



## **Annual Report for 2006**

Scottish Charity No SC024418



**BRISC 2007 Annual General Meeting  
To be held on Saturday 24 March 2007  
at The Birnam Arts and Conference Centre, Station Road, Birnam, Dunkeld,  
11.45 12.30**

**Agenda**

- 1. Apologies for absence**
- 2. Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on 8 April 2006 at The Tweed Horizons Centre, Newtown St Boswells, Scottish Borders**
- 3. Chairman's Report for 2006**
- 4. Wildlife Counts Project Officer's Report**
- 5. Annual Accounts and Treasurer's Report**
- 6. Constitution**
- 7. Annual subscriptions**
- 8. Forward planning: BRISC Business Plan**
- 9. Election of Honorary Officers and Council for 2007/2008**
- 10. Any other business**

## Annual Report for 2006

**Introduction.** I think a general description for BRISC activities over the past year is that it has been a mixture of slow progress and some very worthwhile outcomes. We are still without any administrative back up and, because of this, all work falls back on your Committee who have to juggle their work and own time in order to support the aims of BRISC. We hope that we are progressing to being able to resolve this in both the short and the long term by appointing a Project Officer. This report summarises the main activities of BRISC over the last year and is for presentation at the **AGM** which will take place during the **Annual Conference on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2007** at the **Birnam Institute, Dunkeld.**

We held our **last years AGM and Conference** on Saturday 8 April 2006 at The Tweed Horizons Centre, Newtown St Boswells, Scottish Borders. There were some 50 attendees at the Conference and slightly fewer at the AGM, which is to be expected as the Conference is open to all. This was a hugely enjoyable and informative day based around Wetlands Recording and Monitoring which had been organized for us by Jon Mercer. The venue was sponsored by Scottish Borders Council and included a visit to Whitlaw Mosses NNR, under the auspices of another of our day's sponsors, SNH. We had a total of seven talks and our very sincere thanks to all the presenters.

The Minutes of the last AGM were published in the July 2006 issue of *BRISC Recorder News* No 62 and is also available from the Members Only pages on our website [www.brisc.org.uk](http://www.brisc.org.uk), and further copies will be available at the AGM.

**The Wildlife Counts Project** has undoubtedly been the most important area of work over the last year. The Project Management Team, Chaired by Craig Macadam, who took over from Anne-Marie Smout, comprised representatives of our Sponsors, Catriona Morrison (SNH), Chris Waddell (Stirling Council), Laura Whyte (North Lanarkshire), Caroline Peacock (Falkirk Council) and Vicky Walls (BTCV). Our other major Sponsor has been the Heritage Lottery Fund and, of course, the prime person in seeing that the Project progressed was Dr Claire McSorley. We are extremely grateful to all of them and the helpers at the organized events for the work that has been put in. Claire McSorley sadly had to relinquish her post when she moved to the West Coast but has been replaced by John McFarlane who is losing no time in continuing to take forward the programme.

The first Annual Report of the Project is available but, in summary, there was an excellent response from the three council areas to the programme of events that had been arranged by Claire. In all some 302 participants attended 24 events, which were aimed at introducing them to recording and the biological interests in their locality. The feedback received following the events indicated that participants were well satisfied with what they had learnt and taken back from the event and we are hopeful that at the end of next year there will be a good nucleus of new recorders in the three areas to continue the work into the future and encourage others to undertake recording.

**North East Scotland Biological Records Centre (NESBReC)** was also running a series of workshops and training days, in the Cairngorm National Park area, with the same broad objectives. They needed financial help to run these courses but, as they are part of a 'local authority,' it can be difficult for them to obtain additional funding from some organizations. By asking BRISC to be the lead partner they were able to access funds that would not normally have been available to them. I would like to commend this approach to other Record Centres who require some umbrella organization to submit a Grant Application... As members of BRISC you will all be aware that our aim is to promote the gathering of environmental data, in order to increase public awareness about biological diversity in Scotland, and to that end if we can be of assistance to Record Centres please contact us; we do not take on the day to day running of the project.

