

BRISC (Biological Recording in Scotland) is a voluntary body with Scottish Charity status. Our stated objectives are to advance the education of the public about biological diversity and to promote for the benefit of the public the conservation of the environment.

Specific objectives are

- *To promote the effective gathering and use of biological data and other related information as a means to develop an understanding of Scotland's biodiversity and contribute to the conservation of the natural heritage of Scotland.*
- *To stimulate biological recording in Scotland through promotion of a network of area-based local records centres and recording groups.*
- *To represent the interests of those records centres, recording groups and individual recorders to other organisations.*
- *To promote co-ordination/co-operation between and training of individuals and organisations with an interest in biological recording.*
- *To promote the adoption of good practice and minimum standards of biological recording and the accreditation of records centres.*



ANNUAL REPORT

For
2012/2013

The ancient woodland at Lochwood Oaks SSSI was the destination for one excursion



Snapshots from the 2012 Excursions:



Peter Norman introduced the party to the history of Lochwood Oaks



Another excursion went to Kirkconnell Flow NNR, a restored lowland raised bog

David Lampard *re-elected 2012*
McManus Galleries & Museum
Albert Square, Meadowside
Dundee, DD1 1DA
Tel 01382 432384
[david.lampard@leisureandculturedundee.com]

Patrick Milne Home, *re-elected 2012*
Tel 01577 863758 fax 01577 863007
[patrick@milnehome.org]

Glenn Roberts *re-elected 2012*
Biological Recorder/Manager
North East Scotland Biological Records Centre (NESBReC)
University of Aberdeen, 23 St. Machar Drive
Aberdeen, AB24 3RY
Tel: 01224 273633
[glenn.roberts@aberdeenshire.gov.uk]

Claire Seymour *SNH representative*
SNH. Policy and Advice Officer / Data Manager
Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW
Tel 01463 725311
[claire.seymour@snh.gov.uk]

Richard Weddle *re-elected 20012*
Glasgow Museum Biological Records Centre
200 Nitshill Road, Glasgow, G53 7NN
[biological.records@csglasgow.org]

Graeme Wilson *elected 2012*
Centre Manager, The Wildlife Information Centre
Caretaker's Cottage, Vogrie Country Park,
Nr Gorebridge, Midlothian, EH23 4NU
Tel 01875 825968
[graeme@wildlifeinformation.co.uk]

BRISC Committee Members as of January 2013

Jonathan Willet, Chair

elected chair 2011

Tel: 01349 861994

[chair@brisc.org.uk]

Craig Macadam, Deputy Chair

re-elected 2012

Buglife - The Invertebrate Conservation Trust

Balallan House, 24 Allan Park

Stirling, FK8 2QG

Tel 01786 460360

[Craig.MacAdam@Buglife.org.uk]

Duncan Davidson, Treasurer

& Membership Secretary

re-elected 2012

140 Pitcorrhie Drive, Dunfermline, Fife, KY11 8BJ

Tel 01383 730446

[membership@brisc.org.uk]

Louisa Maddison, Secretary

re-elected 2012

Countryside Ranger, Countryside and Greenspace Service,

Calderglen CountryPark, Strathaven Rd, East Kilbride, G75 0QZ

Tel: 01355 236 644 - Direct Line: 01355 276 885

[briscsecretary@live.co.uk]

Andy Wakelin, Website Manager

re-elected 2012

Tel 01674 676783

[webmaster@brisc.org.uk]

Anne-Marie Smout, Newsletter Editor

Ex Officio

Upper flat Chesterhill, Shore Road, Anstruther, Fife, KY10 3DZ

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BRISC Annual General Meeting for the year 2012/2013

To be held on Saturday 26 October 2013

In Newbattle Abbey College

By Dalkeith

AT 12.40am

Agenda:

- 1. Apologies for absence**
- 2. Minutes of the 2011/12 AGM held on 27 October 2012 at The Crichton Hotel, Dumfries**
- 3. Chairman's Report for 2012/2013**
- 4. Annual Accounts and Treasurer's Report for 2012**
- 5. Membership**
- 6. Election of Honorary Officers and Council for 2013/2014**
- 7. Any other business**

