

SWT CENTRAL BORDERS GROUP

NOTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday 18th October 2018 7.00pm

Langlee Community Centre

Present

Malcolm Lindsay (ML)
Louise Wallace (LW)
Jim Russell (JR)
Lawrence Robertson (LR)
Tricia Wyllie (TW)
Alison Smith (AS)

Apologies

Julian Warman (JW)
Kate Bisset (KB)
John Ferguson (JF)

Item		Action
1.0	PRESENT & APOLOGIES See above.	
2.0	MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS NOTES OF MEETING	
2.1	(2.4) See item 8.2 & 9.1.	
2.2	(2.5) See item 9.1.	
2.3	(2.6) See item 9.1.	
2.4	(2.7) See item 3.1.	
2.5	(2.9) Noted that there was still no Vice Chair and agreed that AS was to attempt to identify a candidate before the end of 2018.	AS
2.6	(2.10) Noted that the current TESCO application deadline was end of October with a February 2019 date anticipated for fundraising.	LR
2.7	(2.11) Noted that the new print run of Eildon Booklets had been produced with thanks to local printer James for keeping costs down. This run included updates on moths and birds with the Foreword by Robin Harper amended to read "Past Chairman". ML reported that a profit of about £3 was now being realised on each booklet having gone beyond the 'break even' point. Noted that sales were now mainly through local retail outlets. Agreed that Borders Book Festival would not be approached in 2019.	
2.8	(2.14) Noted that a 'sightings' slot had been suggested which was still to be initiated. (Not discussed at meeting.) Noted that the suggestion that members' photographs could be collated and presented as a Power Point slideshow before the talks and at the interval had been carried out at the first two talks as well as other announcements. AS asked LW to prepare 12-15 photographs for the next talk evening.	AS LW
2.9	(2.17) Noted that a SWT HQ Volunteer Outings & Activities Form listing attendees giving names, addresses and next of kin details had been completed at all the CBG walks.	
2.10	(2.18) See item 8.3.	

- 2.11 (2.19) Noted that ML had sent e-mails out to all on CBG Volunteer list and committee members not present to request that they complete the forms in either format as requested by HQ. AS had asked Peter Gilbert at HQ to confirm what he has received from CBG volunteers. **AS**
- Noted that announcements about future work parties would be by notifying those on the updated volunteer list. **ML/KB**
- 2.12 (2.20) Noted that LR had attended a further meeting of the SWT HQ Volunteer Steering Group.
- In relation to this, AS referred to the SWT Chair's recent AGM update e-mail which referred to the Young Leaders' Network. The possibility of whether a local tie in with this was possible at Heriot Watt and Borders College campuses in Galashiels was discussed. LR to approach Jo Pike at HQ on this query. **LR**
- Agreed that a CBG Winter Talks sheet should be put up in the above educational buildings staff rooms. **ML**
- 2.13 (2.21) See item 10.1.
- 2.14 (2.23) AS still inviting committee members to submit items for posting. **All**
- 2.15 (2.27) Noted that Jedburgh Guides Group leader had been back in touch with AS who had now given a talk to the Guides and offered further SWT input if desired.
- 2.16 (2.28) Members willing to carry out educational input was discussed further and agreed that this could be members outwith the Committee.
- 2.17 (2.29) Agreed that access to the CBG Facebook page should be the subject of a further demonstration before a talk as the CBG web page link had changed since the last demonstration. **AS/ML**
- 2.18 (6.0) Noted that the Harestanes/Monteviot walk had gone well.
- 2.19 (9.0) Noted that the work to pull out willowherb around the saplings at Hare Moss had been carried out by a small work party.
- 2.20 (15.0) See item 16.1.
- 2.21 (16.1) Noted that the Notes of Meeting were now available to CBG members on the CBG website.
- 2.22 (16.4) Noted that ML was due to give a talk at Leitholm WI. **ML**
- 2.23 (16.5) EM raised the possibility of reintroducing 'Bird Bus' trips to reserves outwith the CBG area along the lines he had organised in the past. EM was to establish current costs for buses with interest to be established at the first evening talk. See also item 6.1. **EM**
- 3.0 TREASURER'S REPORT**
- 3.1 JF had provided AS with financial information for the meeting in his absence:
- Bank Account £2342.78
- This took into account the following agreed expenditure:
 Eildon Hills Booklets £855.00
 Hare Moss Reserve Work (boardwalk, hide roof & fence repair) £554.09
 SWT Cards & Calendars purchase for re-sale £134.00