**The Natural Talent Project** is promoted by the Heritage Lottery Fund and is being delivered on their behalf by BTCV Scotland. BRISC attends meetings in an advisory and consultative role. The project is providing apprenticeships/bursaries to enable recipients to follow up to a work-based skills development programme. The first Apprentices have been recruited and development of the second year's bursaries is now being undertaken.

BRISC has not organized any **training days** this year, out with the projects above. There does seem to be a demand for them on a wider national basis and I wonder if there is not an opportunity here for BRISC to combine with locally organized events and to promote such events on our Website.

We have continued our associate membership of **LINK**. However, LINK is reviewing their method of assessing annual subscriptions and it may be that the revised rates will not be within the financial resources of BRISC. Your Committee has already endorsed our withdrawal from LINK, should we feel it is going to stretch our resources. I continue to input into the discussions at LINK regarding the subscription issue but am not very active on their campaigning front; the position on this latter point has not changed from last year. In the lead up to the 2007 Scottish Parliament elections LINK is gearing itself up to ensure the importance of 'the environment' is not lost sight of by any candidate; BRISC is not partaking directly in any activity but does support the majority of the issues that are being highlighted.

The taking forward of the **Business Plan** is happening but slowly! We have a small sub-group dealing with this and the object is to have grant applications submitted to various organizations in the early part of 2007. We have obtained financial support from a small trust that specifically assists with the initial costs of getting worthwhile schemes up and running. We hope therefore to appoint a contractor to take forward the initial administrative of the longer term project. Their overall responsibility will be to complete identifying Trusts whom we can approach for funds, make sure the necessary applications are made to them and to assist with the recruitment of a long term Project Officer.

**Communication.** We have had four editions of **Recorder News** during the year under and are most grateful to the continuing of its editing by Anne-Marie Smout.

During the course of the year I receive notice of a number of other publications and events and where of general interest I do try and arrange for them to be posted on our web site. One such item was the publication by the National Biodiversity Network (NBN) of guidance on data verification, validation and their application in biological recording. This had been compiled by Trevor James, NBN Development Officer for National Societies & Schemes. Whilst I received hard copies, the guidance is also available in electronic format.

The **Website** has been maintained by Andy Wakelin who continues to refine and make it even more user friendly and helpful. Comments on its contents, layout or ways of improving it still further are, as ever, useful for him to receive.

Our **finances** have been looked after by Duncan Davidson and a copy of the accounts for the year is available. We remain in a healthy position, partly because the Committee has been very generous in not making claims for expenses. However, I am concerned that people should not be put off from joining the Committee because they feel they will have to meet expenses incurred on its behalf. This is not the case and we do expect to meet reasonable expenses incurred in attending meetings, whether Committee ones in Scotland or others down south attended on BRISC's behalf.

We have had three **Committee Meetings** during the course of the year and I have attended the National Federation for Biological Recording (NFBR) and NBN meetings in London on behalf of BRISC. This helps ensure that there is a flow of information around the country and that each end of the country appreciates what the other end is up to! I also attended the NFBR AGM and Conference which looked at *Biological Recording for the Future*. This was held over two days and

was excellent value. I would commend keeping an eye on their website for details of their 2007 Conference, but of course not at the expense of not attending our own one!

We continue to look for members prepared to stand or be co-opted to the Committee. Sara Hawkswell and Murdo Macdonald agreed to be co-opted onto the Committee and we are most grateful to them for that. We desperately need a Secretary because, without some sort of continuity, it makes an ad hoc secretary role quite difficult and also makes it more time consuming for the Chair. I am extremely grateful to our present Committee for all the work that they have done over the year and hope that none of them are thinking of going off to other pastures! If, as indicated, we can appoint a full time manager I hope that the role of the Committee will revert to a greater degree of ensuring the Business Plan is implemented and providing direction to achieve that.

