

Deer management in the political spotlight



Richard Cooke, Chairman, LDNS

November 2013 was a month to remember for those closely involved in the deer sector. The Scottish Parliament Rural Affairs Climate Change and Environment (RACCE) Committee set out to review the impact of deer on the natural heritage. While this was mainly focused on red deer in the Highlands and impacts on designated sites it had important implications for the management of all species of deer in any part of Scotland, including in the lowlands and urban areas.

Strong representations were made to the Committee that many designated sites remain in unfavourable condition due to excessive deer pressure and that more regulation was necessary to rectify this. As Chair of both ADMG and the Lowland Deer Network Scotland it was for me to ensure that Committee Members were fully informed and made aware of the arguments in favour of deer management continuing under the voluntary principle. LDNS submitted written evidence and I gave verbal evidence during one of three question sessions before the Committee. The outcome of the Committee Review has yet to be made known but I believe

that the evidence on both sides of the argument will have significantly contributed to Committee Members' understanding that deer management issues are extremely complex but that progress is being made.

It was of particular importance that the Committee was made aware of the formation of the Lowland Deer Network Scotland as an example of a proactive, co-ordinated and inclusive approach to the management of lowland and peri-urban deer which represent both a potential asset and a liability so far as the public interest is concerned.

There is no doubt that deer and their management will remain under the political spotlight and that there is an expectation that much further progress is required. So far as the management of deer in the lowlands is concerned this reinforces the purpose of the formation of LDNS, namely that a collaborative approach including all interests, both public and private sector, is of the highest importance. LDNS has made good progress in bringing people together in the first two years of our existence but there is much to do. In particular working through our local representatives to build up our programme of local initiatives, along with SNH, we aim to engage more closely with the Local Authorities, many of whom do not yet have the capacity to engage in deer management in terms of their statutory responsibilities. There is also work to be done in gaining the attention of the farming community.

The Annual General Meeting of LDNS is due to take place on Sunday 26th January at the Westerwood Hotel, Cumbernauld and this is an early opportunity to meet others who have an interest in working together on this increasingly important countryside issue.



*Fallow deer - also a species of concern to LDNS particularly in specific locations such as the A9 around Dunkeld.
Photo: www.lauriecampbell.com*

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Scottish Parliament enquiry into deer management digs deep but doesn't get to grips with low ground issues



Dick Playfair

The Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment (RACCE) Committee of the Scottish Parliament met twice in November last year to conduct an enquiry into the impact of deer on Scotland's Natural Heritage. Two full sessions saw the Committee take evidence from Environmental NGOs (John Muir Trust, RSPB Scotland, and Scottish Wildlife Trust), owners and managers (represented by ADMG/LDNS, Scottish Land & Estates, and the Scottish Gamekeepers Association) and the Agencies (SNH, Forest Enterprise Scotland and the Cairngorms National Park Authority) plus Dr John Milne, former Chairman of the Deer Commission for Scotland.

This process was set in motion by Rob Gibson MSP, Chair of the Committee, who had been informed of a case of damage to the natural heritage on a designated site and from this had drawn the conclusion that the local Deer Management Group was not working, ergo all DMGs and the entire voluntary system needed re-examination despite the fact that that had already happened in the run-up to the Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act (WANE).

It was a well-balanced enquiry albeit focusing for the most part on deer management on the upland/red deer range. Richard Cooke, who is Chairman of ADMG as well as LDNS, said that there were some pointers for the deer sector. All upland DMGs need to take their responsibilities seriously, to be more inclusive where that is not already the case, to develop and work to deer management plans, to undertake habitat assessments, and to be more open in terms of information and communication. That is what the system post WANE requires, and that is where some upland DMGs will need to up their game. Many Groups are already doing all that is required, but a number of Groups still have some way to go.

Richard Cooke said:

"The deer sector has acknowledged the challenge to demonstrate that voluntary deer management as we have now is fit for purpose and, taken as a whole, we are making steady progress at implementing the Code on Deer Management at DMG level. This is evidenced by the majority of DMGs and sub-groups that are preparing or reviewing Deer Management Plans and are in the process of bringing deer management and environmental impacts together in implementing habitat assessments.

