



Butterfly Conservation East Scotland Branch Committee Meeting 12 November 2020 (via Zoom)

1. Attendees

Apithanny Bourne, Glyn Edwards, Suzanne Smith, Colin Whitehead, Richard Buckland, Elspeth Christie, Gillian Fyfe, Cathy Caudwell, Helen Rowe, Barry Prater, David Lampard, Nigel Voaden, Katty Baird, Paul Brooks, Michael Scott

Apologies

Colin Edwards

2. Introductions to new committee member

We welcome Michael Scott to the committee as the new Borders organiser. Barry is stepping down after 12 years. He will remain as a moth recorder and will continue with the NBA project. We would like to thank him for all the work he has done over the years.

3. Approval of last minutes

Minutes of last meeting approved.

4. Outstanding actions from last meeting

The money has been given out to the grant scheme winners. We will get in touch in the spring to see how they are getting on.

Glyn is still working on the butterfly maps. Nigel volunteered to produce maps using QGIS. Glyn and Nigel to progress.

We plan to hold the AGM next year on the same weekend as we had planned this year.

5. General update on BC

Pre COVID we were in a good position fund wise. However now membership growth is down and funding is being cut.

Some projects that were externally funded have not been fulfilled and some money has had to be handed back. A lot of charities are in the same position and all things considered we are not in as bad a position as some.

The Stirling office is to be sold. Staff were put on furlough and then offered redundancy packages. There has been a dramatic staff restructuring. This means we have lost Paul Kirkland as head of Scotland. There is now a new head of Scotland, Wales and NI. We are unsure as to how this will be managed.

Shona the office manager in Stirling has been given a one year extension but will need to fundraise for her position in the future.

There have been issues with some of the branches in England and HO. This is prompting changes and firmer guidelines with regards to subscription money and funding.

6. Group discussion on branch purpose and relationship with Head Office

There is a branch chair meeting in December, with this in mind we discussed our concerns and what we think we do well as a branch and areas where we need more guidance/information.

We are concerned about the potential loss of Shona and the staff restructuring resulting in no head of Scotland. How will this affect us and communication we have with head office.

We no longer have our own bank account

If the Stirling office is closing, is there a place for storing equipment?

We are worried that the focus of the group will become too polarised towards either high priority species/landscape projects or on urban projects.

As a branch we are good at organising events, Battleby is a good example of this. We have the scope to create our own agenda and say what is important to us. We need to keep up local connections and retain members.

We would like a document that clearly identifies the purpose of the branch as currently the induction document is not very clear.

Our branch covers a large area and there is no one size fits all, but everyone does things in their own way but contributes well.

We would like volunteer development to focus on existing members skills, which can then be shared with new members in the future.

7.Branch Finances

We currently have £6700 in the bank. £4000 was given back to the Scottish head office.

We had £5600 from membership fees.

We will have £12000 available next year if things stay as they are.

We don't normally budget for the year. We may have to change our practices in the way we spend depending on what is decided in the restructuring.

In the past our main cost has been the newsletter. We seem to find it hard to spend large sums of money and normally buy small things.

8.Funding requests

There are no current funding requests but some potential projects next year. In Fife there is potential for a grayling project at Tentsmuir.

There is a seasonal ranger keen to do some positive environmental work near Dryburgh in terms of habitat management.

Helen didn't get her fencing this year, but it may be needed next year.

The moth trap workshops were cancelled and 2 of them had been fully booked. However, a few traps have been sold and 2 are currently out on loan. We have recouped £200 of the money originally given to fund this project. Katty is exploring doing an online introduction to moth recording.

Cathy would like a moth trap to loan out to people in Perthshire. Katty will give her one or two but they need batteries.

Another idea is to provide starter packs for people wanting to do moth trapping. This could include a net and leaflet.

If anyone has any other ideas, let Apithanny know.

We could use some of our money to support Shona.

9.Feedback on new style E-bulletin

It was felt that it is good that it is now quarterly as it keeps communication going all year round and directs people to the website.

There has been an issue with people receiving it. This may be due to BC transferring to a new system. Hopefully this will be resolved.

We would like dates to submit articles for each bulletin.

10.Regional updates

Cathy said that it has been a fantastic summer for butterflies. The purple Hairstreak has been found in new sites.

There have been really good egg counts for the NBA at Lundie Crags.

11.AOB

We will discuss events at the February meeting.

Date of next meeting to be confirmed.

Circulation of Minutes

All Committee members, Mark Cubitt, Diane Garland, Sarah Foden, CMRs, CBRs.