BRISC has an ongoing important role to play in promoting the need for biological records and facilitating the training of recorders and its members are a vital part of ensuring that it can continue to play that role. We are in good heart and I am hopeful of bigger strides in achieving our objectives.

Patrick Milne Home

Chair of BRISC

January 2007

## Committee Members as of January 2007

### **Patrick Milne Home, Chair**

*elected 2005*

Craigow, Milnathort, Kinross shire, KY13 ORP  
Tel 01577 863758 fax 01577 863007 [chair@brisc.org.uk](mailto:chair@brisc.org.uk)

### **Duncan Davidson, Treasurer and Membership Secretary**

*elected 2005*

140 Pitcorthie Drive, Dunfermline, Fife, KY11 8BJ  
Tel 01383 730446 [membership@brisc.org.uk](mailto:membership@brisc.org.uk)

### **Andy Wakelin, Website Manager**

*elected 2002*

*Computer Skills sub-group contact*  
32 Tailyour Crescent, Montrose, Angus, DD10 9BL  
Tel 01764 676783 [webmaster@brisc.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@brisc.org.uk)

### **Anne-Marie Smout, Newsletter Editor**

*Ex Officio*

Chesterhill, Shore Road, Anstruther, Fife, KY10 3DZ  
Tel 01333 310330, Fax 01333 311193 [AMSmout@aol.com](mailto:AMSmout@aol.com)

### **Claire Seymour**

*representative.*

Tel 01463 248 032 [claire.seymour@snh.gov.uk](mailto:claire.seymour@snh.gov.uk)

*SNH*

### **Brian Boag**

*elected 2002*

*Represents BRISC on LINK*  
Birch Brae, Knap, Perthshire, PH14 9SW  
Tel 01382 562731 Fax 01382 562426 [bboag@scri.sari.ac.uk](mailto:bboag@scri.sari.ac.uk)

### **Gill Calder**

*SWT rep - co-opted 2003*

SWT Survey & Monitoring Data Manager, Cramond House,  
Cramond Glebe Road, Edinburgh, EH4 6NS  
Tel: 0131 312 4773 (direct line) [gcalder@swt.org.uk](mailto:gcalder@swt.org.uk)

### **Paul Kirkland**

*elected 2002*

*Recording sub-group BSG contact*  
Butterfly Conservation Scotland, Balallan House, Allan Park,  
Stirling, FK8 2QG  
Tel/fax 01786 447753 [pkirkland@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:pkirkland@butterfly-conservation.org)

### **Craig Macadam**

*elected 2003*

*Chair of Wildlife Counts Project*  
Braden Aquasurveys Ltd, PO Box 21659, Larbet, FK5 4WX  
Tel: 07786 631369 [info@ephemeroptera.org.uk](mailto:info@ephemeroptera.org.uk)

### **Jon Mercer**

*elected 2002*

Scottish Borders BRC, Harestanes Visitor Centre, Ancrum,  
TD8 6UQ  
Tel. 01835 830306 [j Mercer@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:j Mercer@scotborders.gov.uk)

### **Jonathan Willet**

*elected 2006*

Tel. 01236 780636 [jonathan.willet@highland.gov.uk](mailto:jonathan.willet@highland.gov.uk)

### **Murdo Macdonald**

*co-opted 2006*

Tel 01463 248 032 [mamacdonald@syrphus.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:mamacdonald@syrphus.fsnet.co.uk)

### **Sara Hawkswell**

*co-opted 2006*

Tel 01501 734 413 [sara@lothianwildlife.co.uk](mailto:sara@lothianwildlife.co.uk)

