

Scotland update

Scottish Biodiversity Forum update

Best Value, Community Planning and Biodiversity – guidance for local authorities

This publication offers best practice guidance for local authorities in Scotland to help them mainstream their duty to “*further the conservation of biodiversity*” through new statutory frameworks for Best Value, Community Planning and the Power to Advance Well-Being. This guidance is also relevant to other public bodies implementing Best Value, who are involved in the Community Planning process, or are implementing the requirements placed on them by legislation. A first draft of this publication is now out for consultation. If you would like to have an opportunity to comment on the publication, please do get in touch. I am requesting all comments on first draft to be back with me by 30 January 2004. A final draft will be circulated on 13 February 2004, with an ultimate publication date of 31 March 2004. Again, could I thank everyone who’s already made comment on the content, and have provided details on the many case studies.

Contact: Jo Lenthall, Scotland LBAP Project Officer, Scottish Biodiversity Forum, 0131 311 6512 joanna.lenthall@rspb.org.uk

Scottish Biodiversity Strategy

As the dust settles after the workshops on how the biodiversity strategy will be implemented, the working groups are now incorporating your comments and polishing up their sections of the plans to present to the SBF’s Strategy Steering Group early in the New Year. Jonathan Willet has been attending the ICE meetings (Interpretation, Communication and Education) on behalf of the LBAP Network – they’re getting there, but it is a big subject. The next meeting was 16 December where the Interpretation Strategy was presented to inform the ICE framework. The framework will be finalised in February, with plenty still to do. It needs to be recognised that the framework is not a specific plan for organisations or individuals, but information on the basic message, how it is delivered and to whom. Work is continuing on the Strategy’s indicators, the development of the SBF’s interpretative strategy. Nautilus Consultants are helping the Scottish Executive pull together the final Strategy document. They will be contacting members of the SBF and its’ working groups to input to the process of refining the text, incorporating comments from the consultation and working closely with the Scottish Executive’s Biodiversity Team. Ministers will launch the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy at the Forum’s next conference. Much of the ongoing work can be found on the Forum’s website, www.scotland.gov.uk/biodiversity but if you have any specific areas of interest please do not hesitate to get in touch with the SBF’s National Project Officer. Although, Sarah Hocknell is moving on from the SBF at the end of January, the post is being interviewed for in early January so there shouldn’t be a big gap. Thank you to those of you who have been in touch already to offer help and advice on aspects of the SBF’s work.

Contact: Sarah Hocknell, Project Officer, Scottish Biodiversity Forum on 0131 244 6328 sarah.hocknell@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Forum Conference 2004 – 25 May, Hampden Park, Glasgow
Preparations are underway for the 2004 Forum conference. Watch this space for further information. To register your interest, e-mail biodiversity@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Local Biodiversity Action Plan Newsletter

Issue 10: December 2003



Argyll & Bute

Contact: Marina Curran-Colthart, Local Biodiversity Officer on 01631 562125 marina.curran-colthart@argyll-bute.gov.uk

Ayrshire

Contact: Morven Templeton, Environment Officer, East Ayrshire Council, 01563 554041 morven.templeton@east-ayrshire.gov.uk; Ken Gibb, Sustainable Development Manager, South Ayrshire Council, 01292 616288 ken.gibb@south-ayrshire.gov.uk; Tonia Sobieraj, Policy Officer, North Ayrshire Council, 01294 324131 tsobieraj@north-ayrshire.gov.uk

Cairngorms

Contact: vacant – contact fionanewcombe@cairngorms.co.uk for details

Clackmannanshire

- To compliment Clackmannanshire's LBAP launched earlier this year, a summary publication is now available. It features full colourful pictures of highlighted habitats and species and drawings from a local school, and contains a list of objectives for each habitat and species to help guide the plans actions over the next five years. Please contact the Local Biodiversity Officer for further details.