- 4.0 FUNDING**
- 4.1 Noted that SWT Christmas cards and calendars had been purchased for sale at discounted rates CBG talks. This had already raised £95.
- 5.0 PUBLICATIONS**
- No further matters.
- 6.0 OUTINGS**
- 6.1 JR had been considering possible venues for 2019 outings which were discussed along with other suggestions as follows:
- Hare Moss & Dunhog Moss (with Sarah Eno if possible)
 Spottiswoode (with David Long if possible)
 'Bird Bus' – see item 2.21
 Organic Farm visit – as previously proposed by KB
- 7.0 TALKS**
- 7.1 Additional possibilities for talks were discussed 2019/2020 with list now as follows:
- Hugh Chalmers or Derek Robeson - Tweed Forum on their work
 Philip Munro - Officer South of Scotland Golden Eagle Reinforcement Project
 Rebecca Crawford from Butterfly Conservation who had contacted ML regarding a 'Bog Squad' project with the offer of a talk.
 Dr. Adrian Sumner - on molluscs.
 Graeme Wilson TWIC - on small mammals.
 Dr. Tim Duffy SWT Trustee – talk on his cycling to all SWT Reserves
 Dr. Liz Lakin – Biodiversity and Ecosystems on Tweed (AS to consider further with possibility of Greener Melrose being a more appropriate venue?) **AS**
- 7.2 AS to contact EM to discuss these suggestions. **AS**
- 7.3 Agreed that clarification was needed that all non CBG speakers were being informed at the booking stage of the agreed £30 fee so that JF could pass this on without enquiry after the talk. **EM/AS/ML/JF**
- 8.0 RESERVES**
- 8.1 JW had provided AS with CBG reserve report:
- Hare Moss**
Island repairs...or not? CBG to discuss.
Work parties – brash burning and willow planting to be arranged.
Dalkeith Team to cut more Sitka on A7 side.
Willow to be cut at hide.
- Dunhog Moss (SSSI)**
Keep monitoring plants and willows encroaching bog water areas.
- Whitlaw Wood**
Meadow been cut by Dalkeith Team but now having to keep cuttings on site (Luke Gaskill removing cuttings by tractor had not continued, due to ground conditions, and baling by SWT Dalkeith Team had not been repeated, due to rot problems in inclement weather.) Nearby digester/composter tip to be investigated.
SBC have done no more on landslip section into burn.
- Gordon Moss (SSSI)**
Dalkeith Team been cutting meadow areas in railway section and connecting sections.
- Din Moss & Hoselaw Loch (SSSI)**

Din Moss is part of large scale SNH Peatland Action plans for damming outwith the SWT Reserve.

Yetholm (SSSI)

*Skunk cabbage – still being dealt with as ongoing invasive removal.
Lease coming up for renewal – 3 landowners – should be successful.*

Duns Castle

Matter of debate for some time but SWT withdrawal from management agreement with the owner has now gone through SWT Conservation Committee. No real SWT management has been done here for some time with landowner commercially focussed. Local SWT group members have been looking after hide. (AS noted that SWT Reserve site and up the Oxendean Burn is a SBC LBS site.)

Bemersyde (SSSI)

Discussions and meetings have been taking place with landowners, SNH and SEPA on the reduction of open water particularly at hide. Proposals to use glyphosate herbicide to kill off growth in front of hide needs licence from SEPA and only prepared to allow its use adopting a 'wiping' technique, not spraying. Licence costs are high. Landowner proposal to cut it down off boat but this will only encourage growth. Ongoing matter.

- 8.2 Hare Moss island repair was discussed with AS reporting that the middle section of the growth on the raft construction was now completely missing. This had led to the swan eggs, on their attempt to nest there this year, rolling off the nest.

JW had requested that CBG decide if they wanted the island repaired or left as it was. Repairs would require access by boat. AS had been in touch with Hugh Chalmers, Tweed Forum, who had been involved in the construction of the 'island' and was happy to lend his canoe for repair work. AS to discuss this further with Hugh and JW as committee agreed it was desirable to carry out the repairs.

AS

- 8.3 Committee members who had visited Bemersyde Reserve, as suggested at the last meeting, gave their opinions on the condition of the reserve and hide:

Impressed by the amount of birds on the water but very disappointed that it was so far away from the hide due to the plant growth in the water over the last few years.

Agreed that growth should be reduced but concern expressed on use of glyphosate.

Larger scale work suggested as being required in relation to the reserve's importance as a wintering water bird location but understood that this would need substantial funding outwith SWT resources.

Question of letting it naturally become a willow carr rather than manage it was also raised and discussed.

- 8.4 Possible local composter companies were discussed in relation to the removal of cuttings from Whitlaw Wood Reserve. LR to investigate further to assist JW.

LR

9.0 VOLUNTEER WORK PARTIES

- 9.1 Proposed work parties:

Hare Moss 'island' repairs as above item.

Hare Moss brash burning.

Hare Moss willow replacement planting and additional planting.