"DMG meetings must be open to all those with a direct interest in local deer management and Groups should set up liaison arrangements with external interests and local community interests in particular, in response to the Act and the Code. We are confident that when SNH comes to review the system as it is required to do then good and continuing progress will be demonstrable."

But what of the parts of Scotland that are not in the upland red deer range? In its written evidence to the Committee LDNS states:

"A small number of Deer Management Groups exist in the lowlands. However, these differ in character from upland DMGs. Such Groups generally represent only partial coverage of an area and their members tend to be deer managers rather than landowners as in the Highland DMGs.

Their members are brought together by a common interest in deer stalking, to share experiences and, in some cases, resources such as deer larders.

"LDNS was formed in 2011 to bring together the many different interests involved in lowland deer management with a view to promoting a culture of effective collaboration. This is intended to augment our capacity to manage a wild species which represents both benefits in terms of biodiversity and threats such as environmental damage to habitats, economic costs in respect of farm and forestry crops, and increasing risks to public safety, particularly due to road traffic accidents."

The direction and further action as a result of the enquiry has not yet been determined and the pressure by some environmental NGOs for a regulated system continues. Hopefully the Review will have had the benefit of communicating to our Parliamentarians that deer management is complex and variable locally, reflecting the different land uses, different deer species and different approaches to management. A 'one-size-fits-all' system would not be workable and the flexibility of the present voluntary approach has most to offer. We also hope that the evidence submitted to the Committee will have helped to contradict the idea that deer management is 'exclusive' as is often asserted. For individuals with an interest, the training and qualifications are accessible and, if a Firearms Certificate can be obtained, opportunities to stalk deer are readily available, particularly in view of the growing lowland deer population. Joining or forming a lowland DMG is an obvious way to get involved.

What is required certainly is that all low ground owners of land where deer are present are aware of their responsibilities, and an expanding network of DMGs and individual, properly qualified, professional and vocational stalkers and syndicates across roe deer territory predominantly can help to ensure that sustainable deer management is delivered in these areas.

The LDNS evidence submitted to the RACCE Committee can be sourced at: www.ldns.org.uk

Deer management is particularly challenging on the urban fringe. It is not just an issue related to the red deer range and the uplands. Photo: SLDG



Muntjac

(*Muntiacus reevesi*)



Anton Watson,
Deer Management Officer, SNH

Muntjac deer are classified as an invasive non-native species under the Wildlife & Natural Environment Act (Scotland) 2011. It is therefore illegal to release muntjac deer into the wild and a licence issued by SNH is required to keep muntjac deer in captivity.

Of all the deer species found in the UK, muntjac are the smallest with adults ranging from 44 – 52 cm (shoulder) in height and can weigh between 10 – 18 kg, the does being marginally lighter. Their small, stocky frame is rich, light brown in summer, changing to grey brown in winter. They have large sub-orbital glands located below the eyes that are very obvious when open. They have a hunched appearance as the haunches are slightly higher than the shoulder and a brown tail with white underside which is quite wide and held erect when the animal is disturbed.

Apart from their size, they have a distinctive look. The bucks sport a ginger forehead with pronounced black lines running up to long pedicles upon which short, spiked antlers sit which can reach up to 10cm in length. Does also have a ginger forehead with the black lines being replaced with a distinctive black diamond.

Muntjac can be vocal and are sometimes known as 'barking deer'. When alarmed they may let out a high pitched scream and youngsters are known to squeak to their mothers.

Muntjac typically favour densely wooded areas, but are also increasingly found in urban and sub-urban areas south of the border. In addition to damage to agricultural, woodland and private garden interests, they can have considerable impact on sensitive understory habitats such as native oak woodlands and bluebells.

Muntjac do not have a defined breeding season and are capable of producing young any time of the year. They reach sexual maturity at 8 months old and the does normally give birth to a single kid. Shortly after giving birth, the does are able to conceive again which can see a small population increase dramatically in a small period of time. As a result of year round breeding, and the fact that they are not formally recognised

as a deer species in Scotland, they have no closed season. However if culling of sexually mature females takes place consideration should be given to the welfare of possible dependent young.

In a recent report that focused on preventing muntjac from becoming established in Scotland it was estimated that the cost of managing an established population could be up to nearly £2m per annum.

