

Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LBAP



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UPDATE REPORT AND ROLLED FORWARD ACTIONS FOR 2008-2011



Inverclyde
Renfrewshire
East Renfrewshire
LBAP

Introduction

The Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) is a Partnership forum which aims to protect and enhance Biodiversity.

Biodiversity is, simply put, biological diversity or the variety of living things. The LBAP was launched in 2004 and included 18 Action plans for 7 habitats and 11 species with species groups represented by fungi, plants, fish, birds and mammals.

Since then the LBAP Partnership has been working to achieve actions included in the plan through

- ★ habitat enhancement
- ★ protecting species
- ★ working with groups and partners
- ★ raising the profile of biodiversity with the public and at the strategic level

This report highlights some of the activities and events that have been taking place to promote biodiversity throughout the area.

What's been happening?

Strategic Projects

- ★ The Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership has a long-term objective to create an Integrated Habitat Network. It is an ambitious project which aims to improve and create quality habitats throughout the Glasgow & Clyde Valley area.

The overall aim is to provide greenspaces which have value for both communities and biodiversity by improving quality and connectivity of greenspaces on a large scale level. The first stage of this work involves using mapping data and Geographical Information Systems (GIS) software to analyse where important habitats need to be located so species can move around effectively. This has important implications for the long-term survival of biodiversity from threats like global warming.

- ★ Renfrewshire has a new Local Nature Reserve at Durrockstock Park. The park received its official LNR status in January 2008 and becomes Renfrewshire's third Local Nature Reserve.

The park boasts open water, a LBAP Habitat, with excellent marginal habitat including reeds, wet woodland and semi natural woodland (also a LBAP Habitat).

Habitat Enhancement Projects

- ★ Habitat enhancement surveys for invertebrates and water vole have been conducted as part of the works for a path construction within Dams to Darnley Country Park. The Park is a partnership project between East Renfrewshire and Glasgow City Council which will manage the area for the benefit of the public, amenity and biodiversity.
- ★ Scottish Water needs to lower the water level of Harelaw Reservoir to de-classify it as a reservoir. Scottish Water has agreed to include habitat enhancement works during the works in order to mitigate for the temporary disturbance. These include the creation of scrapes and introducing seeded coir mats to improve the marginal habitat next to the dam.



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- ★ A new scrape has been created at Jenny's Well Local Nature Reserve. This will provide new habitat for frogs to spawn and important invertebrate groups like dragonflies to lay their eggs. Once the scrape is better established it will provide a useful education resource by providing pond dipping opportunities.
- ★ BTCV have set up two Green Gym ® projects in Renfrewshire after the success of the pilot scheme in Linwood. The BTCV Green Gym ® is a scheme that inspires people to simultaneously improve their health and the environment by offering the opportunity to 'work out' in the open air through local, practical environmental or gardening work.



- ★ Renfrewshire Council has changed the cutting regime on a very large grass area at Cockleshill Loan in Renfrew, to allow wildflowers, particularly orchids, to emerge, flower and set seed. These flowers will be protected during nearby building works and the grass will be cut once a year after the orchids have finished flowering.
- ★ Work has started to develop a habitat enhancement project in Gleniffer Braes Country Park. The plan is to create new areas of mature hawthorn scrub with dense bramble, dog rose and gorse understory. Scrub is an important habitat for a wide range of species so will be a new Habitat Action Plan for the LBAP. Furthermore, this habitat will eventually provide nesting habitat for Lesser Whitethroat, one of our rarest LBAP species, but will also provide ideal habitat for other bird and invertebrate species.
- ★ In 2007 a grass verge survey was commissioned to provide information about the location of grass verges with high or potentially high biodiversity throughout the LBAP area. The results were very interesting with a number of grass verges supporting high floral biodiversity. This information will be used to modify the mowing regime in some areas to enhance or protect the existing biodiversity.



Education & Promotions Projects

- ★ Lower Clyde Greenspace, based in Inverclyde has developed a School Grounds Project. This project provides money to help schools to better use their outdoor spaces and encourage wildlife, thereby allowing pupils' contact with the outdoors and nature. These experiences can be incorporated into the school curriculum through subjects like science, geography and maths.
- ★ The Biodiversity Healthcare Project at Dykebar is ongoing and during summer 2007 a number of improvements were made to the wildlife walk including the provision of benches, clearing paths and new display boards. The project will be extended into a horticultural project this season with the patients involved in organic gardening.
- ★ Renfrewshire's Rangers have been involved with running biodiversity education events such as the Hop Out Programme for 17 schools. Pupils learned about woodland minibeasts, freshwater minibeasts and different habitats at Gleniffer Braes Country Park and Durrockstock Park LNR. They also run numerous guided walks on biodiversity topics for interested groups from children to over 65s at various different sites throughout Renfrewshire.

