

Minutes of SCTEAG meeting
5th February 2018, SCT office

Present: Peter Roberts (chair), Roger Cottis, Alan Drever, Chris Pendlebury, Catherine Dickey, Dorothy Jackson (minutes)

Apologies: David Ashford, Tim Godfrey, Henrik Micski

1. Minutes of 6th November were approved for forwarding to SCT for placing on the web site.
2. Matters arising from the minutes: None
3. 2017/18 Winter/Spring programme: forthcoming talks

Date	Name	Venue	Location	Notes
15 th February 2018	Roger Cottis	Mammals of Skye & Lochalsh	An Crubh, 7.30 pm	
1 st March 2018 3 rd March 2018	James Merryweather	Creatures of the Seashore Followed by shore visit 3 rd March	Ardvasar Hall, 7.30 pm Shore visit at Tarskavaig	Pat: tea & biscuits. James: poster, with phone number to 'book' for shore visit. Peter: parking at Tarskavaig. Dorothy: WHFP. Tim: collect key
27 th March 2018	Phil Knott	The Moths and Butterflies of Skye	Seomar Chruinneachaidh, 7.30 pm	Dorothy: publicity
29 th March 2018	Joint event with Seall	Film: The Island and the Whales	SMO TDC, 7 pm	Dorothy/David: publicise via environment networks. Seall will take care of the rest.
Monday 23 rd April 2018 NB Note date change	Dr Lauren Hartny-Mills, Science & Policy Officer, Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust	Citizen science and cetaceans of Scotland's West Coast	Ardvasar Hall, 7.30 pm	Check whether Lauren needs AV equipment and accommodation. Finalise at next SCTEAG meeting.

4. TWIG

- The Tormore Forest Plan is approved and harvesting has started. The contractor has been asked to minimise debris and will also fell in the peat restoration area.
- Now the Tormore Forest Plan is approved, Peter will liaise with SRL about a second Tormore Futures meeting in the spring, which would be approx. one year after the first Tormore Futures meeting.
- Peatland restoration: Adele Beck has completed the peat depth and vegetation survey and is looking at damming certain areas to raise the water table as part of restoring the area to blanket bog.
- Post Code Lottery-funded project: ground works and erection of the polytunnel for the tree nursery will consume most of the budget. Paths and signage will be carried out with available resources. Tree seedlings already planted in the polytunnel area need to be moved.
- A feasibility study for micro-hydro on the Allt a Cham-Aird has proposed a 34kW scheme with payback within 8-10 years. Capital funding will be needed. Environmental assessments would be carried out as

part of the scheme. No native woodland is impacted. It may be possible to improve the burn-side path at the same time. The electricity generated could tie in with aquaponics proposals.

- A feasibility study for biogas from Sleat food waste is being carried out.
- White-tailed Eagles. The Skye and Lochalsh Sea Eagle Stakeholders Group representing SNH, RSPB, NFUS, SCF and individual crofters had a further meeting with representatives of SCT, SRL and SCTEAG on 27th November at the Broadford Hotel. SCT, SRL and SCTEAG are currently still waiting for the draft minutes and the monitoring protocol report relating to the Argyll site (all agreed months ago) where a WTE tree has been felled. SCTEAG stressed the need for objective, scientifically-based monitoring of any WTE predation of livestock, rather than anecdotal accounts. Prey remains in and under the WTE nest comprised mainly seabirds (fulmars) with the remains of around two lambs (i.e. definitely lambs), but these may have died from other causes before being taken to the nest. Mitigation measures in the event of proven lamb predation could include diversionary feeding by leaving deer carcasses on the hill. Felling of the WTE nest tree will very likely only displace the birds to another tree nearby, as they have now established their territory. Alan to check with Steve Bentall (who is continuing to monitor the WTE nesting period on behalf of Raptor Study Group) to find out when the birds were seen back at nest repairing, to guide planning of any TWIG activities at Capisdal. Flight paths and feeding behaviour monitoring may be possible elements of forthcoming potential lamb impacts work. The SCTEAG meeting reiterated that a webcam of the WTE nest in association with the SCT office at Armadale would be a good asset for the Sleat community, by providing additional monitoring of what is taken to the nest, and especially adding value from tourism.
- Volunteer days. The next volunteer day may be at Capisdal with Martin Wildgoose. Further volunteer days will be reviewed and planned during February.

5. BEACH CLEAN

Sleat Primary School's Parent Council is keen to be involved with Catherine's proposal for a beach clean around Armadale and Ardasar Bays. The event could highlight the impacts of marine plastic on marine wildlife with reference to James Merryweather's talk and excursion on the sea shore (1st & 3rd March) and the Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Society talk on cetaceans (23rd April). Greenpeace may have speakers who could talk to the children about plastic pollution. Catherine to follow up.

6. AOCB - none

7. Dates of next meeting at 7.30 pm at the SCT office:

Monday 9th April 2018

Monday 11th June 2018