

## MINUTES

## BERWICK WILDLIFE GROUP COMMITTEE MEETING Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2008, 7.00 pm, Castle Hotel.

**Attending:** Fiona Aungier, Leslie Cook, Molly Hardie, Malcolm Hutcheson, Enid Turnbull, M. Williams.

By invitation: Shona Alexander, Director of Regeneration and Development at Berwick Borough Council for item 3.

**Apologies:** John Inglis, John Rae.

Item	Subject	Decisions to make	Outcome
1	<b>Minutes of last meeting (April.)</b>	Agreed	
2	<b>Matters arising not shown below</b>	<b>Tapee Fen.</b> Despite reservations on the netting and ringing of small birds, BWG has no jurisdiction over the site and therefore is not in a position to oppose the netting and ringing of small birds at the fen. FA stated that M McNeely is doing a legitimate study and that he intends to ring in the autumn. FA has communicated BWG views to CARA and M McNeely.	
3	<b>Berwick's Future.</b>	See below for summary of Ms Alexander's contribution.	
4	<b>Development at Old Coating and Blending Works, Dock Road.</b>	M Hutcheson stated that the whitebeam is a mountain species adapted to adverse weather conditions and that the fact that the trees on site were of untidy appearance should not have contributed to the decision by BBC to allow felling. It was strongly felt that there had been a lack of transparency on the part of BBC, and FA is to write to the Planning Officer and to the County Council.	
5	<b>AGM</b>	M Williams appointed third signatory on cheque book. Suggestions for future events welcomed from members. JR to liaise with FA re. work on data. JR's talk on Canada excellent, thank you.	
6	<b>Recent/forthcoming events</b>	<b>Outdoor meetings.</b> Hartshope Valley – was a very good meeting. Arrangements for Fenton Centre (28 <sup>th</sup> May), Butterflies at Cocklawburn (1 <sup>st</sup> June), Aisling Lannin (5 <sup>th</sup> June). FA has produced posters.	
7	<b>Surveys</b>	Butterflies – T the M. good results, including comma. None so far at Cocklawburn. Bats – comprehensive programme starts 22 <sup>nd</sup> May. Meet at the Scout Hut, Palace Green. BTO Birds. M Hutcheson reported 15 species including stonechat in the	

		Scremerston square, no buzzards. 115 nests in Borewell rookery. MH to arrange a square for next year, possibly north of the river. Squirrels. Survey going well. Red reported killed on road in Belford. Town Trees. FA and M Hutcheson to rearrange survey days. Trees along Ord Drive to be surveyed. M Hardie read of survey of Creeping Buttercup by Dr. John Warren of Aberystwyth University. It was felt that the group could participate in this. Bumblebees. Identification day 22 <sup>nd</sup> June in Morpeth with Shaun Hackett.
8	<b>Any other business</b>	None.
9	<b>Date/venue of next Cttee Meeting</b>	Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> June, then 16 <sup>th</sup> July.

### Meeting with Shona Alexander

Ms. Alexander explained the history of development plans for the Berwick area which began with a need to address the future of the coating & blending works site. Currently there are 10 projects. Dock Road Green is not to be developed, but enhanced for public use with landscaping, footpaths and cycleways. The needs of wildlife will be considered. There is to be an iconic development on the Quayside. BBC is in favour of keeping the majority of car parking outside the walls, rather than creating more within. It is hoped that the former Kwiksave building will become a learning centre where, among other things, countryside skills could be taught. BBC has been consulting with local interest groups, and welcomes their input. Submissions may be made until the end of July. BWG has agreed to submit a document via internet on the care and conservation of wildlife in relation to the proposed developments, and is to designate the most important sites.

LC – The landscaping of Dock Rd. and introduction of trees would spoil the view across the estuary, encourage pedestrian use and disturb wildlife.

M Hutcheson – The new Yarrow Slake footpath is not well planned. The slack at the end of the estuary is a low tide roost. These should be addressed.

Re. recent felling of established whitebeams for development of the site, SA stated BBC had received a specialist report claiming the trees were badly damaged and had not long to live. M Hutcheson pointed out that whitebeam was a mountain tree ideal for a windswept site and that lack of beauty was not a relevant criterion for felling.

SA – BBC is trying to get byelaws in place to enable prosecution of jet skiers.

M Hardie – It would be useful to have all boats registered for easy identification of wrongdoers.

FA – The river needs zoning for use by different types of craft.

SA – BBC is awaiting report, due in 3-4 months, on climate change & rising sea levels in relation to Spittal Point. There may be a need to create a flood plain, and ways of protecting the Point are being explored. Commercial development will be confined to Sandstell Road.

SA – All Berwick plans now have to be completely re-thought as part of a new 2009 county-wide scheme.

FA thanked SA who is henceforth to receive a BWG Monthly Review.