

Local Biodiversity Action Plan Newsletter

Issue 1: April 2002

Welcome to the first LBAP Newsletter. In response to popular demand from the LBAP Coordinators Network we are producing a newsletter, approximately every two months. This will be a vehicle for you to get more regular progress updates from your colleagues. It should also be a forum for discussion of key topics or requests for help. We aim to see how well it is used over the next few issues, if it isn't well used it won't continue. Thanks to all of you who sent in updates this time. I hope you all find them informative. We hope this newsletter will also be circulated around Scottish Biodiversity Forum members and Sustainable Scotland Network, so it also a way of getting more exposure for your LBAP. **Deadline for the next copy is June 17**, although we will of course remind you. As well as local updates, if anyone has a discussion topic they would like to include please contact us. Finally, please let us know what you think of this first effort, we aim to keep improving! **Vicky and Jo**

Email comments and contributions to [Vicky Abernethy](#) or [Jo Lenthall](#)

Local Updates

Cairngorms LBAP

Consultation on draft LBAP completed and currently incorporating consultation responses into final version.

Cairngorms Upland Grain Project -

Successfully carried out Year II of the Pilot Project; Initiated Year III of the project; Expanded scheme and attempted to get many local farmers and crofters to enter the 'unharvested crops option in the RSS; Maintained high profile media coverage of the project (e.g. Landward programme, BBC Radio Scotland); Provided advice to at least 6 farms, crofts and estates outwith the Strathspey area wanting to run similar schemes.

'Pearl mussels matter' - Provided BBC Scotland with information, sites and contacts for a TV programme on the cultural and biological importance of pearl mussels in Scotland's rivers

'Aspen action' - Edited, authored a paper and produced the 2001 Aspen conference proceedings; Secured £4500 to publish and distribute >500 copies of the proceedings, to be distributed in April; Liaised with local LEAF demonstration farmer (Alastair MacLennan) to plan to (re)create a functional Aspen habitat network between Grantown and Nethy Bridge

'Capercaillie in crisis' - Helped the Caledonian Partnership successfully secure £4million LIFE Nature 2002 Capercaillie Project proposal.

Cairngorms Moorland Project - Helped the Cairngorms Moorland Forum secure the £600,000 Cairngorms moorland biodiversity demonstration and interpretation project.

Spey Catchment Management Plan Revised the draft paper on key River Spey biodiversity objectives inc. habitat & species accounts for the Spey Catchment Management Plan.

Local area biodiversity audits and information - Contributed to the production of two biodiversity audits for CRAG (Cairngorm, Rothiemurchus & Glenmore area) and Glenlivet estate; Developed & produced Farm Biodiversity Audit for a LEAF (Linking Environment & Farming) demonstration farm; Provided biodiversity advice and information for interpretation at the funicular railway visitor centre.

Local wildlife tourism initiative - Helped SNH & HOST develop a 'nature based' tourism strategy and European funding bid for the Highlands (and Islands).

Deeside Forest Biodiversity Guidance note - Contributed to production and dissemination of the 'Deeside Forest

Biodiversity Guidance Note' for local foresters and land managers.

Farmland biodiversity awareness issues -

Promotion of the importance of traditional farmland management for biodiversity in the Cairngorms. - Nominated the Cairngorms LEAF farm for the RSPB/NFU(Scotland) national Farmland Biodiversity Award. It went on to win the top award. Helped produce a series of biodiversity interpretation display boards for the LEAF demonstration farm along the Speyside Way.

Future initiatives currently being considered include: Cairngorms Water vole action plan (SNH led); Introduced or Non-native fish species action plan (various fishery interest led); FWAG led farmland wader project; Local bee-keepers led campaign to keep the Cairngorms free of the destructive varroa mite; Production of a practical (conflict avoidance) guide for developers and woodland managers on the issues surrounding woodants (SWT/SNH led).

Clackmannanshire Biodiversity Action Plan

Tranche 1 HAPs and SAPs are coming in for the Consultation Draft.

Consultation Draft - available mid-June '02 (there will be mini-launch/photo call).

Seminar/Launch - 30 August, in Alva (presentations, posters, Consultation Draft comments...).

Dumfries & Galloway

Monitoring of the LBAP has shown varying degrees of success in different areas of the plan.