Contact: Lynn Campbell, Biodiversity Co-ordinator on 01259 452639 lynncampbell@clacks.gov.uk www.clacksweb.org.uk/biodiversity

Comhairle non Eilean Siar

Contact: Anne MacLellan, 01870 602425 amaclellan@cne-siar.gov.uk

Dumfries & Galloway

- Dumfries and Galloway's Wildlife Festival runs from 10-18 April 2004, consisting of a series of events organised by biodiversity partners, across the whole region (including guided walks, open days, illustrated talks, practical conservation work and an art exhibition). It is the first time such an event has been held, and it is hoped not only to involve a large number of participants, but also to raise the overall profile of biodiversity. In future years, as the festival grows, it will be used to attract tourists to the region at a time of year when many other tourist attractions have little to offer.
- Two staff have now been appointed to the Dumfries and Galloway Environmental Resource Centre. This is the first time the region has had a dedicated centre for the collation, storage and dissemination of environmental records, and it is expected to provide a significant boost to the implementation of the LBAP.
- A number of other projects, covering both LBAP habitats and species, are at various stages of development or implementation. More on these in future editions of this Newsletter.

Contact: Peter Norman, Biodiversity Officer, 01387 260172 peter.norman@dumgal.gov.uk www.dumgal.gov.uk/biodiversity

East Dunbartonshire

- The draft LBAP will go to committee soon.

Contact: Paul Baker, Biodiversity Officer 0141 578 8642 paul.baker@eastdunbarton.gov.uk

Local Biodiversity Action Plan Newsletter

Issue 10: December 2003



East Lothian

Contact: Stuart MacPherson, Biodiversity Officer 01620 827242
smacpherson@eastlothian.gov.uk

Edinburgh

Contact: Susan Steel or Caroline Peacock, Biodiversity Officers 0131 469 3920
susan.steel@edinburgh.gov.uk caroline.peacock@edinburgh.gov.uk

Falkirk

Contact: Martin Nunn, Biodiversity Officer on 01324 504863 martin.nunn@falkirk.gov.uk

Fife

Contact: Rachel Sherman, LBAP Co-ordinator on 01592 413437 rachel.sherman@fife.gov.uk

Glasgow

- Glasgow's Biodiversity Awareness Strategy and the first annual Biodiversity Progress Report was launched was held on 27 November 2003 in Pollok Country Park. School pupils from the first Eco-school in Glasgow to receive its Green Flag award came along to make birdfeeders and boxes for their school grounds, and were joined by the two Glasgow Councillors who gave given speeches at the launch. The Awareness Strategy and Progress Report can be obtained from the Biodiversity Officer.
- Rural Stewardship Scheme applications have been successful for two Glasgow City Council owned farms in the south of the City.
- BTCV Scotland (a Biodiversity Steering Group partner), are carrying out practical works in the south east of the City to enhance and create habitats which will further progress the LBAP.
- The City Woodland Initiative audit of all City woodlands is at a final draft stage.
- The development of a local woodland ground-flora seed project has been agreed by interested parties.
- A project for schools to raise awareness of biodiversity through wildflower planting and associated events, funded by SNH, has been agreed. This project will help implement the new Biodiversity Awareness Strategy.
- The Biodiversity Officer is contributing to a large scale Parks Review currently being carried out by the Council's Land Services.

Contact: Keith Watson or Carol MacLean, Biodiversity Officers on 0141 287 5665
keith.watson@land.glasgow.gov.uk carol.maclelan@land.glasgow.gov.uk
<http://wildlife.glasgow.gov.uk>

Highland

Contact: Janet Bromham, Biodiversity Officer, 01463 702274 janet.bromham@highland.gov.uk

Midlothian

- I have settled in to the post and started networking within the Council, which is leading to some positive steps with regards to changing grounds maintenance practices. The three main habitat working groups have formed and met, and are making good progress using the vast experience the working group members offer.

Contact: Helen Dunlop, Biodiversity Officer, Midlothian Council, 0131 271 3462
helen.dunlop@midlothian.gov.uk

Local Biodiversity Action Plan Newsletter

Issue 10: December 2003



North East Scotland

Contact: Maria Hardy, LBAP Co-ordinator, 01224 711120 maria.hardy@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