**Minutes of BRISC AGM for the year 2011/12 held on
Saturday 27 October 2012 at 12.00 at the Gilchrist Room,
Easterbrook Hall, The Crichton, Dumfries**

New and existing members were welcomed to the conference and AGM

Apologies: Richard Sutcliffe, Craig MacAdam, Glenn Roberts

Present: Alastair Dawson, Amy Murray, Andy Swales, Andy Wakelin, Anne-Marie Smout, Barbara Mearns, Brian Walker, Catherine Barlow, Chris Cathrine, Chris Smout, Christine Johnstone, Claire Seymour, Colin Brydon, David Lampard, Deirdre Holding, Duncan Davidson, Graeme Wilson, Graham Smith, Ian Richardson, John Haddow, John McKillop, Jonathan Willet, Joyce Cooper, Keith Bland, Louisa Maddison, Mark Pollitt, Mike Beard, Natalie Harmsworth, Patrick Milne Home, Peter Robinson, Richard Mearns, Richard Weddle, Sarah Eno, Stanley Tanner.

Annual Report

This had been mailed out to members in September, and extra copies were available. Jonathan Willet (chair) reported:

- We had a successful AGM in 2011 despite a low turn-out due to clashing with other events.
- The BRISC website now hosts a calendar which shows major events of other organisations/societies so hopefully we can prevent diary clashes in the future. It was suggested that an online calendar be used to allow sharing and updates.
- The committee has met three times since the last AGM. The main focus has been the Scottish Biodiversity Information Forum (SBIF), and the projects that result from this will shape how we move forward. SBIF had their first meeting in May 2012, with BRISC running a discussion seminar beforehand to give suggestions for progression.
- We gave a loan to the Highland Biological Recording Group (HBRG) for publication of their Mammal Atlas which will be repaid soon.
- The bursary scheme continues in partnership with Glasgow Natural History Society (GNHS). There were many applications this year, and thanks to an anonymous donor we were able to assist with funding five courses.
- The National Federation for Biological Recording (NFBR) are becoming more of a lobbying group. See their website for meeting minutes and the “Join the Dots” strategy <http://www.nfbr.org.uk/>

Receipts and Payments Accounts Comparison

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<i>1. Receipts</i>							
Membership Subscriptions	1821.25	1975.00	2385.00	1640.00	1855.00	2610.00	1070.00
Conference Bookings	621.00	1657.00	3622.63	497.00	588.00	448.00	684.00
Donations	340.00	10022.00	15.00	0.00	25.00		415.00
Sales	176.60	25.00	815.00	631.00	20.00	30.00	38.00
Project Admin/Loan Repay		200.00		2500.00			300.00
Gift Aid		292.86					
Bank Account Interest	185.30	327.47	216.82	18.29	14.24	5.84	
	3144.15	14499.33	7054.45	5286.29	2502.24	3093.84	2507.00
<i>2. Payments</i>							
Conference Costs	199.63	1142.98	3296.53	814.37	423.00	1128.80	1241.70
Subscription s	296.00	5.00		5.00	10.00	45.00	5.00
Newsletter	504.24	737.67	959.50	1066.97	1431.92	1201.94	1487.09
Members Expenses	466.00	410.76	353.58	547.22	422.78	547.20	416.32
Website Costs	56.38		56.38		56.23		57.58
Data Protection Registration	35.00	35.00	35.00	35.00	35.00	35.00	35.00
Miscellaneous		4109.00	2311.05	3244.75	400.00	661.25	618.25
Bank Account Tax deducted	37.03	65.44	42.75	3.60	2.75	1.12	0.00
	1594.28	6505.85	7054.79	5716.91	2781.68	3620.31	3860.94
<i>3. Excess of Receipts over Payments</i>	1549.87	7993.48	(0.34)	(430.62)	(279.44)	(526.47)	(1,353.94)

Treasurer's report for 2012.