Wetland and woodland habitat **implementation** has generally been successful, with urban and grassland habitats showing least progress.

Habitat working groups - now meeting and using findings from the monitoring exercise to focus their efforts.

Monitoring has flagged least progress for **communications and publicity** actions. The Steering Group have now been examining ways of improvement - main target groups have been identified, cost-effective communications /publicity techniques identified, and a timetable of action prepared. One of the first actions has been the preparation of biodiversity pages on the Council's **website**.

Second tranche of 19 local SAPs has now been printed and distributed. All SAPs and HAPs will soon be available from the new website. This will enable completion of all remaining SAPs over the next year, as costs are reduced.

Other ongoing projects include: survey and assessment of Local Wildlife Sites; establishment of a local records centre; assistance to several communities developing wildlife areas in towns and villages; contributing to two river catchment plans; assisting individuals/groups to implement projects for particular species (bats, water voles, great crested newts, black grouse, red squirrels); finding funding to continue this post beyond November 2002.

East Lothian Biodiversity

Grey Partridge - 100 acres of wildbird cover will be sown on 40 farms to try and enhance populations of grey partridge in East Lothian. Many farmers are also counting grey partridge to monitor changes in partridge populations. Other priority species to benefit include brown hare, yellowhammer, linnets.

Prairie planting - amenity grassland in residential areas is being planted with a mix of garden plants and wildflowers to attract and enhance urban wildlife and the local

landscape. Landscape maintenance also benefits.

Wildflower grassland trials - 12ha of amenity grassland were grown as a hay meadow last year. Attempts were made to establish wildflowers in the hay crop but these were largely unsuccessful. Seeding trials are continuing this year.

www.eastlothianbiodiversity.org.uk - should be on-line by the end of May.

Project funding - small budget has been established to help fund local or community wildlife projects.

Longniddry Biodiversity - A local community group has been established to survey and enhance local wildlife. Projects include coastal surveys, woodland management, bird box building and beach clean ups.

Edinburgh Biodiversity Partnership

Second EBAP Newsletter - Summary of species and habitat actions under way, information on current EBAP implementation fund, our applications for funding post April 2002 and list of awareness raising events.

EBAP Reporting round 2001 - Second round of reporting. Information submitted on General Activity Forms (GAFS) for all actions (completed, ongoing, part done or not done).

Habitat Groups - reconvened to review progress with habitat and associated species actions and to identify where problems have arisen and attempt to solve them!

First stage of developing **website** underway.

Funding - Viridor funding ends April 2002 and we have been unsuccessful in our two bids to receive continued landfill tax funding. The steering group has agreed to use any remaining unallocated money to fund Lothian Wildlife Information Centre, priority implementation projects (juniper

and ponds) and raising awareness in proportion 50:35:15 respectively.

HEI Award - Lothians FWAG won a highly recommended award for riparian habitat at Buteland Farm (Water of Leith) from SEPA in December 2001. This scheme was part funded by the EBAP implementation fund.

LNR Launch - Meadow's Yard and Ravelston Woods LNRs will be launched on 10th May 2002.

City Council Task Force - Progress with alterations to task force grass cutting regime and scrub management along city wildlife corridors.

Planning Guidance - Supplementary planning guidance on biodiversity produced for inclusion in City Council Development Quality Handbook.

Education - Urban Forest Project (City Development) and Grounds for Awareness (Education) schemes are both involved in actively encouraging school children to become involved in tree planting and in gardening for wildlife in school grounds. EBAP advice leaflet sent out to schools who apply to GFA scheme, which is 33% funded by EBAP.

Falkirk Area Biodiversity Action Plan

LBAP document and first 23 action plans being published for launch this spring.

Green School Guidelines developed and to be launched in April. Covers biodiversity, energy, transport and waste/recycling. £15,000 from Council and SNH to support school projects in 2002-03 linked to this guide.

'10 steps for garden biodiversity'

developed and will be widely promoted this year. Already included in a calendar/leaflet going to all Falkirk households.

Local greenspace survey ongoing this year, will include separate forms for gardens and other greenspace.

Business & Biodiversity guidance

note/leaflet produced. Targeted approaches to be made in 2002 to some local businesses using this leaflet.

