

Meeting of Lowland Deer Network Scotland Development Committee

At: Scion House, Stirling University Innovation Park
 On: Tuesday Wednesday 5 September 2012

Present: Richard Cooke (RC), Acting Chairman
 Dick Playfair (DP), Acting Secretary
 Dr Colin Shedden (CS0, BASC Scotland
 David Quarrell (DQ), SLDMG
 Derek Kneller (DK), NLDMG
 Ian Fergusson (IF), Forest Enterprise
 Glenn Heggs (GH), SW Scotland DMG/UPM
 Jamie Hammond (JH), SNH
 Linzi Seivwright (LS), SNH
 Ian Talboys (IT), Aberdeen Council
 Ron Smith (RS), Fife
 David Fyffe (DF), Scottish Land & Estates

Apologies: Kenny Wilmitt (KW), BASC Scotland
 Alex Hogg (AH), SGA
 Mike Flynn (MF), SSPCA
 James Govan (JG) (Stalker, Ayrshire)
 Jane Begg (JB), West Lothian Council
 Alex Paul (AP), WLDMG
 Rob Sharp (RS), Stalker (Renfrewshire)
 Alisdair Colyton (AC), Farmer (Angus)
 Angus Corby (ACor), Transport Scotland
 George Ritchie (GR), Banff & Buchan DMG
 Malcolm Muir (MM), South Lanarkshire Council, COSLA
 Daye Tucker (DT), NFUS Scotland
 John Bruce (JB), BDS

The following points were covered:

1.	Matters arising from previous minutes	
1.1	<u>Central Scotland Countryside Trust</u> IF reported that he would be link between George Eadie of Central Scotland Countryside Trust and LDNS going forward.	IF
1.2	<u>LDNS Subscriptions and membership</u> RC said that it was intention that 1 January should be start of subscription year, but that partway joiners would be asked to pay an appropriate percentage and that this amount should be left to the Chairman's discretion. Agreed. Also while the target had been 1000 members by Christmas, current membership stood at around 100 and that LDNS would need continued support from public agencies beyond year 1. RC would be having discussions with SNH, FCS and Transport Scotland to this effect over coming weeks.	RC