North Lanarkshire

- Successful Moth ID event with 14 attending and 11 species identified. After discussion with Julie Stoneman of Butterfly Conservation, an ID, recording and the ecology of small pearl bordered fritillary and green hairstreak (two local priorities) course will be held over a weekend in June. A general butterfly fun day in July will raise general awareness and encourage garden recording.
- Bogs will be a priority in 2004. We will be running three or four bog day events in July, which will consist of a storyteller, butterfly and dragonfly catching, peat coring, crafty stuff and a bog walk, and perhaps some practical work such as installing plastic dams or a general tidy up. Two sites are in Country Parks, another is in Shotts surrounded by housing. These, with four other Council owned sites, have some restoration potential and it is hoped the bogs days will result in more site active management, and greater local awareness.
- A trial, delayed cut area (late June) on two large verges in Cumbernauld is being created. Due to Health and Safety issues, in 2003 the area wasn't cut until late June resulting in lots of visible cuckoo flower. The plan is to get photographic evidence (fortnightly) to be presented to the GM team to encourage a change in grass maintenance outwith parks. A wildflower ID form (bluebell, cuckoo flower, red campion) has been drafted for the GM teams to use in the spring cutting season to gather wildflower presence on the verges, and to start a biodiversity dialogue.
- A Hedge Management day was run at the end of November (23 from west central Scotland attended). Planting and mechanical management was covered. The positive feedback has resulted in presenting suggestions on the timing of Council hedge cutting and their equipment (ie changing flail teeth after the verge cutting season as they get blunt).
- Lanarkshire Record Centre; working with South Lanarkshire to get the Invasive Species records on our system. This information will demonstrate to partners what an LRC could do for them. With no agreed National Strategy and no confirmed funding partners for a National Network (match funding has to be found before SNH will commit financially) there is no harm trying to get something done, albeit on a small scale, locally.
- Urban habitats, not identified in the original LBAP do cover a significant area of North Lanarkshire. As there is a population of over 320,000 a framework for action referring specifically to these habitats is necessary; so a draft Urban BAP before Christmas.
- An action from the Urban BAP has been achieved; talks to all the Council's Development Control teams (3) (jointly with Mark Forest, Planning and Environmental Projects team). These 1-2 hours talks/discussions covered general biodiversity, existing planning legislation, and opportunities for developers and the planning process to enhance biodiversity on a site. Feedback from the talks were very useful, including, as a first step, a summary of the SAP and HAP key objectives and actions, then perhaps look at producing supplementary guidance for both them and developers.
- There was a BARS workshop in November; the database is user friendly, not perfect (but that's boring). It will be useful and not too time consuming to operate and update.
- And finally..... Jonathan appeared on Thistle TV, Lanarkshire's local TV station, for a 10-minute slot on biodiversity – his agent hasn't heard from the Beeb yet, but it's only a matter of time.

Contact: Jonathan Willet, Biodiversity Officer, 01236 780636 willetj@northlan.gov.uk

Orkney

Contact: Nadine Russell, Orkney Biodiversity Officer, 01856 888760
nadine.russell@orkney.gov.uk

Local Biodiversity Action Plan Newsletter

Issue 10: December 2003



Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire, Inverclyde

Contact: Jenny Gough (temporary contact), jenny.gough@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Scottish Borders

Contact: Andy Tharme, Natural Heritage Officer, 01835 826514 atharme@scotborders.gov.uk

Living Shetland

Contact: Nicky Davies, Biodiversity Officer, 01595 690832, livingshetland@fwag.org.uk

South Lanarkshire

- LBAP Launch –Lady Isabel Glasgow (Chair SNH West Areas Board) launched the South Lanarkshire LBAP on 24 November 2003 to 70 attendees. SLC Councillor Gerry Convery welcomed the audience, which included representatives of the local authority, statutory bodies, NGOs and local communities. Guest speaker Simon Rennie of CSFT demonstrated links between biodiversity, quality of life and local economy, while Malcolm Muir of SLC summarised the development of the SLBAP to date and the benefits of partnership working. Initiatives, such as the Clyde Valley Woodlands LIFE Project have already demonstrated the success of biodiversity partnerships and have stimulated the local economy. Other projects include 'Biodiversity Banks', which aim to bring wildflowers back into our towns and a community led scheme to restore the woodlands of Morgan Glen near Larkhall.
- SLBAP – this is now available as a PDF, a hard copy and a summarised format. For copies please contact the Biodiversity Officer.