## BRISC Treasurer's Preliminary Report for the year 2006 (Jan-Dec)

<b>BRISC Treasurer's Preliminary Report for the Year 2006 (Jan-Dec)</b>			
<b>Total Opening Balance at 1<sup>st</sup> January 2006</b>		<b>£17,899.26</b>	
<b>BRISC Operating Balance at 1st January 2006</b>		<b>£4,730.90</b>	
<b>Income</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>£</b>
Membership subscriptions	1821.25	Conference	199.63
Conference Bookings	621.00	Subscriptions – LINK/ buglife/NFBR	296.00
Donations	340.00	Newsletter	504.24
Sales	176.60	Members Expenses	466.00
Interest	185.30	Data Protection	35.00
		Website fees	56.38
		Tax deducted	37.03
<b>Totals</b>	<b>3144.15</b>		<b>1594.28</b>
<b>BRISC Operating Balance at 30th December 2006</b>		<b>£6280.77</b>	
<b>Projects</b>			
<b>Wildlife Counts Balance at 1<sup>st</sup> January 2006</b>		<b>£13,168.36</b>	
<b>Income</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>£</b>
SNH Grant	14255.00	BTCV Scotland	42373.90
NHMF Lottery Fund	20000.00		
Falkirk Environmental Trust	2033.00		
<b>Totals</b>	<b>36288.00</b>		<b>42373.90</b>
<b>Wildlife Counts Balance at 30<sup>th</sup> December 2006</b>		<b>£7,082.46</b>	
<b>Promoting NE Biodiversity – Balance at 1<sup>st</sup> Jan 2006</b>		<b>£0.00</b>	
<b>Income</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>£</b>
CNPA Grant	4623.22	NESBReC	1665.24
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4623.22</b>		<b>1665.24</b>
<b>Promoting NE Biodiversity – Balance at 30<sup>th</sup> Dec 2006</b>		<b>£2,957.98</b>	
<b>Overall Balance at 30th December 2006, inc Projects</b>		<b>£16,321.21</b>	

Notes:

Donations include contributions from individual members and a sum of £300 from Agilent Technologies.

Sales include bumblebee packs, a number of source books and £106 from the conference raffle.

The subscription to Scottish Environment LINK increased from £122 to £271.

Duncan WW Davidson  
BRISC Treasurer

30 Dec 2006

## Receipts and Payments Accounts Comparison

	2004 £	2005 £	2006 £
<i>1. Receipts</i>			
Membership Subscriptions	1454.00	2137.00	1821.25
Conference Bookings	475.00	710.00	621.00
Donations	460.54	156.50	340.00
Sales	78.50	81.25	176.60
Bank Account Interest	51.38	221.29	185.30
	<b>2519.42</b>	<b>3306.04</b>	<b>3144.15</b>
<i>2. Payments</i>			
Conference Costs	274.22	449.44	199.63
Subscriptions	290.00	127.00	296.00
Newsletter	693.47	628.41	504.24
Members Expenses	656.05	523.01	466.00
Website Costs	56.38		56.38
Data Protection Registration	35.00	35.00	35.00
Miscellaneous	14.00	202.45	
Bank Account Tax deducted	8.66	44.21	37.03
	<b>2027.78</b>	<b>2009.52</b>	<b>1594.28</b>
<i>3. Excess of Receipts over Payments</i>	<b>491.64</b>	<b>1296.52</b>	<b>1549.87</b>

## BRISC Membership Report 2006

The membership year runs from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March, and so details for inclusion in the BRISC annual report are necessarily of an interim nature.

As of the 30<sup>th</sup> of December 2006, membership numbers are as follows:

Individual – 95

During the year, we have attracted 3 new members. One member has resigned and one individual member has converted to corporate status. 36 of our individual members have also signed up for Gift-aid allowing us to reclaim tax on their subscriptions and donations paid over the last six years.

Corporate – 28

During the year we have had one new corporate member in the British Trust for Ornithology.

Reciprocal – 9

There has been no change in reciprocal membership.

Honorary – 1

Honorary membership was offered to, and accepted by Douglas Turner.

Duncan WW Davidson  
BRISC Membership Secretary

30 Dec 2006