Council '**Biodiversity Parks**' project ongoing. Intend to alter the cutting regime in further parks in 2002. Changes to landscaped area outside a Council office (this spring) to include compost bins, planting for biodiversity and a bird table. Biodiversity Officer inputting to the development of the new area-wide **Local Plan**.

Contact with National Trust for Scotland to including **swift boxes** in a house renovation, in progress.

Production of a **Bings Action Plan** being progressed with the Council contaminated land officer.

Managed Realignment project on the Forth Estuary still the subject of feasibility studies. Members of the LBAP Estuary Action Group closely involved.

Funding for the Local Biodiversity Officer post from August 2002-July 2005 currently being sought.

Large heath butterfly survey started summer 2001 and to continue summer 2002. First recorded sighting since 1983 made **Woodland Habitat Network Strategy** to be developed in 2002 by the Woodland Action group.

Wide range of surveying taking place along **canals**. Suitable planting undertaken on new sections.

Living Shetland

Seminar In February, over 100 people attended Living Shetland seminar; "Local Action by Local People". A range of councillors, crofters, community groups, MP, MSP, attended but we would have liked to see more local people not associated with any particular organisation. There were talks by our MSP and chairman of the

Steering Group. The key speaker was Laughton Johnston, author of "A Naturalist's Shetland". There were a couple recurring themes throughout the day - the need for better communication between all parties, management of roadside verges and the feeling of pride for the local environment and culture.

Community LBAPs It was decided early on that to succeed, the LBAP must take a community-led approach. We are in the process of employing the first of five Community Representatives. These will work part-time for 6 months, focusing action on geographic areas in Shetland. To meet funding agreements they must produce at least one community LBAP each. I have been visiting the Community Councils, introducing the LBAP process and asking for support and how best to approach communities and industries within their area.

Guidance notes We had an excellent audit published in 1999. I have been condensing it into "guidance notes". It picks out species and habitats that have been identified as having some conservation importance or highlighted by local specialists and gives an introduction to the status of groups and habitats in Shetland.

CD-ROM The LBAP involved with a CD-ROM being produced as a resource for teachers and children, a result of the Young Person's Environment Conference held last summer and attended by 600+ primary school children. It includes topics such as waste and energy and environmental art as well as biodiversity.

Working Groups are being established. The Agriculture group had a productive meeting with John Henderson SEERAD regarding the future of agri-environment schemes in Shetland. **Photography**

Competition is being organised (mainly by a local Girl's Brigade) to help in awareness

raising and getting folk oot & about. Possibly sending Community Council's disposable cameras to get folk to take pictures of what they like/dislike.

Airport To help prevent bird-strikes the airfield at Sumburgh was sprayed and re-seeded with a grass mix. The rich flora was gone overnight (though I have been told the autumn gentians were not harmed). There has been great debate within the media, organisations and the public in general as to whether this was the best way to deal with bird-strikes (particularly as a flock of geese was on the airfield at Christmas!!). People would like to see some areas re-established, but safety is the main concern. The airport manager has offered to give a presentation on their land management and hold a discussion with the Living Shetland steering group.

Wee Projects in development – Flower trail and tree planting on Fetlar.

I am continuing to collect Shetland dialect names for biodiversity and ways of the weather and sea. Braer anniversary – an event is hoped for in January. Community Allotments – this is in planning stage. There has been a severe decline in crops in Shetland, which has had a major impact on twite, in particular. The community allotments (perhaps called C-Allot) would provide an area for people to grow their own plus have a positive impact on local biodiversity. May get local school and youth groups to have their own rigs.

South Lanarkshire Biodiversity

Partnership

Stephen Corcoran recently started as **LBAPO** working within the Council's Community Resources, East Kilbride; a three year post joint funded by SNH and South Lanarkshire Council.

Priorities for the Partnership will be: to reconvene **the five working groups** (Urban,

Woodland, Agriculture, Freshwater & Peatland) and start up some projects. No plan has been published for South Lanarkshire (an audit was done) and one target for this year will be to bring all the draft plans together into an action plan document. Funding remains a critical barrier to progress as there is no project money available, so another target will be to investigate funding opportunities for project work.