Contact: Scott Riddell, 01355 806858, scott.riddell@southlanarkshire.gov.uk

Stirling

Contact: Chris Waddell, 01786 442875 waddellc@stirling.gov.uk

Tayside

- As part of the "Building Better Biodiversity" series of short seminars organised by the Tayside Biodiversity Partnership, Angus FWAG led two popular hedging events in November. The first was a half-day demonstration for private and local authority contractors, farmers and estate workers. A Hedge Day (attracting 22 people from all over Angus, Grampian, Fife and Perthshire) learned different aspects of hedgerow management –planting, establishment, species choice etc. through to future management and restoration of old hedges. The Tree Council's new "hedgerow tree tag" idea was introduced and the importance of hedgerow trees emphasised.
- A new project has started to improve sand martin nesting sites in Dundee and Monifeith. Three volunteers have raised funds to construct a 'sand martin wall' on the beach at Broughty Ferry. The Royal Institute of Architects Scotland (RIAS) Millennium Award Scheme has given funding for research into local and national sand martin populations, the construction of artificial nesting sites and interpretation of the project. The information will be shared with the Tayside Biodiversity Partnership, which is also in touch with other initiatives in the area concerning sand martins. Aggregate Industries UK is incorporating sand martin barrels into its Angus quarrying sites, there are large artificial nesting banks at Forfar Loch Country Park, and at SWT's Montrose Basin Reserve. The 'Safe Homes for Sand martins' Group is gathering information on designs of sand martin 'walls'. If you can help, please contact Ian Ford, Sandy Stuart or Mike Groves, c/o Broughty Ferry Environmental Project, Broughty Ferry Library, Dundee. Tel. 01382 436932.

Local Biodiversity Action Plan Newsletter

Issue 10: December 2003



- Dundee Red Squirrel Project – a video has been produced by Dundee City Council in conjunction with Dundee CSV Media Action. Part funded by SNH, it highlights all that is happening in Dundee to protect and enhance its red squirrel population. The Dundee Red Squirrel Action Group is carrying out surveys to establish distribution and extent of the red squirrel population. The Dundee Partnership for the Environment is also involving organisations such as the Police and the NHS at Ninewells Hospital to record sightings in their grounds on a regular basis. The Countryside Rangers are holding events and guided walks and the Council's gamekeeper is helping control the grey squirrel population in areas where red squirrels still exist.

Contact: Catherine Lloyd, Biodiversity Officer, 01738 476481 tayside.biodiversity@ukf.net

West Dunbartonshire

Contact: Rob McCreath (temporary contact) rod.mccreath@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

West Lothian

- West Lothian LBAP completed its first 5-year phase in June 2003. It is now to be re-evaluated to reflect progress and achievements in addressing the strategic priorities that it identifies. This will be done in the context of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy, the duty to further the conservation of biodiversity as set in the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Bill and the cross border opportunities for joint working in the Central Scotland Forest area. The plan focuses on strategic priority habitats and each of these is being delivered through adopted 5-year action programmes rather than habitat or species action plans. This is to ensure that social and economic benefits are delivered as well as environmental eg the farm grant scheme run by the council and SNH is, this year, linking the 4 Point Plan, which addresses farm sourced pollution, with water course improvements, biodiversity enhancement and the production of Farm Waste Management Plans for co-operating farmers. Two other projects have been short listed for national awards - the community led White Burn initiative in Whitburn, and the Earth Science focus that is providing an important policy link with the planning process.

The year has also seen a number of innovative partner initiatives. These include:

- the preparation of a pilot biodiversity plan for a global company based in Livingston;
- analytical work for the development of a Forest Habitat Network across the county;
- biodiversity assessments of Local Plan housing proposals;
- the preparation of a soil sustainability plan;
- West Lothian Environment Fair held in September by the members of the West Lothian Environmental Support Group (the theme being biodiversity).

Contact: John Sheldon, Co-ordinating Officer, 01506 775278 John.Sheldon@westlothian.gov.uk

Continued overleaf ...

Local Biodiversity Action Plan Newsletter Issue 10: December 2003



SNH staff update

As from 1st December, **Ro Scott** took over the half-time SNH Biodiversity Co-ordinator post from Caroline Eccles. Ro has had a varied career with NCC/NCCS/SNH, starting with 10 years as an Area Officer based in Fort William, then a 2 ½ year secondment to the Vincent Wildlife Trust working on otters and wildcats, followed by SNH Advisory Officer posts at Regional and national level. For the past 6 years she has been working full-time on deer issues across Scotland, which will continue to occupy the non-biodiversity half of her time. She is looking forward to dealing with a wider range of species and habitats, and getting to know who's who in the Biodiversity world. Her contact details are ro.scott@snh.gov.uk and 01463 712221.

Amelia Morgan's post has not yet been recruited. Her replacement will be based in Inverness and the post is likely to be recruited after Christmas. It is on hold until SNH has secured temporary accommodation in Inverness, which will fill the gap until the new office is built.