In the event of a muntjac sighting SNH strongly urges the following:

1. Report it to SNH Wildlife operations unit: wildlifeops@snh.gov.uk
2. SNH will investigate any sighting and respond accordingly. This may include engagement with local deer managers and the use of camera traps and thermal imaging cameras.
3. Ensure that all local landowners/managers are made aware and that all reasonable steps are taken to cull any muntjac that have been found to be present in the area.

Links

Report on preventing muntjac establishment in Scotland:
www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/commissioned_reports/457.pdf

Best Practice Guidance:

www.bestpracticeguides.org.uk/ecology/muntjac



The Leading Question

Q: I have been asked by my local butcher if I can supply him with venison. What are the rules to do this?

In order to sell venison to the public the butcher must generally be registered as a venison dealer, and he should only be procuring venison from a licensed dealer also. Venison dealer's licenses are obtained from the relevant local Authority Department of Environmental Health.

Butchers can also source venison from Approved Game Handling Establishments (AGHEs). These restrictions ensure the highest standards of handling and hygiene. Under a European derogation, venison can also be sourced by butchers direct from estates or deer management groups where the supply should be undertaken by trained staff and is subject to various exemptions under the Hygiene Regulations.

Relevant legislation is the Deer (Scotland) Act and the Meat Hygiene Regulations. One is concerned with the sale of venison, and the other, more familiar with the butchery trade, regulates the conditions under which the meat is cut and processed for the consumer.

For a butcher to procure venison through the wholesale market the meat must come from an AGHE and must have the FSA plant number.

LDNS is actively encouraging specialist butchers with a Venison Dealers License to source their venison locally provided they can be sure of its provenance and that their supplier meets the relevant criteria.

Wildlife crime - a Scottish perspective



**Police Constable 514 Ian J Laing,
Wildlife Crime Liaison Officer**

Prior to April 2013, Scotland was policed by eight separate police forces. Each force had agreed identical priorities although how they set out to achieve them varied from area to area. One of those priorities was wildlife crime investigation and this has remained the case after the merger on 1 April last year when Police Scotland was created.

To reinforce the existing five full-time wildlife crime officers that already existed in Scotland, a National Lead on Wildlife Crime (presently Detective Superintendent Cameron Cavin) and a Force Co-ordinator role (presently Police Sergeant Andrew Mavin) were created. In addition to the existing full-time Wildlife Crime Liaison Officers, a cadre of nine part-time Wildlife Crime Liaison Officers were appointed so that all 14 divisions in the new force were covered. This increased commitment meant that, in contrast to the previous arrangement, all of Scotland including the islands would have access to an officer with expert knowledge of wildlife crime investigation. To further enhance this area of investigation, the future of the National Wildlife Crime Unit in Livingston was secured providing the local officers with investigative support.

Police Scotland also continued to be a member and support the Partnership for Action against Wildlife Crime (PAW) which ensures that all Agencies with an interest in wildlife crime work in a co-ordinated fashion.

This partnership is chaired by Paul Wheelhouse MSP, the Scottish Minister for the Environment and Climate Change, and meets bi-annually.

On the ground, wildlife crime takes many forms such as investigations into the trade in endangered species, badger baiting and sett disturbance, offences against birds and their nests, hare coursing, deer coursing, poaching and so on. In addition, the Police are also responsible for registering crow cage and Larsen trap use, and for the licensing of those operating snares. As well as this there are also a number of Statutory and Partner meetings that are attended regularly.

Police Scotland also liaises with colleagues in SASA (Science and Advice for Scottish Agriculture) who carry out all post-mortems and much forensic work including DNA recovery on material recovered as part of any investigation. In Scotland, all such forensic work is paid for by the Scottish Government and consequently Police Scotland is the envy of colleagues south of the border where, on occasion the expense associated with these procedures can be prohibitive. The joint access to DNA recovery and the Scottish DNA database means that Police Scotland is the only Agency in Scotland in a position to fully utilise forensic investigatory tools, and places the organisation at the cutting edge in Europe in this regard.

For those whose lifestyles and occupations are shaped by deer and deer management they will be aware that throughout Scotland on a daily basis there are multiple collisions between deer and motor vehicles. On occasion there is injury to the vehicle occupants and normally the deer will die at or near to the scene of the collision. There is usually significant damage to the vehicle and the resultant requirement for Police attendance means considerable Police time spent following this type of incident. There is no easy solution to this problem and dealing with the aftermath in terms of the welfare of the deer brings with it its own problems. With increasing deer numbers of roe deer particularly in both rural and urban areas this problem is greater than it was 20 years ago and shows no sign of abating.