The Biodiversity Officer will be co-ordinating the collation of information from a new leaflet "**Plant Invaders!**" that is being launched later this month. This is a joint venture with North Lanarkshire Council to encourage the public to record locations where giant hogweed, Japanese knotweed and rhododendron are found in the wild. A **Woodland Officer** is currently being recruited to co-ordinate the Clyde Valley Woodland Enhancement Project. This woodland project is being funded for 3 years by the EU Life programme. In addition, this July will see the start of a major regeneration and restructuring of the woodland at Chatelherault Country Park. Both these projects have opportunities for enhancing the biodiversity of woodlands in the Clyde Valley catchment area.

A major Treefest event, "**Tree in the Park**", is being held at Chatelherault Country Park on 21 and 22 September. This will be celebrating the cultural, environmental, social and economic use and value of woodlands. It promises to be the biggest event in Scotland, with a large number of events, demonstrations, displays and participation activities and is estimated to attract 20,000 people.

Stirling Biodiversity Action Plan

Consultation drafts of the 25 HAPs and SAPs making up the 2nd Volume (of 3) are being finalised. Launch of consultation on 1

May. Major plans are the 4 urban habitats greenspace, gardens, built environment and transport corridors.

Monitoring, a methodology for doing this for all of the BAPs' actions is being devised.

Planning, I have agreement from the council to fund the production of a GIS overlay for planners that will include the location of Priority habitats and distribution of Priority species allowing them to easily recognise developments that will impact on them.

This will fulfill a policy in the recently produced structure plan.

Post funding, 50% from SNH over 3 yrs, my boss at the Council is trying to make the post permanent, pending agreement from the Council.

Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park, a major partnership HLF bid for £1.5million plus covering this area (looking to create landscape scale habitat networks park-wide) to be submitted in mid-April. Biodiversity structures in the LL&TNP still to be confirmed but looks like the LBAPOs will retain their areas in the LL&TNP and work in partnership with the NP authority.

Biodiversity Trail, a route round Stirling stopping at accessible Priority habitats using existing interpretation. Leaflet and website to be produced in the summer.

Web site - www.stirling.gov.uk/countryside

Best value for biodiversity, looking to audit the Council's activity (very broadly) to give a baseline of its environmental performance. Using ALGE booklet as a basis for this.

Swift boxes. 200 to give away as part of the swift action plan.

Tayside Biodiversity Partnership

Local Patch Project - to be launched April 2002 (to run for 2 years); 35,000 leaflets printed. .

Species Interest Groups - taking projects and the writing of SAPs forward - so far,

Barn Owl, Swift and Red Squirrel Groups have been set up; others to follow.

A draft **Guidance Note** 'to integrate biodiversity into local authorities services' is to be distributed to all departments in Perth and Kinross Council; it is hoped Angus and Dundee City Councils will also wish a similar document to be drawn up for their use.

Perth and Kinross Council are also ensuring biodiversity is incorporated into its **education sector**; the Environmental Education Officer is regularly circulating information to the 93 schools in the area. Interest in growing in setting up pilot projects throughout Tayside to control **Japanese Knotweed**; several community groups and one sporting group (the Edinburgh Kayak Club) have confirmed they will (a) survey specific areas or (b) carry out eradication work.

Tern Project - being considered at the MoD's Barry Buddon site to encourage recolonisation by terns. Clay models of the birds will be made locally, schoolchildren and local people being involved in siting and monitoring.

Tayside Veteran Tree Project - launched by Tayside Native Woodlands - workshops, survey forms and guidance notes available in due course.

TNW have also launched their **Community Woodlands Initiative** to encourage more community woodlands in Tayside.

Lunch-time biodiversity seminar given to private firm of architects - with a request for further input in the future.

Tayside Business and Biodiversity leaflet - draft already well received. Scottish Enterprise Tayside has confirmed 50% funding (£500) to publish it.

Three small wildlife projects being undertaken in Angus to link with the TLBAP's "**Businesses with Land**" HAP - The **Orchardbank Industrial Estate** wildlife

corridor; the butterfly-friendly planting at **Lidl's Supermarket** car park; wildlife-friendly forecourt at **Sturrocks Joiners**.
Partnership Project Listing - a wide range of projects are being highlighted in this occasional round of internal reporting which is, in turn, creating new ideas and contacts within the Partnership.
LBAP - (1st Tranche of 24 HAPs) due for publication this autumn; 2nd Tranche of 30 SAPs and 20 additional HAPs currently being compiled.