Treasurer's Report for 2012 (1 January – 31 December)			
Opening Balance at 1 January 2012		£12,411.27	
Income	£	Expenditure	£
Membership Subscriptions	1070.00	Conference	1241.70
Conference Bookings	684.00	SBIF Conference	146.50
Donations	415.00	Subscriptions	5.00
Sales	38.00	Newsletter	1487.09
HBRG Loan Repayment	300.00	Members Expenses	416.32
		Website Costs	92.58
		Bursaries	471.75
Totals	2507.00		3860.94
Closing Balance at 31 December 2011		£11,057.33	

Notes:

- Membership subscriptions are well down as we continue to recover payments that were rejected by our account because of the issues described in 2011.
- Donations include a £200 input from the Bank of Scotland to cover any costs incurred due to bank account issues.
- HBRG Loan repayment is partial repayment of the loan given in 2011 to help with the mammal Atlas publication. There is £450 outstanding.
- SBIF Conference – BRISC hosted an SBIF conference and there was a charge for catering.

Duncan Davidson
Treasurer

Membership & Financial Report from Duncan Davidson:

- Outgoings have been higher than usual due to the loan to HBRG and holding a separate conference and AGM last year.
- Membership trends are generally static
- The treasurer reported the loss of many membership payments due to Bank failure re standing orders. This has given us a much reduced income, and efforts to resume membership payments are continuing.
- The accounts were proposed Richard Weddle, seconded by Anne-Marie Smout.

Committee Election

- Anyone who would like to join the committee is more than welcome, and can discuss this with Jonathan Willet chairman@brisc.org.uk
- Similarly anyone wishing to assist Anne-Marie Smout with editing Recorder News should get in touch.
- All existing committee members were proposed to retain their positions. This was proposed by Mark Pollitt and seconded by Ian Richardson.
- Thanks were given to all the committee members for their hard work, to Mark Pollitt for organising the conference and speakers, Anne-Marie Smout (newsletter editor and help with organising the conference), Duncan Davidson (treasurer and membership), Louisa Maddison (minutes secretary), Andy Wakelin (website) and of course Jonathan Willet (chair).

AOCB

- Claire Seymour expressed thanks on behalf of Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) for BRISC's e-petition which led to the creation of Scottish Biodiversity Information Forum (SBIF), as well as organising and running discussion sessions prior to the inaugural forum meeting. It is hoped that the success of SBIF will lead to improved data flow and more data in the future.
- The future of BRISC will tie in with progress of SBIF. We will engage with this as much as possible and are already involved e.g. the BRISC website is currently hosting information on the forum, and Craig Macadam, deputy chair of BRISC, chairs the steering group. We will offer funding to assist with the co-ordinator post to allow us remain up to date with progress of the project. LM



Rain did not discourage people from joining the Sunday excursion to Caerlaverock
© Andy Wakelin



The Gilchrist Room in Easterbrook Hall was an excellent and comfortable venue



But the warm and dry café afterwards was very welcome © Andy Wakelin



BRISC Chairman's Report.
October 2012 to September 2013.

Membership report for 2012.

The membership year runs from the 1 April to 31 March.

At year end 31 March 2013, we had 106 individual members having gained five and lost two during the year. We also had 31 corporate members.

However, the picture is muddled somewhat by the problems we are still having as a result of bank account issues in 2011. There were 70 members whose standing order payments were affected and all were asked to complete and return revised standing order mandate forms. Unfortunately not all responded and reminder letters are being sent to those few concerned. In addition, some members' banks appear to have ignored the new mandates and even though the new forms have been submitted, payments have not been received. This is also being followed up with the members concerned and I am sorry to say that they will be asked to contact their bank for information as BRISC has no authority to do so.

This situation is reflected in the membership subscription figures shown in the Treasurer's report. We hope to have resolution through 2013.