*Deer poaching - head, feet and gralloch left behind by poachers.
Photo: www.angusforbesphotography.co.uk*

Deer coursing and poaching are reported daily and much Police activity is devoted to its prevention. This must be reported on every discovery, as only then can we identify what areas the perpetrators are favouring. These people are a direct contradiction to countryside managers. Yes, they shoot deer but if it is not a clean kill they move on without tracing the animal and despatching it. Yes, they use dogs but not for the purpose of deer recovery. These dogs bring down a deer and are allowed to savage it to reward them for their effort. The perpetrators hunt at night and take deer out of season. They have no lawful authority to hunt the land on which they are hunting and, as Police Officers, we require the assistance of the community to detect these crimes.

If you take away one thought from this article it is to telephone either **101** or Crimestoppers (**0845 600 4700**) and allow Police Scotland to work with you.

Police Constable 514 Ian J Laing
Wildlife Crime Liaison Officer
Crime Management, P Division
Police Scotland

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Email: ian.laing@scotland.pnn.police.uk

Website: www.scotland.police.uk

Twitter: [@policescotland](https://twitter.com/policescotland)

Facebook: www.facebook.com/policescotland

Wildlife Crime Liaison Officers (as at 21 November 2013)

Division	Nomination	Contact
A Aberdeen	PC Seb Cook - Non-core role	sebastian.cook@scotland.pnn.police.uk
B Aberdeenshire and Moray	PC Mike Whyte - Core role	michael.whyte@scotland.pnn.police.uk
C Forth Valley	PC Malky O'May - Core role	malcolm.o'may@scotland.pnn.police.uk
D Tayside	PC Blair Wilkie - Core role	blair.wilkie@scotland.pnn.police.uk
E Edinburgh	PS James Sinclair - Non-core role	james.sinclair@scotland.pnn.police.uk
G Glasgow	PC Craig Borthwick - Non-core role	craig.borthwick@scotland.pnn.police.uk
J Lothian and Borders	PC Hannah Medley - Core role	hannah.medley@scotland.pnn.police.uk
K Renfrewshire and Inverclyde	PC Stewart Fleming - Non-core role	stewart.fleming@scotland.pnn.police.uk
L Argyll and W Dunbartonshire	PC Andy Crawford - Non-core role	andrew.crawford@scotland.pnn.police.uk
N Highlands and Islands	PC Eric Sharkey - Non-core role	eric.sharkey@scotland.pnn.police.uk
P Fife	PC Ian Laing - Core role	ian.laing@scotland.pnn.police.uk
Q Lanarkshire	PC Dave Wood - Non-core role	david.wood2@scotland.pnn.police.uk
U Ayrshire	PC Graeme Gordon - Non-core role	graeme.gordon@scotland.pnn.police.uk
V Dumfries and Galloway	Insp David McCallum - Non-core role	david.mccallum@scotland.pnn.police.uk

Dial **101** and ask for the Wildlife Crime Liaison Officer for the Division (names above) or an on-duty Wildlife Crime Officer in the Division if one is available.

Substitution of roe for red is one route to help meet market demand



Dick Playfair

Until recently venison was regarded as something of a seasonal speciality, for special occasions, and expensive. But that has changed – sales of venison are climbing steadily particularly in the retail sector and not enough, whether wild or farmed, can be produced to meet the current UK market and export requirement.

And looking ahead, if Scotland (and elsewhere in the UK) is to produce enough venison to satisfy growing UK market demand then either we are going to have to change our taste and eat more roe and less red, or more of what we eat will be coming from farms and parks. The push is on in Scotland to encourage more farmers to consider diversifying into deer.

Retail sales of venison in the UK rose from £32M in 2006 to £43M in 2009, and that growth continues. Annual UK market growth of around 25 per cent year on year has subsequently been reported, although this is not thought by all to be sustainable. Other reports show that Marks & Spencer sold three times as much venison in the UK in 2011 as in 2010 (all imported however), Waitrose and Asda reported sales up by a third, and other suppliers reported sales up by as much as 50 per cent. The Co-op stocked venison for the first time in 2012.

