

# SWT CENTRAL BORDERS GROUP

## NOTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2018 7.00pm

Langlee Community Centre

### Present

Malcolm Lindsay (ML)  
John Ferguson (JF)  
Kate Bisset (KB)  
Jim Russell (JR)  
Lawrence Robertson (LR)  
Tricia Wyllie (TW)  
Eric Middleton (EM)  
Anne Hogarth (AH)  
Dawn Spark (DS)  
Alison Smith (AS)

### Apologies

Louise Wallace (LW)

Item		Action
<b>1.0</b>	<b>PRESENT &amp; APOLOGIES</b>	
	See above. Noted that Julian Warman had not been required to attend this meeting having supplied reserve report.	
<b>2.0</b>	<b>MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS NOTES OF MEETING</b>	
2.1	No comments on previous Notes of Meeting.	
2.2	(2.5) Noted that there was still no Vice Chair with AS attempting to identify a candidate as soon as possible.	<b>AS</b>
2.3	(2.6) Noted that the TESCO collection was arranged for Saturday 19 <sup>th</sup> January 2019.	<b>LR</b>
2.4	(2.8) Agreed that the 'sightings' slot suggestion be incorporated at the start of the next meeting.	<b>AS</b>
	Noted that the KB's photographs, which were to have been presented as a Power Point slideshow at the previous two talks, had been postponed due to pressure of items being presented. KB to bring her PP to next talk.	<b>KB</b>
2.5	(2.11) Noted that Peter Gilbert at HQ to had not confirmed what he had received from CBG volunteers in terms of re-registration. Agreed that announcements about future work parties would be by notifying those on the updated volunteer list held by ML.	
2.6	(2.12) Noted that LR had approached Jo Pike at HQ in relation to the Young Leaders' Network and the possibility of whether a local tie in with this was possible at Heriot Watt and Borders College campuses in Galashiels. Response awaited from Jo.	<b>LR</b>
	Noted that ML had taken CBG Winter Talks sheets to the Borders College & Heriot Watt Campus and requested that they be displayed.	
2.7	(2.14) AS still inviting committee members to submit items for Facebook posting.	

- 2.8 (2.17) Noted that access to the CBG Facebook page had not yet been the subject of a further demonstration before a talk as the CBG web page link had changed since the last demonstration. **AS/ML**
- 2.9 (2.22) Noted that ML's talk at Leitholm WI had gone well.
- 2.10 (2.23) Agreed that EM's suggestion of reintroducing 'Bird Bus' trips to reserves outwith the CBG area along the lines he had organised in the past was to be held back until 2020. EM to establish current costs for buses towards end of 2019. Interest in this proposal with possible destinations to be established at future evening talks. **EM**  
**EM/AS**
- 2.11 (7.1) AS to discuss possibility of Greener Melrose talk being a more appropriate venue for Dr. Liz Lakin – Biodiversity and Ecosystems on Tweed project. **AS**
- 2.12 (7.2) Noted that AS had passed on initial talk suggestions to EM. (See item 7.0)
- 2.13 (7.3) The matter of agreeing fee for speakers (non SWT members) at booking stage for CBG talks was discussed. Agreed that a draft letter/e-mail be produced which could be sent to speakers detailing the fee being offered. **AS/ML**
- 2.14 (8.2) AS reported that Hare Moss island repairs were being discussed in detail following Hugh Chalmers inspection from canoe. Current proposals were to repair the missing top sections by fixing layers of cork insulation to build up the level and provide additional flotation with coir matting then fixed to the cork to provide a base for the new turf. It had been agreed with JW that details of the work be decided and materials purchased during 2019 with actual work being carried out in late 2019 after the breeding season. **AS/JW**
- 2.15 (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. Ongoing. Local biodigester plant St. Boswells Biogas was discussed but LR did not consider it a possibility due to their strict accreditation of supplies. **LR**
- 2.16 (10.1 ) Noted that received instructions from HQ for members not getting CBG e-mails to 'subscribe' on the main SWT website continued to be passed on at talks and in response to enquiries.
- 2.17 (13.1) See item 13.1.
- 2.18 (14.1) See item 14.1.
- 2.19 (15.3) See item 15.0.
- 2.20 (18.6 &18.7) Noted that KB had been presenting ideas for sustainable products such as shampoo bars and wooden toothbrushes at the evening talks with products available for sale. This was to be continued with gardening products to be included. **KB**
- 2.21 (18.8) Noted that the December talk had been by Henry and Alison.