Macaulay Institute Cooperative Action Project

A team at the Macaulay Institute in Aberdeen is looking into the potential for developing more co-operative approaches to farm environmental management, under a SEERAD-funded project. The potential role of more co-operative working was identified in the Custodians of Change report from the Agriculture and Environment Working Group, which suggested that a variety of local agri-environmental partnerships could help to stimulate a more integrated approach to biodiversity and diffuse pollution issues.

Phase One of the Macaulay project has been to develop a database of the range of projects and initiatives around Scotland that involve elements of farmer environmental cooperation. More than 150 initiatives have been identified, ranging all the way from small informal groups of 4 or 5 neighbours to large umbrella organisations such as the Southern Uplands Partnership and the Tweed Forum. Many initiatives are connected to LBAP priorities such as Grey Partridge and Black Grouse recovery programmes; others are focused around the development of catchment management plans and tackling diffuse pollution. Yet others involve farm forestry, fishing, landscape management, green marketing, and waste disposal.

The degree of voluntary farmer co-operation in all these initiatives is very varied. In Phase Two, the project team is focusing on a small set of case studies in Grampian, Galloway and Perthshire, talking in depth to farmers and project officers engaged in initiatives that have been led by farmers. The aim is to develop a realistic picture of how and why farmers may work together on environmental issues, and how this kind of activity could be developed in the future. The introduction of collaborative applications under the Rural Stewardship Scheme is one example of a new policy development supporting these kinds of activities.

The project team has already contacted several LBAP Officers to get a feel for what is happening on the ground. If you know of local projects where farmers are trying to work across farm boundaries, or would like to know more about the project, please get in touch with the project coordinator at the Macaulay Institute: Ben Davies (b.davies@macaulay.ac.uk; 01224 498200). The project will finish in mid-March 2004.

News from Butterfly Conservation Scotland

Butterfly Recorders' Gathering 2004

Saturday 28 February 2004, 10am-4pm, Cowane Centre, Stirling

This will be of interest to staff or volunteers involved in butterfly recording in Scotland. Presentations will show results from butterfly transects and the Butterflies for the New Millennium

Local Biodiversity Action Plan Newsletter Issue 10: December 2003



Project (BC's general recording scheme). There will be presentations on the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and the use of butterflies as indicator species, as well examples of survey and monitoring work currently being carried out in Scotland. There will be a small charge to cover costs and booking is required - contact BC(Scotland) 01786 447753 or email scotland@butterfly-conservation.org for further information and a booking form.

Plantlife update

Address changes

PLEASE NOTE: from 24 November 2003, Plantlife Scotland moved to new offices.

Dr Deborah Long
Conservation Officer
Plantlife Scotland
Balallan House
Allan Park
Stirling FK8 2QG
TEL. 01786 478509
deborah.long@plantlife.org.uk

www.plantlife.org.uk

Other News

Incorporation of Climate Impacts into Scottish Biodiversity Action Plans

The latest climate change predictions for Scotland suggest that (relative to now) winters will become milder and wetter, while summers will become warmer in general. The potential impact on biodiversity is substantial but there are few studies that have considered the likely outcome for species' distribution, phenology, or the possible risk of extinction. Work has concentrated on direct effects, whereas indirect effects eg concomitant changes in land use, may have a more profound impact on species viability. SEERAD has commissioned a study (by NERC Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, Marine Biological Association and NERC Sea Mammals Research Unit) that seeks to incorporate climate change impact predictions into BAPs, and their associated targets for habitats and species across Scotland. This should enable management undertaken as part of the biodiversity effort to be carried out with full consideration of the potential responses to predicted change. There are difficulties in predicting climate change impact with certainty. For many BAP species there is insufficient information to outline precise habitat requirements, let alone key factors influencing their distribution or survival. Some are so rare and localised that in the short-term insufficient knowledge will require some informed guesswork that will clearly need to be distinguished as such. The study seeks to raise awareness of species and habitats vulnerable to climate change and wishes to engage the Lead Agencies/Partners and LBAP Officers at the outset. If you have specific concerns or relevant information then we would be happy to hear from you (s.albon@ceh.ac.uk). As we distil likely impacts and draft text outlining climate change measures for possible inclusion in BAP objectives and targets we will consult with all relevant parties.

Merry Christmas, and all the best for 2004!

If you would like to contribute to this newsletter, please do get articles to [Jo Lenthall](mailto:Jo.Lenthall@scotland.gov.uk), Scotland LBAP Project Officer, Scottish Biodiversity Forum, by 20 February 2004.