Duncan Davidson
Membership Secretary

BRISC continues to be in good health and the committee has spent most of its time dealing with the Bursary Programme, organising the 2013 AGM, acting as a banker for certain projects and keeping a watching brief on the progress of Scottish Biodiversity Information Forum (SBIF) as well as providing an interim web page for SBIF. My thanks go to the committee and especially to Anne-Marie Smout for her editing and compiling of *Recorder News* and also to Sarah Eno who volunteered to help Anne-Marie with the newsletter. Plus a special mention for our treasurer, Duncan Davidson who has done sterling work making sure that all the Standing Orders are working and also chasing up those members who have been a bit slow in paying their subscriptions.

AGM.

Our last Conference/ AGM was held in Dumfries on the Crichton Campus in a superb venue, possibly our most opulent Conference yet. Mark Pollitt did a fantastic job of organising the speakers and venue. Just over 30 people attended, making one of the most successful in recent years. The committee was re-elected as was the Chairman.

BRISC Committee.

The Committee has had three committee meetings since the last AGM, one in Perth and two in Stirling. Aside from SBIF and the 2013 Conference the main topics for discussion were Bursaries, the Data Scoping Project, technology and biological recording and the Future of BRISC.

In December 2011 the *Highland Mammal Atlas* was published. BRISC loaned Highland Biological Recording Group £750 to cover the shortfall in its publication budget. I am pleased to report that half of this sum has been repaid and the balance is expected in Summer 2013.

BRISC has also acted as a banker on behalf of the HBRG for a grant received from the John (Spedan) Lewis Foundation. This grant funded the curation, validation and data mobilisation of the significant invertebrate collection of the late Philip Entwistle. The collection contains over 10,000 specimens and mobilising its data will make a very important dataset available.

The Glasgow Natural History Society / BRISC Bursaries have been going very well with four bursaries funded. Another generous anonymous donation has allowed a fifth bursary to be funded for another year. These have been over subscribed and the Committee has been discussing ways to secure more and continued funding for them. I shall be writing letters to prospective funders this summer asking for support for these bursaries. The bursaries tie in very well with Citizen Science initiatives.

The Data Scoping Project developed by Gill Dowse, Craig Macadam and Anne-Marie Smout has been on hold for a year or so, and will be delivered this Autumn as part of BRISC's contribution to SBIF. For more information see the previous Annual Report.

The Future of BRISC. This has still to be determined but we should know by May 2014 how SBIF is faring in its delivery plan and from there we can formulate a way forward.

Scottish Biodiversity Information Forum

As ever with SBIF there is mixed news. There is a coordinator in place, Christine Johnston, and she has a great deal on her plate in terms of things to deliver. The time taken to get the coordinator in place has pushed everything back and it is now over a year since the first meeting was called and there is little concrete to show for this. However I expect the second year will really start delivering, not necessarily the grand step change we are after, but hopefully small, quick-wins that will start us moving more quickly in the right direction. There are still issues with institutional resistance to a national joined-up approach to data management that have to be tackled. This resistance will be the toughest nut to crack.

National Forum for Biological Recording.

I attended a meeting in January that was very interesting, as the NFBR were getting close to constituting themselves and becoming a charity. This has taken a long time but they have now achieved it as of June this year. They have grand plans to take their strategy forward along with a number of key partners. They have been holding talks (bi-laterals no less) with a number of key organisations, and it is hoped that these will be the springboard for a SBIF-like coalition of organisations to tackle some of the key issues affecting data in England. It will be interesting to watch their progress. I also attended their Annual Conference in Poole in April for the proceedings see <http://www.nfbr.org.uk> .

Membership/ Finances.

Our membership has not changed a great deal in the last year but as ever we do require to have more members if we are seeking to fully represent the biological recording stakeholders of Scotland. This continues to be discussed by the committee.

Our Treasurer (and Membership Secretary), Duncan Davidson, has done another year of hard work on BRISC's behalf. His reports can be found elsewhere in this Annual Report. Our finances remain healthy but will be running down over the next few years due to the Data Scoping Project and the continuing support of the Bursaries.

And finally.

Gill Dowse has stepped down from the committee due to pressure of work. We thank her for the time she put into BRISC.

Jonathan Willet
Chairman of BRISC. June 2013
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