### **3.0 TREASURER'S REPORT**

3.1 JF reported the following:

Bank Account                    £2577.78

Skipton BS Account        £644.59

#### 4.0 FUNDING

4.1 The funding of the CBG was explained for the new committee members as being mainly from donations, raffle, and Eildon Hills Booklet and Christmas card/calendar sales. SWT HQ allowed the local group to manage its own funds.

Noted that SWT itself was funded by contributions from:

- Membership fees
- SNH
- National Lottery
- Heritage Lottery Fund
- People's Postcode Lottery
- Wren
- Albert Bartlett (corporate funder)
- Vine House Farm (corporate funder)

#### 5.0 PUBLICATIONS

No current matters.

#### 6.0 OUTINGS

6.1 Noted that the 2019 outing to **Spottiswoode** with David Long was arranged for 25<sup>th</sup> May 2019.

JR's proposals for the 2019 outings which were discussed as follows:

##### **Hare Moss & Dunhog Moss**

Afternoon visit with AS to provide weekend date in July.

AS

*(Post meeting note – Stuart Craig has offered to carry out bird ringing as part of one of CBG's outings. This outing to be suggested to Stuart making it a full day event.)*

AS

##### **Farm visit near Fountainhall** (approx. 3 mile walk)

Environmental work/recording being undertaken. KB to confirm possible dates with farmer in June or July.

KB

##### **St. Mary's Loch**

Full day walk proposed with circular routes to be investigated. June or July dates to be considered.

ML/JR

Farne Islands trip was discussed with costs and boat booking arrangements to be looked into further as possible for 2020 outing if above list goes ahead for 2019.

Other possibilities discussed were:

Dunstanburgh Castle

Pease Dean

The Haining (possibly too short and work to undertaken there 2019 to improve paths etc.)

See item 2.10 for 'bird bus' suggestion.

#### 7.0 TALKS

7.1 EM put forward proposals for 2019 talks which were discussed along with previous offers as follows:

John Robertson Poisonous Plants in the Borders

Roger Manning Farming and Wildlife

Mike Rutherford – topic TBC (probably February date)

Mike Betts – Chile

Members' Night

December Talk - Q&A session with table of CBG experts + Chris Rose  
Svalbard talk  
Hugh Chalmers or Derek Robeson - Tweed Forum on their work  
Philip Munro - Officer South of Scotland Golden Eagle Reinforcement Project  
Rebecca Crawford - Butterfly Conservation – possible shorter talk after AGM?  
Dr. Tim Duffy SWT Trustee – talk on his cycling to all SWT Reserves

## 8.0 RESERVES

8.1 JW had provided AS with local reserve report:

### **Hare Moss**

*Island repairs...see item 2.14.*

*Work parties:*

*Brash burning had been postponed due to weather.*

*Consideration being given to log chipping on site on north side.*

*Further log removal to be considered with AS to speak to Douglas Methven.*

*Willow planting to replace dead saplings to be arranged.*

JW/AS  
JW/AS  
AS  
JW/AWS

### **Dunhog Moss (SSSI)**

*Nothing to report.*

### **Whitlaw Wood**

*Meadow cut and raked by Dalkeith Team with cuttings kept on site.*

*Nearby digester/composter tip to be investigated. See item 2.15.*

*Grey squirrel trapping being carried out under SWT Red Squirrel project.*

### **Gordon Moss (SSSI)**

*Dalkeith Team had cut and raked three grassland areas on the railway cut.*

*One glade enlarged to try and enhance orchid population.*

### **Din Moss & Hoselaw Loch (SSSI)**

*Small birch and pine cut from open area of raised bog to maintain habitat.*

### **Yetholm (SSSI)**

*Hide repairs carried out.*

*Willow screen by hide pruned and willows near hide pollarded.*

*Skunk cabbage – controlled for second year.*

*Lease coming up for renewal in July 2019 with SWT negotiating with the three landowners for another 25 year lease.*

### **Duns Castle**

*SWT withdrawing from management agreement with the owner.*

### **Bemersyde (SSSI)**

*JW trying to get consent from SEPA for herbicide treatment of vegetation outside hide.*

*Owners have felled spruce area outwith, but adjacent to, SWT reserve at*

*south west end. JW's attempts to encourage willow and alder planting looking unsuccessful and more likely to be spruce.*

## 9.0 VOLUNTEER WORK PARTIES

9.1 Proposed work parties:

Hare Moss 'island' repairs as above item 2.14.

Hare Moss brash burning.