Both the London Olympics and the Jubilee saw venison sales rocket in the UK, and sales have also increased through restaurants, food service, and independent butchers, a number of whom are now sourcing and selling their venison locally.

Figures for the amount of venison actually consumed in the UK are extremely fluid. The Scottish Venison Partnership, the body that represents Scottish venison producers, estimates that the UK market is somewhere under 4000 tonnes per annum. Scotland currently produces around 3500 tonnes of which the majority comes from wild red deer shot on the hill, with a sizeable proportion also from smaller roe deer – although much of the roe venison goes for export. Venison imports to the UK are probably in the region of 1200 tonnes per annum, from New Zealand, Poland and latterly from Spain. So around a third of the venison consumed in the UK is not domestically produced – but imports have been vital as they have enabled the market to expand, and to lose some of its seasonal constraints.

The challenge however for the venison sector is that the national red deer cull is declining. Five years ago around 65,000 red deer were culled, but that figure has now reduced to around 57,000. This is due to a number of reasons including the hangover from some very heavy reduction culls and hard winters, plus the deer population finding a sustainable level in many areas.

What can be deduced also is that with the red deer cull declining any future increase in market volume will need to be met either from imports or from product substitution of roe venison for red. This is good news for low ground deer managers who should, with astute marketing and widening contacts, find expanding markets for the venison they produce.

A further source of supply will be Scotland's expanding deer farming and deer parks sector where a target has been set to produce 1000 additional tonnes of venison by 2020.

While the red deer cull is static, the roe cull is not, and Forestry Commission Scotland reports increased numbers of roe deer being shot in order to protect young trees particularly in the light of significant sanitation felling and future replanting due to ash dieback and other tree diseases.

The expansion of the venison market in the UK can be attributed to a number of factors, not least the level of publicity it receives on national and regional media – venison is frequently on Masterchef and on other mainstream cookery programmes, and venison recipes are featured regularly in the press without any prompting from the producers. The fact that venison is widely available both through retail, restaurant and catering sectors has also improved visibility. Consumers have also had the benefit of trying products such as venison sausages, burgers and pies to introduce them to the meat, and there are excellent smoked venison products, venison chorizo and other specialities widely available – so it is no longer perceived as the meat for the elite. The best cuts will cost around £30-£45 per kilo – on a par with fillet steak. Increasing demand and limited supply should translate into better value for the producer.

For more information about Scottish venison see the Scottish Venison Partnership website: www.scottish-venison.info

Push to match up low ground deer managers and specialist butchers

LDNS was one of several organisations involved in an initiative run by the Scottish Federation of Meat Traders Association (SFMTA), the Scottish Gamekeepers Association, Scottish Natural Heritage and the Scottish Venison Partnership to interest more butchers in selling venison particularly where it can be locally sourced and supplied.

In September 2013 presentations on venison were given to around 200 butchers at four events held in Lanarkshire, Ayrshire, Inverness and Perth, and a new leaflet produced by the Scottish Venison Partnership and funded by SNH was distributed both for butchers and their customers to tell them more about Scotland's deer species and venison. This follows on from two similar evenings held in 2012 in the Scottish Borders and Aberdeen to build closer links with the butchery trade as well as exhibiting at the Perth Meat Trade Fair.



The team before the evening for butchers at Braehead Foods, Kilmarnock, (l to r) Douglas Scott (SFMTA), Jim Govan (LDNS), Jamie Hammond (SNH)

Nichola Fletcher awarded MBE

Pioneering venison ambassador, Nichola Fletcher, of Reediehill Deer Farm in Fife, has been awarded an MBE for her services to the venison industry.

An award-winning food writer, Nichola has worked tirelessly to educate people about venison, its health aspects as well as how to prepare and cook it. Having worked with both wild and farmed venison for over forty years, she is regarded as Britain's pre-eminent expert on all aspects of venison.

Nichola said:

"When you spend your life trying to make people listen to you, it's sometimes quite a surprise when you discover that someone actually was listening after all! I am just thrilled that my work with venison should have been so honoured and it's great to be working in an area I feel so passionately about."

Nichola is married to John Fletcher who first started farming deer in Scotland in the 1970s. John is widely and internationally recognised as an expert deer vet and leading authority on the farmed deer sector, and is a key member of the Scottish Venison Partnership. He is also a director of the Venison Advisory Service Ltd, the specialist consultancy advising those interested in setting up new deer farms and parks.