<p>1.3</p> <p>1.4</p>	<p><u>Performance</u> RC also said that the Committee had been challenged previously as to progress and delivery. However, RC said he was confident that there was considerable progress being made and encouraged that a number of the agreed actions were being delivered.</p> <p><u>RHET</u> DP said that he had contacted RHET and had been briefed on 'Food and Farming' days for schools already being delivered by RHET and SNH. DP had said that where the schools were in low ground areas then to be sure that it was a low ground deer message that was being promoted.</p> <p>Some linkage still required between RHET website and Scottish Venison Education Zone. DP to follow up with Pete Moore, SNH.</p>	<p>DP</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>Chairman's Report RC gave an update of activities and meetings attended since last Development Group meeting.</p> <p>Included were the first Angus Deer Initiative meeting; Scottish Game Fair (although curtailed by weather to one day); Royal Highland Show; Moy Game Fair; Galloway Country Fair; presentation at Lochter Activity Centre Aberdeen-shire and interview with Blaze Publishing's online broadcast channel.</p> <p>The Angus Initiative was promoted as a model that other areas could follow, meeting just once a year, involving local authority (Tom McGrath), and information gathering by a simple questionnaire to establish more information about deer in the area.</p>	
<p>3.</p>	<p>Financial Report RC said that LDNS was operating within budget although budget figures had been adjusted to reflect a more modest subscription income.</p> <p>DP said that the first Newsletter, at eight pages rather than four, had cost more than budgeted but that this overrun could be recouped from other areas where there would be underspend.</p>	
<p>4.</p> <p>4.1</p>	<p>Publications/PR</p> <p><u>Newsletter</u> Generally felt that the first Newsletter had done its job with range of articles and necessary information to be circulated both about LDNS as a new organization, other topical issues in the sector and other information of interest.</p> <p>Topics for issue 2 discussed for publication soon after the AGM in December. These could include:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case study about 'deer management on the farm'. • Angus Deer Initiative as template for setting up a local low ground deer group • Deer vehicle collisions • A normal day's work for a Wildlife Crime Office (Gavin Lindsay, Grampian?) • Fallow deer in an urban context (Newton Stewart) • Muntjac policy – what should deer managers do? • Legislation re knives - reminder on legal position on carrying knives (2007/08 legislation) • Buying and selling venison legally (illegally?) <p><u>E News</u></p>	
4.2	Local authority database for distribution to be expanded RHET contacts to be added to database.	DP
4.3	<p><u>Leaflet</u></p> <p>Reprint required. DP to organize.</p> <p>LDNS leaflets for gun/sporting shops should be considered.</p>	DP
4.4	<p><u>Scottish Farmer</u></p> <p>DP has been discussing future deer feature with Scottish Farmer, possibly for week immediately prior to AGM.</p>	DP
4.5	<p><u>Landward</u></p> <p>DF suggested contact with Simon Cousins at BBC Landward re pitching possible feature on low ground deer management.</p>	DP
5.	Events	
5.1	<p><u>Butchery demos – Borders and Aberdeen</u></p> <p>DP advised re two events taking place during Scottish Food and Drink Fortnight organized by the Scottish Venison Partnership and Scottish Federation of Meat Traders Association in conjunction with SGA, SNH and LDNS.</p> <p>These involve a talk to attending butchers on deer species, habitat and quality assurance by SGA (Alex Hogg at Carfraemill, Peter Fraser at Aberdeen Thistle), followed by a butchery demo of red and roe by Bruce Brymer.</p> <p>New leaflet has been produced for butchery trade, but also available for public and online at www.scottish-venison.info</p> <p>Significant part of initiative paid for by SNH.</p>	
5.2	<p><u>SLDMG awareness competence day</u></p> <p>Some discussion given to this proposal put forward by DQ as a 'light touch awareness' event (not a training event) to reach those with an interest in deer management but possibly little or no experience.</p>	

5.3	<p>Designed as an intro to Level 1 it would be high impact, low cost and broad reaching in terms of audience. Concerns expressed over any live firing and necessary insurance cover. DQ said that it could be an event possibly better taken forward by one of the larger organisations like BASC or BDS.</p> <p>JH said he thought the principle was good, but the practicalities were more complex. Agreed such an event should appeal to both qualified and non-qualified deer managers as well as those new to the sector. Could also cross over into farming and education.</p> <p>RC suggested setting up a small sub-group to discuss and take forward to consist Mike Cottam SNH; BDS (RS), BASC (Donald); DQ, RC and DP. Group to meet Tuesday 9 October, 10.30am, at SNH office, Stirling.</p> <p><u>Wild deer best practice event for urban deer managers</u> Hamilton Park Racecourse on Sunday 25 November, all day from 07.30am. Now also badged as an LDNS event.</p> <p>DP to promote to LDNS database by E-Newsletter.</p>	<p>RC/ DP + others</p> <p>DP</p>
6.	<p>LDNS AGM and seminar After discussion, date agreed as Sunday 9 December starting at 2.00pm, with a pre-AGM development group meeting at 12.00noon.</p> <p>DP has investigated a number of venues in central belt – likely contenders are Westerwood Hotel, Cumbernauld; Scottish Police College, Tulliallan; and Airdrie FC Excelsior stadium. DP to compare costs and suitability.</p> <p>RC said that the AGM would ratify the existence of LDNS and set it on a structured footing. The constitution would be presented and approved and an executive committee appointed with a 'block election' for those requiring election on a two year revolving basis – ie half would stand down after year one but be eligible for re-election or replacement.</p> <p>In line with the constitution, committee members would be proposed/elected to cover the regions as follows: SW – James Govan Borders – Alex Hogg Central – David Quarrell Tayside & Fife – Ron Smith NE – George Ritchie In addition the following would also be proposed/elected to committee: Deer Management (3): Rob Sharp, Alex Paul, Derek Kneller Farming (2): Daye Tucker, Alistair Colyton Forestry (1): Glen Heggs Estates (1): David Fyffe</p>	