- 10.0 DATA PROTECTION**
- 10.1 ML reported that the flow of information to CBG members via HQ was improving. Noted that further communication with HQ on problems with the new system had followed KB raising the matter at the SWT AGM/Members' Day. ML had presented the received instructions from HQ for members not getting e-mails to 'subscribe' on the website at the last evening talk. KB had informed ML that she had done this but was still not receiving the CBG e-mails. Ongoing matter. **ML/AS**
- 10.2 ML had received response from HQ to his query on post codes constituting CBG membership outwith the TD1-TD10 postcodes that they should contact HQ and request to be included in CBG area communications.
- Noted that HQ were also putting an item in the next magazine issue notifying members of the situation and inviting them to consent to being on the new HQ data list if they had not already done so.
- 11.0 PLANNING REVIEW UPDATE**
- 11.1 AS reported that regular planning application reviews were ongoing.
- 11.2 (2.22) Previously agreed suggestion that CBG could invite members to contact AS if concerned about a particular planning application was discussed further. Concern was expressed that this could lead to matters being raised that were subjective comments rather than relevant objective wildlife matters forming the basis of a material 'objection' in planning terms.
- 12.0 TWEED FORUM UPDATE**
- 12.1 Next meeting 06/11/2018 with AS attending.
- 13.0 SBC LOCAL BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN (LBAP)**
- 13.1 Noted that the SBC "Draft Supplementary Guidance: Scottish Borders Local Biodiversity Action Plan" had been sent out for public consultation. AS had forwarded it to committee members and to SWT HQ with a joint response prepared with the help of Susan Davies, Director of Conservation, as copied to committee members. AS to submit this response prior to 30/11/2018. **AS**
- 14.0 LOCAL BIODIVERSITY SITES (LBS)**
- 14.1 AS reported that SBC had been informing landowners of the location of assessed LBS sites during the first part of the year with reviews about to recommence. Next meeting 30/11/2018 with AS to attend. **AS**
- 15.0 SCOTTISH FORESTRY STRATEGY CONSULTATION**
- 15.1 AS reported attending a Scottish Forestry Strategy Workshop at SWT HQ arranged by Bruce Wilson to discuss SWT HQ's reaction and possible response to the proposed Scottish Forestry Strategy Consultation document (as forwarded to committee members).
- 15.2 Bob Frost, Forestry Commission Scotland, had presented an overview of the consultation document.
- 15.3 Bruce Wilson was to draft and send out a SWT HQ response to the consultation and had requested that local groups consider independently using this, if in agreement, to submit their own response. AS to keep committee members updated on progress with this. **AS**
- 15.4 AS reported that the overall Scottish Government targets for forestry planting were ambitious with the Borders to be an area of particularly intensive proposed planting.

- 15.5 Monitoring of forestry proposals was noted as having been very difficult to date but that, under the new SG set up, this should become easier. The need to monitor applications in the SBC area was agreed as desirable but considered to be possibly unmanageable by CBG unless a volunteer came forward to undertake the work. To be reviewed further as details become clearer. **All**
- 16.0 LINDEAN BIRD HIDE**
- 16.1 Noted that CBG had confirmed funding support in principle to SBC making clear that SBC would be responsible for the design, costings, erection and maintenance of the hide.
- The preference that the new hide be located further west to improve the view of the water, with attendant limitations on location due to its SSSI designation, was again discussed with concern expressed if there was such a location. The fact that the current hide could be repaired was again discussed, albeit recognising that the views could not be improved due to the SSSI conditions.
- Confirmation had been received from Keith Robeson, SBC, that CBG's offer had been received with further details of progress with the project awaited.
- 17.0 WOODSIDE GARDEN FOR WILDLIFE AND WELLBEING (WGWW)**
- 17.1 Noted that Woodside Garden for Wildlife and Wellbeing had been created as a separate charity from Woodside Garden Centre. This was in the area that had been created and looked after by the now disbanded RSPB Local Group. Members and volunteers were being recruited for help and work at the garden. AS had left out leaflets on the project at the evening talk.
- 18.0 AOCB**
- 18.1 Noted that Maggie Keegan's replacement at SWT HQ on Policy was a Douglas (Dougie) Peedle.
- 18.2 AS reported that she had received a call from a member of the public regarding a possibly distressed juvenile Gannet at Burnmouth which she had referred to the SSPCA.
- 18.3 Noted that AS had received an e-mail that morning from Peter Gilbert (SWT HQ) on driving for the Trust. This concerned those driving Trust vehicles or regularly carrying out work for the Trust in their own vehicles. AS reported that this now clarified the situation for CBG volunteers who occasionally use their own vehicles with no pre-authorisation required from HQ.
- 18.4 Noted that the TWIC AGM and Autumn Conference was to be held on Saturday 10th November 2018 in Melrose. Booking details will be on TWIC website.
- 18.5 Noted that AS had been invited to SWT Chair's lunch in January with venue to be decided.
- 18.6 Noted that KB and AS had been discussing the use of disposable cups, which cannot be recycled, at the evening talks. Suggested encouragement of attendees to take their own cups and have some reusable cups for sale was discussed and agreed to be taken further. **KB**
- 18.7 Agreed that KB investigate further her suggested promotion of non plastic products such as shampoo bars. **KB**
- 18.8 ML noted that Henry would be showing his film presentation at the December talk with another short presentation required for after the break (15-20 minutes). AS agreed to prepare one on Hare Moss & Dunhog Moss. **AS**

19.0 NEXT MEETING

Next meeting to be held on THURSDAY 17th JANUARY 2019 at Langlee Community Centre at 7.00pm. (Room to be confirmed.)

CIRCULATION

Malcolm Lindsay
John Ferguson
Kate Bisset
Louise Wallace
Lawrence Robertson
Tricia Wyllie
Eric Middleton
Jim Russell
Alison Smith
Julian Warman

Alison Smith 19/10/2018