CWD - vigilance is called for

Chronic wasting disease (CWD) is a highly infectious disease affecting parts of North America that is having a devastating effect on populations of deer.

As our knowledge of CWD grows so any potential spread of the disease into Europe and the UK by whatever means is increasingly alarming and deer managers and stalkers here should insist on the strictest biosecurity measures from visitors to the UK who may come from, or have visited, an affected area in the USA or Canada.

CWD is caused by a prion and belongs to the same group of diseases as scrapie and BSE. CWD has resulted in the death of every known infected deer; there are currently no vaccines or treatments available to control it; and efforts to control the spread of it in North America have so far failed.

The prion is transmitted in deer body fluids and body parts - urine, faeces, saliva, central nervous system tissues and meat. It can remain infectious for up to 10 years when bound to soil, for several years on stainless steel, and it defies normal farm disinfection processes.

Surveillance carried out in several European countries has so far failed to find evidence of CWD present. However, should it find its way into wild deer populations in Europe (remember Ash Dieback Disease) it would have major consequences, not least the death of large numbers of deer, restrictions on the sale of venison and the movement of live deer, and restrictions on stalking and deer management activities.

One likely route of possible transmission into the UK or Europe is from contaminated clothing or equipment - a particular risk being from hunters, stalkers or other tourists who may have visited where CWD is present.

Please note the following guidelines and encourage others to do likewise:

If visiting the UK, USA or Canada as a countryside user:

- Consider whether you need to take clothing or equipment with you and bringing it back. Clothing and equipment bought or borrowed, used and then left in North America poses no risk to our deer populations.
- If bringing clothing, equipment or footwear back to the UK make sure that is scrupulously clean of all contamination – soil, blood, faeces etc. This will reduce the risk although it will not eliminate it.
- Do not bring any trophies or body parts back to the UK.

If organising or hosting visitors from North America:

- Make sure that they are aware of their responsibilities – you can direct them to the full CWD briefing note that is on the LDNS as well as other UK deer sector websites.
- Check their kit for cleanliness – it is unlikely that this check will have been carried out at UK Border Control.
- Don't assume that they will be aware either of the disease or its risks.

Taking these simple steps will help to minimise the potential spread of this harmful disease into the UK.