Western Isles

SAC has been commissioned to undertake a **biodiversity audit** for the Western Isles. This should be produced by the end of April 2002.

A series of **public meetings** were held in February to raise awareness of the LBAP and encourage participation in the process. Over 80 people attended the meetings which included presentations and workshop sessions. The guest speaker was Dr Kenny Taylor, Chairman of the Cairngorms LBAP Management Group.

An LBAP **web page** is being developed on the Council website

Western Isles Council has recently agreed to support the establishment of a **Local Nature Reserve** at Loch Stiapavat, Lewis. This will be the first LNR in the Western Isles.

The Biodiversity Officer is a member of the local liaison group for the **Uist Wader Project** which is dealing with the problem of hedgehog predation of waders in the Uists, looking at preventing the spread of hedgehogs further north, hedgehog exclusion areas and investigating the translocation of hedgehogs to the mainland. The Biodiversity Officer is involved with the local Ranger Service in developing an **environmental programme for schools**, to increase awareness of the local environment, develop research and communication skills

and encourage team working. The programme will be in one secondary school initially and will involve talks, site visits and various class based activities and projects. Western Isles Council is part funding the **Hebridean Mink Project** which is looking to eradicate American mink from the Uists and to reduce their numbers in Harris. This project will investigate an approach for the wider eradication throughout Lewis and Harris. The project has obtained 50% of the £1.65 million required from the EU Life Nature Fund.

West Lothian

The Council's Spring edition of its newspaper included a 4 page **biodiversity supplement** part sponsored by SNH. A **Lowland Peat Bog HAP** has been adopted after consultation. Led by SWT it is based on the model adopted across the central belt which allows a strategic approach to implement the plan.

Draft plans for **woodlands and farmland** are at the final stage prior to consultation. A **Canal HAP** is being prepared by British Waterways as part of a suite which will address biodiversity management for the lowland canal system.

It has been agreed to hold an **annual open meeting** to review the LBAP progress in West Lothian.

Plans are being made for the **West Lothian Waters Week** (15-23 June).

The **West Lothian Environmental Support Group** (which consists of representatives of all the ranger services, including private and voluntary, and environmental bodies active in the county) is being re-launched in April to plan biodiversity related event programmes.

The **Boundaries, Banks and Birds** farm projects grant supported 8 projects on 01/02
The **West Lothian Landfill Environment Projects Grant** supported biodiversity

projects submitted by SWT and Central Scotland Countryside Trust.

The **Dedridge [Livingston] Community Biodiversity Project** got off the ground after two years of planning, primary school and youth group and Community Council involvement with the start of returning an urban oakwood to its former state.

A retrofit **SUDS** has been agreed for an industrial estate, which is unique in itself, with a design to maximise biodiversity through partnership and community involvement.

SNH Biodiversity update

Much of what we are currently engaged with is internal housekeeping, but this should eventually result in better information for LBAP Officers. We are currently seeking to improve links between our centrally based advisory staff and our area staff by drawing up Area profiles, which will guide area staff as to which priority species and habitats they should be focusing on in a given area.

SNH recently had a meeting for all those area staff that are engaged in LBAPs. Area staff were very supportive of the work being carried out by LBAP Officers.

Internal guidance is being drawn up on funding for LBAP officers.

SNH has commissioned a review of educational resources for sustainable development and biodiversity.

Discussion corner

Community Planning

The Scottish Executive recently published an outline of proposals for the Local Government Bill. They hope to produce a draft Bill in May. This will contain proposals to introduce a power of Community Wellbeing and a new duty of community planning for local authorities.

The current proposals also extend a duty to engage in community planning to the NHS Boards, Police and Enterprise Network.

Alongside the Bill will be ministerial guidance on both what community 'well being' will mean, and also on what a community plan should achieve. What the Bill will mean for biodiversity will become clearer in this associated guidance. England and Wales have a similar Local Government Act 2000. Unlike in E & W the Scottish Executive do not propose to define what 'community well-being' means in the legislation. This will be defined in associated guidance. Also in E & W the duty has not been extended in the legislation beyond local authorities.

As this Bill develops there are a number of challenges.

