CL if you have any suggestions on venues for the banners. No work had yet been completed on improving the hirundine postcard and transferring it into a poster format. It was agreed this was now urgent to complete and print ahead of the birds returning this spring. DM to design the poster. <p>Angus School Bats Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deferred to August 2013 owing to CB's long-term sick leave. <p>Urban Watercourse Initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Dighty - no report from AL The Perth Lade - BG reported that the Perth Lade Group was considering becoming a charity, but there would be a delay in undertaking this. They had already drawn up a very good list of objectives and have a good action plan agreed. There is to be an annual litter pick involving schools and the local community. BG said he had seen a kingfisher on the lade the other day; CL reminded everyone that the Bat Conservaiton Trust and PKC Ranger Service ran a Bat Survey along the lade some years ago. BG mentioned that SSE staff walk the lade during their lunch time and after work. He also wondered if water voles were back on the lade as someone thought they had seen one recently. The Perth Lade management plan had yet to go out to public consultation, but it was a very good document and would prove useful in the future. BG was asked if he could provide a pdf version of the plan for the Urban group members. 	<p>DW</p> <p>All</p> <p>All</p> <p>DM</p> <p>BG</p>
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		<p>Sheltered Housing, Care Homes & Hospitals Project</p> <p>There continues to be potential for further hospital biodiversity projects in Angus and P&K following the great success of the Ninewells Woodland Project (led by the Forestry Commission and NHS). Lack of time was delaying this, although the advisory leaflet was now in hand courtesy of one of the Dundee University student placements.</p>	
	New or Revised Projects	<p>ZOOMIn2 Time Lapse Photography</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The revised project would rely on digital photographs being uploaded onto a new TBP website. The TBP's webmaster had provided a test page for Urban group members to trial and there had been good feedback on this. CD had suggested the project linked into the Young Scot aspect of Year of Natural Scotland and this was discussed. It was decided that as before, the project should be open for all, but that it would be good to invite specific groups such as Young Scots to take part. CL would update the existing poster/leaflet and obtain an up-to-date quote for printing. <i>Following the meeting, a new website has been set up: http://www.zoomin2.co.uk/; everyone is invited to check this and feedback comments as soon as possible to CL.</i> <p>ZOOM4Bees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although it had been previously agreed to continue with this project and CL had gained the Bumblebee Conservation Trust's confirmation that they would continue to endorse it, the BBCT's BeeWatch project was so good it seemed to be a waste of printing to roll out our original project. Unlike the first survey, we would not be in a position to collate survey responses and it was proposed we add the BeeWatch link to the updated TBP poster and just reprint that instead. DW had looked into the BeeTag App and although it is free if we wanted to analyse the number of hits, there would be a charge. It would still be possible to retain the various survey information on the website, but this updated project would enable us to point the way direct to the BBCT's BeeWatch project instead. 	All
5	BARS update	The UK Biodiversity Action Recording System is now map-based. All the old TBP information is now archived. The need to transfer and update all project proforma to BARS2 has created a huge amount of work as a new proforma had to be designed and tested. There are still problems with it and further advice is being sought.	
6	Any other business	<p>SNH is currently considering its Big Five species; it will probably take the form of a public vote on the web. The TBP has been asked to come up with its own Big Five. CL confirmed that at present there was a shortlist of eight species - Bottlenose Dolphin, Small Blue Butterfly, Swift, Common Toad, Beaver, Red Squirrel, Wild Cat, Juniper. The Water & Wetland Working group thought that Red squirrel might be better rather than beaver.</p> <p><i>Subsequently, the People & Communications Group proposed the list should be: Salmon, Red Squirrel, Swift, Juniper, Small Blue. Everyone is invited to comment on the proposed Tayside Big Five, but we could, as SNH is doing, open this out to a public vote?</i></p>	All
10	Date of next meeting	CL thanked everyone for attending the meeting. It was agreed to next meet at the end of April and plan the launch of either the ZOOMIn2 project or the Carse of Gowrie Swift Conservation Project; details to be confirmed nearer the time: Friday, 26 th April, 10.30am - provisionally at Errol Community Hall. CL to book hall.	CL