Species Projects

- ★ Aspen features in a new Species Action Plan written for the LBAP by BULB, a voluntary environmental community group based at Lochwinnoch. They will be championing the action plan and have already started implementing some of the actions including: collecting root cuttings in spring 2007 from the four remaining stands in the Renfrewshire Hills and germinating shoots from these to provide 200 healthy potted up cuttings.
- ★ Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park and the LBAP partnership are working with Forest Research



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Juniper

and Plantlife to propagate Juniper from a range of sites and then match these plants to environmentally similar locations. Forest Research has developed a Geographical Information System programme that can find areas which have environmental conditions similar to those where Juniper populations already exist. This information can be used to determine which populations are suitable to exchange plant material with, so we can improve the survival chances of our own small Juniper population.

- ★ The Black Guillemot or Tystie, *Cephus grylle*, is an endearing, medium-sized seabird about 32-38 cm in length. Adult birds have black bodies with a white wing patch, a thin dark bill and red legs and feet.

In Inverclyde the birds had been nesting in the eaves of a water front building in Kingston Shipyard since 1979. This was the first case of them breeding in such an industrial site. Since then the extensive regeneration of the derelict waterfront and the re-routing of the A8 meant that the building was demolished and the birds lost their nesting place.

As compensation and thanks to a team from Clydeport, we recently installed 12 nest boxes for the birds within James Watt Dock. The boxes were funded by Lower Clyde Greenspace and Clydeport helped with the physical installation of the boxes which is very difficult because they need to be close or ideally above water and well out of potential predators' reach.

All that remains to be seen is if the boxes live up to the birds' standards in future breeding seasons.

- ★ Black-headed Gulls are both a European and UK Species of Conservation Concern; and colonies have undergone recent losses in Scotland. A colony has historically nested on an island at Barcraigs Reservoir near Howwood in Renfrewshire. In recent years however, the island has become overgrown with trees, which prevent the gulls from nesting on the ground.

Renfrewshire and North Ayrshire Councils co-funded a team from Scottish Wildlife Trust to conduct some tree clearance work on the island to allow the Black-headed Gulls to nest again this season.

- ★ A number of identification courses were held in spring and summer 2007 to help people identify different species of Bumble Bees, Dragonflies and Butterflies. The aim of these courses is to try to get people out collecting and submitting records in the LBAP area.
- ★ Two Barn Owl boxes were installed at a farm near Lochwinnoch in early 2007. The site was chosen because Barn Owls had been seen in the area and it was noted that there was a lack of nesting opportunities in the area. The owls moved into their new accommodation within weeks.



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Revised Actions for 2008-2011

The following section shows how the Actions for the existing 18 habitat and species that were originally launched in 2004 will be rolled forward over the next 3 years.

Habitat Action Plans

Dwarf Shrub Heath

Actions	Partners	Timescale
Identify sites available for habitat enhancement management and restoration	SNH CMRP LAs	2008-2011
Promote available funding sources in order to encourage management practices which enhance and restore heathlands	SNH FWAG	Ongoing
Develop policies which presume against loss to development and agricultural intensification	SNH FWAG CMRP LAs	Ongoing
Work with partners to promote guidance literature	SNH FWAG	2008-2011
Organise public participation events to extol the virtues of heathland habitats for biodiversity	CMRP Rangers	2009-2011

Mires

Actions	Partners	Timescale
Identify sites available for habitat enhancement management.	FWAG CMRP	2008-2011
Develop policy of preventing further loss in extent and quality of existing mire habitat	LAs SNH	2008-ongoing
Encourage sympathetic, site-specific management regimes.	FWAG SNH	2008-2011
Develop policy of restoring degraded mire sites wherever opportunities arise.	FWAG SNH	2008-ongoing
Organise public participation events to demonstrate the importance of mire habitats to biodiversity.	CMRP Rangers BO	2009-2011

Unimproved grassland

Actions	Partners	Timescale
Review and digitise existing survey information on semi-natural grasslands to identify key ecological areas	LAs SNH	2008-2011
Develop policies which promote management practices that enhance and restore unimproved grassland habitats	LAs SNH FWAG	2008-ongoing
Identify sites available for habitat enhancement management and encourage sympathetic, site-specific management regimes	LAs FWAG Landowers & managers (NFU)	2008-ongoing
Development of a unimproved grassland demonstration project.	FWAG LAs	2008-2011