Hare Moss willow replacement planting and additional planting.

JW/AS  
JW/AS  
JW/AS

## 10.0 DATA PROTECTION

10.1 See item 2.16.

**11.0 PLANNING REVIEW UPDATE**

11.1 AS reported that regular planning application reviews were ongoing with a member of the public having contacted SWT HQ regarding an application for housing by Renaissance Homes in Melrose possibly affecting Great Crested Newt habitat. SWT HQ had asked CBG to comment. Application documentation had been reviewed by AS and ML with GCN matters considered to be being dealt with by SBC Ecology Officer. Reported back to HQ.

**12.0 TWEED FORUM UPDATE**

12.1 No current matters to report.

**13.0 SBC LOCAL BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN (LBAP)**

13.1 Noted that CBG had submitted response to SBC "Draft Supplementary Guidance: Scottish Borders Local Biodiversity Action Plan" which had included concern regarding the delay in advising landowners of the assessed LBS sites which are referred to in the LBAP.

**14.0 LOCAL BIODIVERSITY SITES (LBS)**

14.1 AS reported that SBC had had to delay programmed informing landowners of the location of assessed LBS sites due to lack of resources. (See also item 13.1 above.) This was causing concern in the steering group as to the purpose of designating these sites if they were not made public and introduced into planning guidance. Despite this a further meeting had been held to assess further sites.

**15.0 SCOTTISH FORESTRY STRATEGY CONSULTATION**

15.1 Bruce Wilson at SWT HQ had forwarded the SWT HQ response to the SG Scottish Forestry Strategy to CBG which was forwarded to the committee. This had been agreed as a comprehensive response covering all concerns.

15.2 Monitoring of forestry proposals was again noted as a matter of concern with the need to monitor applications in the SBC area desirable but considered to be possibly unmanageable by CBG unless a volunteer came forward to undertake the work.

All

**16.0 LINDEAN BIRD HIDE**

16.1 AS reported that there had been no formal update on the Lindean hide replacement project by SBC to replace the hide at Lindean but had been informed that a meeting was being held there that week with Douglas Methven and David Parkinson representing CBG SWT. It was also understood that Bemersyde hide was being used as a 'model' for the new hide with its location not yet decided and requiring SNH approval.

16.2 AS had noted that an old SWT bird identification board, including some hand drawn images of swan species, was still intact in the hide, despite the adjacent graffiti, and has asked that it be carefully taken down prior to demolition of the existing hide.

**17.0 LANGLEE COMMUNITY CENTRE**

17.1 Noted that JF, (who represents CBG at LCC meetings), and ML had attended a committee meeting at Langlee CC in November. They reported that Live Borders are now pressurising Langlee CC to develop in a more autonomous way with an expansion in uses to reduce Live Borders support. This may prove difficult with the existing small house committee structure. CBG have indicated that it would consider an increase in the hire charge if that helped. Ongoing matter to be monitored.

JF

**18.0 BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION HLF SUPPORTED PROJECT**

18.1 ML reported on a recent approach from Butterfly Conservation for written support from CBG for the HLF supported 'Project for the Northern Brown Argus Butterfly'. The deadline for this initial support had been too tight to allow involvement of the full CBG committee with ML and AS agreeing to support the project due to its relevance in the CBG area in relation to NBA sites. The project was also considered important in relation to concerns over potentially indiscriminate volume tree planting to meet government targets as part of the Scottish Forestry Strategy. (See15.0). ML had sent out a CBG supporting letter.

If HLF bid successful survey volunteers would be needed with CBG to advise members accordingly.

**ML/AS**

**19.0 AOCB**

19.1 AS reported a call from a member of the public in relation to an injured pigeon. AS had referred the caller to the SSPCA.

19.2 TW gave details of a Grey Squirrel eradication project underway at Craig Hill, near Clovenfords, under the Red Squirrel Project.

19.3 ML reported on the recent tree planting at Brown Moor Heights opposite Hare Moss Reserve where it had been noted that trees had been planted on areas where Rock Rose was known to have grown. Andy Tharme, SBC Ecology Officer, had taken the matter up with FCS with a view to the removal of trees which would in time shade the Rock Rose areas.

19.4 Local sightings of Pine Martens were discussed.

**20.0 NEXT MEETING**

**Next meeting to be held on THURSDAY 28<sup>th</sup> MARCH 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  
Anne Hogarth  
Dawn Spark  
Alison Smith  
Julian Warman

*Alison Smith 19/01/2019*