	<p>Representatives of public bodies (appointed/no election): Jamie Hammond, SNH; Ian Fergusson, FCS, Angus Corby, Transport Scotland; Jane Begg, Malcolm Muir, Ian Talboys, Local Authorities, Iain Laing, Scottish Police.</p> <p>Representatives of NGOs (appointed/no election): John Bruce, BDS; Kenny Wilmitt, BASC, Alex Hogg, SGA: David Fyffe, SL&E; Daye Tucker, NFUS; Mike Flynn, SSPCA.</p> <p>RC said he was happy to stand for election as Chairman but equally happy to step down.</p> <p>Outline plan for day as follows: 1.15 Registration, tea, coffee 2.00 AGM starts 2.45 AGM ends, followed by: 3 x guest speakers 3.45 panel session 4.45 finish</p> <p>Possible speakers discussed: • deer vet on topic of low ground deer health and safety issues – possibly Ken Urquhart, or James Simpson • vocational stalker or deer manager – Rob Sharp, David Quarrell (or both), or James Imrie (Mugdock) or Andy McFarlane (Beecraigs) • competence – Colin MacLean</p> <p>RC/DP to develop programme and invite speakers.</p> <p>Decided not to have trade stands – a distraction, and not enough time available to do them justice.</p> <p>Publicity by e mail, e news and other PR.</p> <p>Decided that members should be badged with a different colour non-members.</p> <p>Constitution would be circulated to all in advance.</p>	RC/DP
7.	<p>National deer issues JH reported that: • information re code and competence now in circulation • nothing further to add on RTA monitoring • he was engaging with whole range of people, and many more aware of deer issues, competence and the code, plus LDNS being talked about. • he was meeting Angus Corby and Malcolm Muir at COSLA with paper going to all Local Authorities to draw their attention to the code and WANE. Hope to get a platform at one of COSLA quarterly events.</p>	

8.	<p>Local deer management matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RC had met with Johnny Hall at NFUS and discussed opportunity to have something included in NFUS local meetings. <p>SAYFC also proposed as possible route into farming community – less formal. RS will follow up.</p> <p>RC speaking at Galloway meeting (Maitland Rankin)</p> <p>DK said he was trying to get North Lanark Council involved. Conversation with Provost should lead to introduction at a departmental level.</p> <p>Advised that DMGs could be more active re data being collected on DVCs, and that these incidents need to be reported.</p> <p>In Angus, Tom McGrath is collating DVC information (discussed at Angus deer group meeting).</p> <p>IT said that carcasses being picked up by cleansing crews were being recorded in Aberdeen.</p> <p>RC said that LDNS needed a network of local authority contacts, and asked whether this could be sourced through MM/COSLA. Also Ranger Services. RC asked IT to talk to JB and MM and assemble a local authority contact list at officer level.</p> <p>IT said that in Aberdeen what was needed was more positive headlines about deer, but that the flurry of e mails from those opposing the cull had subsided now that it had been carried out. Also that flashing signs warning drivers of deer on road were being trialled as more effective than static deer signs in making drivers pay attention to the danger.</p> <p>A report on the NE DVC project coming from JH.</p> <p>DK said that they had had a discussion with Ken Robertson, and that to be effective signage needs to be intermittent – ie during April and May and during the roe deer rut. The use of portable electronic signs for short periods was an option.</p>	<p>RS</p> <p>DK</p> <p>IT, JBg, MM</p> <p>JH</p>
9.	<p>Date of next development committee meeting 12.00noon, Sunday 9 December (pre AGM), venue to be advised.</p> <p>Date of next LDNS Executive Committee meeting 10.30am Wednesday 23 January, Scion House, Stirling.</p>	