Rivers and Streams

Actions	Partners	Timescale
Ensure that all statutory water quality and discharge consent standards are maintained	SEPA	2008- ongoing
Promote the adoption of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) principles	SEPA LAs	2008-2011
Ensure compliance with policies which promote management practices that enhance and restore riverine habitats particularly in regard to strategic policies for flood prevention and integrated habitat networks	SEPA LAs RCFMT	2008-2011
Advocate the integration of biodiversity friendly design when works to watercourses are required.	SEPA SW LA's	2008-ongoing
Encourage local community projects that enhance watercourse biodiversity.	Greenspace teams RCFMT RCF LAs SEPA	2008-2011



Standing Open Waters

Actions	Partners	Timescale
Ensure that all statutory water quality and discharge consent standards are maintained	SEPA	2008-2011
Promote the adoption of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) principles	SEPA LAs	2008-ongoing
Develop policies which enhance and restore standing water habitats	SEPA LAs SW	2008-2011
Create new ponds where appropriate and improve the habitat of existing ponds	SEPA SWT FWAG CMRP LAs	2008-2011
Encourage local community projects that enhance open water biodiversity	Greenspace Projects LAs SEPA	2008-2011



Dams to Darnley Country Park

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Broadleaved & Mixed Woodland

Actions	Partners	Timescale
Ensure no further loss in extent and quality of existing woodland habitat	FC SNH LAs	2008-ongoing
Collate and digitise all available survey information to review status of the main sites	FC LAs CMRP	2008-2011
Encourage natural regeneration, colonisation and native tree planting in appropriate sites	FC LAs CMRP	2008-2011
Promote available funding sources in order to encourage sympathetic, site-specific management regimes	FC SNH LAs	2008-2011
Promote an appreciation of the value of woodlands to local communities	LAs Greenspace teams Rangers Forestry Commission	2008-ongoing
Organise potential woodland management activities for community groups, volunteers, trainees etc geared towards enhancing biodiversity in targeted sites.	BTCV	2008-2011

Urban Area

Actions	Partners	Timescale
Review existing information about urban habitats to evaluate importance of identified sites to biodiversity	LAs	2008-ongoing
Use upgraded information to ensure urban wildlife sites are fully integrated into strategic policies, in order to protect important sites & encourage sympathetic management	LAs	2008-2011
Promote an appreciation of the value of urban habitats to local communities and business, in terms of marketing and environmental management.	Greenspace teams Rangers LAs	2008-ongoing
Encourage community action and provide support for local groups and landowners on best practice for maintenance and enhancement of greenspaces	Greenspace teams BO	2008-ongoing



Butterfly Orchids

Actions	Partners	Timescale
Collate and digitise available survey information	BSBI PNHS Rangers Paisley Museum	2008-2011
Ensure no further loss in extent and quality of existing populations	LAs	2008-ongoing
Encourage appropriate management of known sites	FWAG SNH CMRP LAs	2008-ongoing
Inform landowners of presence of orchid population	BSBI FWAG LAs	2008-ongoing

Common Juniper

Actions	Partners	Timescale
Ensure no loss or damage to the surviving plants	FC LAs FWAG	2008-ongoing
Encourage regeneration at all known sites	BSBI CMRP FC	2008-ongoing
Establish new sites at appropriate locations	BSBI CMRP	2008-ongoing
Identify suitable sites for potential reintroduction	BSBI CMRP	2008-2011
Coordinate with National Plan and encourage appropriate genetic diversity in the local population to improve chances of long-term survival	BSBI CMRP Biodiversity officer	2008-ongoing
Continue public engagement exercises within context of appropriate, broader initiatives.	CMRP	2008-ongoing

Spignel

Actions	Partners	Timescale
Collate and digitise existing distribution information	BSBI Paisley Museum	2008-2011
Maintain records of any new populations and monitor existing populations	BSBI UWS PNHS	2009-ongoing
Ensure no further loss or damage to the surviving populations by protecting existing sites and encourage appropriate management of known sites	SNH FWAG LAs	2008-ongoing
Identify suitable sites for potential reintroduction	BSBI CMRP	2008-ongoing

Atlantic salmon

Actions	Partners	Timescale
Ensure no net loss of species numbers or range.	RCFMT SEPA	2008-ongoing
Participate in the production of a Catchment Management Plan for the River Clyde and its tributaries.	SEPA RCFMT CRF CMRP	2008-ongoing
Record known and reported sites in the area and monitor population trends.	RCFMT CRF	2008-ongoing
Identify opportunities to improve the river habitat for salmon	CRF RCFMT	2008-2011