More information at: www.bds.org.uk/chronic_wasting_disease.html

LDNS Area

Areas partly covered by DMGs

A - Borders

B - Buchan & District

C - Eskdalemuir

D - North Lanarkshire

E - South Lanarkshire

F - South West Scotland

G - West Lothian

H - Inverclyde and

West Dunbartonshire

Local Authorities

1 - Aberdeen City

2 - Aberdeenshire

3 - Angus

4 - City of Edinburgh

5 - Clackmannanshire

6 - Dumfries & Galloway

7 - Dundee City

8 - East Ayrshire

9 - East Dunbartonshire

10 - East Lothian

11 - East Renfrewshire

12 - Falkirk

13 - Fife

14 - Glasgow City

15 - Highland

16 - Inverclyde

17 - Midlothian

18 - Moray

19 - North Ayrshire

20 - North Lanarkshire

21 - Perth & Kinross

22 - Renfrewshire

23 - Scottish Borders

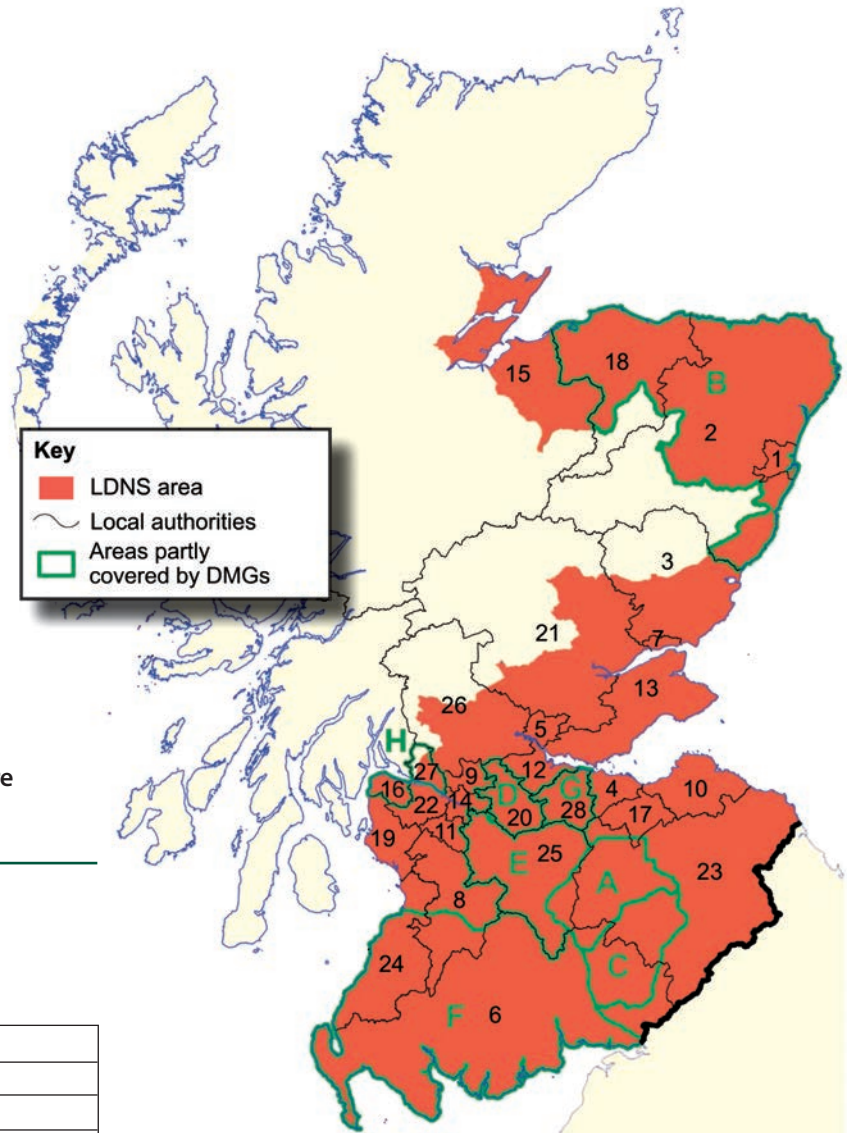
24 - South Ayrshire

25 - South Lanarkshire

26 - Stirling

27 - West Dunbartonshire

28 - West Lothian



LDNS Executive Committee (as at 1 January 2014)

Richard Cooke	LDNS Chairman
Ron Smith	LDNS Vice Chairman
Dick Playfair	LDNS Secretary
Jane Begg	West Lothian Council
John Bruce	British Deer Society
Angus Corby	Transport Scotland
Ian Fergusson	Forestry Commission Scotland
Mike Flynn	SSPCA
David Fyffe	Scottish Land & Estates
James Govan	Stalker, SW Scotland
James Hammond	SNH
Glen Heggs	Forestry
Alex Hogg	Scottish Gamekeepers Association
Derek Kneller	North Lanarkshire Deer Management Group
Ian Laing	Police Scotland
Malcolm Muir	South Lanarkshire Council
Gordon Patterson	Forest Enterprise Scotland
Alex Paul	West Lothian Deer Management Group
David Quarrell	South Lanarkshire Deer Group
George Ritchie	Banff & Buchan Deer Management Group
Robert Sharp	Stalker and Deer Manager, Renfrewshire
Ian Talboys	Aberdeen Council
Daye Tucker	NFU Scotland
Kenny Willmitt	BASC Scotland

What does LDNS offer and how to join?

LDNS adds value by coordinating existing effort and representation and provides the basis for a collaborative approach. It can provide a single, strong voice if further legislation is proposed as in the RACCE Committee review or brought forward, when consultation papers require a response, or the sector is faced with new European regulation.

LDNS is a source of information internally for members and externally to the wider public who want to see deer but know little about deer management. LDNS has an important role to play in public education and in countering negative comment. Membership also provides representation to bodies including the Scottish Country Sports Tourism Group, the Scottish Venison Partnership, and the Scottish Quality Wild Venison assurance scheme.

LDNS provides a forum for increased contact and sharing including events to provide access to Best Practice Advice, other training needs, and experience exchange.

This Newsletter is produced by:

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