- To ensure that environment is given an equal weight alongside social and economic elements in the definition of community well being.
- To ensure that specific guidance is issued on how to include environmental considerations into community plans. DEFRA issued guidance on producing Community Strategies (available from their website), which has some mention of environment and biodiversity. Experiences in E & W suggest that stronger and more specific guidance on environmental elements of community planning would have been valuable in getting a voice for environmental interests around the community planning table. As no environmental organisation has been suggested as having a statutory duty to engage, guidance will become even more important to ensure that environment is not treated as a second tier element, or not at all.

- To gain a better understanding of what a community plan seeks to achieve. Despite legislation and guidance existing in England there is still confusion amongst local authorities and partners as to whether the community plan essentially seeks to improve local authority and partners service provision, or to be a 'bottom up' process for involving the community in local planning and decision making. The range of community plans developing in Scotland (and E&W) reflect a number of positions across this spectrum.
- To advocate continuing best practice guidance is issued from the Executive and to promote environmental case studies amongst these.

What is your experience of getting biodiversity recognised in the CP process?
 What would you like to see in any guidance on community planning?

[Vicky Abernethy](#)

Scottish Biodiversity Week



SCOTTISH
 BIODIVERSITY
 WEEK

Please could anyone with local stories that can be included in national press releases during SBW, please get them to me asap. As you organise events, please could you get them to me so I can start on the national flyer.

Cheers - [Jo Lenthall](#)

Information Requests

If anyone has published a Roadside BAP could they contact Helen Moncrieff to give her ideas and advice on developing one in Shetland.

livingshetland@fwag.org.uk

Scottish Biodiversity Contacts - Who's who?

Biodiversity Secretariat, Scottish Executive

John Ramsay and Elaine McCall, SEERAD, 1-H South, Victoria Quay, EDINBURGH, EH6 6QQ - [John Ramsay](#); [Elaine McCall](#)

The secretariat for the Scottish Biodiversity Forum.

Scottish Biodiversity Forum National Biodiversity Project Officer

Sarah Hocknell, Scottish Biodiversity Forum, 1-H South, Victoria Quay, EDINBURGH, EH6 6QQ Tel 0131 244 6328 Fax 0131 244 4071 - [Sarah Hocknell](#)

- Supports the Scottish Biodiversity Forum (SBF) in organising an annual Biodiversity Forum
- Co-ordinating the development, production and monitoring of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy
- Input to and assist Forum Working Groups and facilitate broader working with NDPBs such as VisitScotland and the Enterprise network
- Enhance communications within and outside the SBF, enhancing communications on biodiversity within different departments of the SE and developing a higher media profile for SBF work

- Re-structuring the SBF website and developing a national biodiversity newsletter, enhancing communications between national and local groups on biodiversity implementation.

Scottish Biodiversity Forum National LBAP Officer

Vicky Abernethy and Jo Lenthall (job share), based at RSPB Scotland, Dunedin House, 25 Ravelston Terrace, EDINBURGH, EH4 3TP Tel 0131 311 6512 Fax 0131 311 6569

[Vicky Abernethy](#), [Jo Lenthall](#)

- Informs SBF and working groups on LBAP progress
- Provides support for LBAP officers, including organising the LBAP coordinators network, and providing briefings on key topics
- Provides training for LBAP partnership bodies
- Assists in SBF strategic work
- Promotes LBAP work in Scotland
- Maintains an overview of LBAP work in the UK and promotes progress in Scotland

SNH Biodiversity Co-ordinators

Caroline Eccles, SNH, Ardconnel Terrace, INVERNESS Tel 01463 712221 - [Caroline Eccles](#)

Amelia Morgan, SNH, 2 Anderson Place, EDINBURGH, EH6 5NP Tel 0131 447 4784 - [Amelia Morgan](#)

Caroline works part-time (Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday) and Amelia works full time.

Caroline leads on LBAP issues except for monitoring, where Amelia leads.

- Co-ordinate SNH work on biodiversity and maintain an overview of SNH's contribution to the UK BAP, providing advice and information on biodiversity issues;
- Monitor and progress SNH work on actions and targets identified in the UK BAP;
- Provide support to SNH Area staff working on LBAPs, including the development of guidance and promoting best practice;
- Communicate SNH's work on biodiversity internally and externally with partners and the general public;
- Maintain links between biodiversity groups and contribute to the work of the Scottish Biodiversity Forum, its subgroups and UK Partnership groups.