Waxcaps

Actions	Partners	Timescale
Ensure no further loss or damage to existing populations	LAs Landowners	2008-ongoing
Collate existing population data, monitor existing populations and record new populations	UWS SNH	2008-2011
Encourage appropriate management of known sites	LAs GBCP SNH	2008-ongoing
Produce an ID guide for local species and provide information on waxcaps and their use as indicator species, for distribution to landowners and outdoor groups	Biodiversity Officer UWS	2008-2011

Black Grouse

Following two years (2006 & 2007) of Black Grouse surveying within Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park, we can conclude there are likely to be only 2 single lekking males left in this area. This is an extremely low number of black grouse and this does not form a viable or sustainable population. The nearest black grouse populations are north of Helensburgh c.8km and over 20km away to SE, Therefore these birds are remnants of a now fairly isolated population. The RSPB has suggested that it would be unjustifiable to put any resources into managing habitats etc. for these solitary birds and we can assume that Black Grouse are likely to disappear from Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire and Inverclyde in the very near future.



Hen Harrier

Actions	Partners	Timescale
Establish a running mean population of at least 9 breeding pairs of Hen Harrier within the Renfrewshire Heights Special Protection Areas, through implementation of the Special Action Plan	RSPB CMRP SNH RSG SOC PWLO FWAG	2009-2013
Develop management practices to protect and extend suitable nesting and foraging habitat within publicly owned land and seek out private landowners' help in restoring and protecting heather moorland throughout the LBAP area.	SNH CMRP RSPB RSG SOC	2009-2013
Ensure continued vigilance to detect and deter persecution of Hen Harriers	RSPB CMRP PWLO RSG/SOC	2009-2013
Contact all landowners and tenants whose land supports Hen Harriers by spring 2009 and seek partnership working to further the objectives of the action plan	CMRP FWAG RSPB SNH	2009
Continue to run a programme of monitoring of breeding and wintering Hen Harriers during the lifetime of this plan.	RSG/SOC CMRP	2009-2013
Continue the remote viewing facility at Muirshiel Country Park initiated in 2003 and produce an awareness strategy to investigate opportunities to increase viewer numbers	RSPB CMRP SNH RSG/SOC	2009-2013



Brown Hare

Actions	Partners	Timescale
Protect existing Brown Hare habitat from development and habitat degradation	LAs FWAG CMRP	2008-2011
Promote management practices that enhance and restore suitable habitat and identify potential sources of funding for habitat enhancement	FWAG	2008-2011
Record known and reported sites and encourage record submissions by landowners and recreational countryside users	CMRP SNH BO	2008-ongoing
Promote an appreciation of the value of Brown Hares to local communities and habitat requirements to landowners	CMRP BO Rangers FWAG	2008-2011

Lesser Whitethroat

Actions	Partners	Timescale
Develop policies which protect, create & enhance suitable breeding habitat	LAs	2008-ongoing
Implement projects to create, restore and enhance suitable habitat	LAs Clyde Ringing Group	2008-2011
Continue monitoring and maintaining the ringing programme	Clyde Ringing Group SOC	2008-2011
Continue, educational and local community initiatives that increase the positive perception of Lesser Whitethroat and associated habitat.	PNHS Rangers	2008-2011



Otter

Actions	Partners	Timescale
Protect existing Otter habitat from development and habitat degradation	LAs SNH	2008-ongoing
Record known habitat and reported sightings in the area	LAs SNH	2008-2011
Develop policies which protect, enhance and restore suitable Otter habitat	LAs SNH SEPA	2008-ongoing
Implement projects that create or enhance Otter habitat	LAs SNH	2008-2011
Support educational and local community initiatives that increase the positive perception of Otters	LAs SNH SEPA	2008-2011

Pipistrelle Bat

Actions	Partners	Timescale
Record known and reported maternity and hibernacula roost sites in the area	Clyde Bat Group SNH	2008-2011
Develop policies which protect, enhance and restore roosting & foraging habitat suitable for bats.	LAs SNH	2008-2011
Support educational and local community initiatives that increase the positive perception of bats	Clyde Bat Group LAs SNH	2008-2011

The Future of the LBAP

Whilst much has been achieved there is always more work to be done and new priorities for action in the area. For example, we now have six new actions plans for Water Vole, Mountain Hare, House Sparrow, Green Hairstreak, Scrub and Aspen, which give us a whole new set of actions to work on over the next three years.



All progress on the Local Biodiversity Action Plan detailed in this report has been achieved through the hard work and commitment of the LBAP Partnership organisation members and volunteers.

Thanks to all who contributed



BSBI

