

Minutes of SCTEAG meeting
6th November 2017, SCT office

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

Apologies: David Ashford, Henrik Micski

1. Minutes of 11th September were approved for forwarding to SCT for placing on the web site.
2. Minutes and matters arising.
 - Peter to ask Polly to forward the Tormore Forest Plan, including the maps, to the Environment Group members.
3. 2017/18 Winter/Spring programme : forthcoming talks

Date	Name	Venue	Location	Notes
14 th November 2017	Alison Maclennan	25 years of RSPB on Skye	Ardvasar Hall, 7.45 pm	Tim to collect key; Roger to provide screen
7 th December 2017	Film	Demain	Seomar Chruinneachaidh, 7.30 pm	Dorothy to confirm venue, Peter and Roger to test out DVD beforehand
15 th February 2018	Roger Cottis	Mammals of Skye & Lochalsh	An Crubh	Dorothy to confirm venue
1 st March 2018	James Merryweather	Seashore Followed by shore visit 3 rd March, LT is at 1247	Ardvasar Hall, 7.30 pm Shore visit location TBC	Dorothy to confirm venue
27 th March 2018	Phil Knott	The Moths and Butterflies of Skye	Seomar Chruinneachaidh, 7.30 pm	Dorothy to confirm venue
Between 16 th and 30 th April 2018	Lauren Hartley-Mills, Science Officer, Hebridean Whale and DolphinTrust		TBC	Alan to obtain date

Catherine has contacts for two potential talks next year: Scottish Wildlife Trust and Woodland Trust on ancient/native woodlands.

NB: Proposed talk by Charlie Phillips from Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society also pencilled in for 2018/19 Winter Talks programme.

4. TWIG

- The Tormore Forest Plan is open for further responses until 23rd November, and will then be approved, following which harvesting can start.
- Another Tormore Futures meeting is proposed for Spring 2018 (one year after the first Tormore Futures meeting).
- Peatland restoration: Adele Beck will meet with SRL representatives on 21st November to plan a survey of peatlands in Tormore forest, in order to evaluate options for future habitat management. Peter to request the participation of representatives from the SCTEAG.

- PostCode Lottery funding has been granted to SRL for a tree nursery, signage and a new path. The proposed tree nursery site has been moved further up the hill where the ground is less wet. The proposed path needs to be walked and marked. Boggy stretches will need extra work to permit wheelchair access. Signage will now be done in-house. Through SCT's contacts with 'Interface', the University of the West of Scotland will be monitoring the pine weevil populations in Tormore Forest. Heriot Watt University has expressed preliminary interest in virtual reality modelling at Capisdal.
- White-tailed eagles. The Skye and Lochalsh Sea Eagle Stakeholders Group representing SNH, RSPB and crofters met with representatives of SCT, SRL and SCTEAG on 5th October to discuss options in response to crofter concerns about WTE predation of lambs. This may be due to depletion of the natural prey base (brown and mountain hares, voles etc), resulting from inappropriate muirburn. Proposals included setting up a trial farm at Camard, which marches with Tormore (adding to the two trial farms in north Skye) to monitor more closely what is happening and diversionary feeding by leaving deer carcasses on the hill. Other possibilities are reintroduction of brown and mountain hares after habitat assessment, and tagging of lambs to identify any that are taken. A webcam of the WTE nest in association with the SCT office at Armadale could provide additional data by monitoring what is taken to the nest, and add value from tourism. A WTE nest tree has been felled in Argyll; time is needed to evaluate whether this is a suitable strategy. A follow-up meeting will be held at the Broadford Hotel on 27th November.
- SRL has a grant for a feasibility study of biogas and organic waste collection from the community, and is planning to commission a feasibility study for hydro in Tormore.
- Volunteer days. The volunteer base is stretched due to the volume of new initiatives in Tormore. Volunteer input decreases during the summer; therefore volunteer effort will be focused on the winter months, primarily on path creation.

6. AOCB

Catherine is interested in organising a beach clean around Armadale/Ardvasar Bays. Dorothy to forward council contacts to Catherine.

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

Monday 5th February 2018

Monday 9th April 2018

Monday 11th June 2018