

Orkney Area Advisory Group

Thursday 10 May 2012, 10:00 until 13:00

Scottish Natural Heritage office, 54-56 Junction Road, Kirkwall, KW15 1AG

Minutes

Present:	
Eileen Summers (ES)	Orkney Islands Council
Paul Griffiths (PG)	Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)
Chris Matthews (Chair)	SEPA
Eilidh Johnston (EJ)	SEPA
Alan Younie (AY)	Scottish Government Rural Payments and Inspections Division (SGRPID)
Kate Thompson (KT)	Scottish Natural Heritage
Hugh Halcro-Johnston (HHJ)	Scottish Land & Estates
Sarah Sankey (SS)	RSPB
Jenni Kakkonen	Orkney Islands Council
Steve McFarland	SEPA
Fiona Matheson (FM)	Orkney Fisheries Association
Apologies:	
Stephan Walker (SW)	Scottish Water
Malcolm Thomson (MT)	Orkney Trout Fishing Association

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Welcome, introductions and apologies

CM welcomed everyone to the meeting, thanked KT for hosting and gave apologies as listed above. He welcomed Sarah Sankey to her first meeting, and noted that Eric Meek had now retired from RSPB.

The previous minutes were agreed as accurate, except a minor correction to Hugh Halcro-Johnston's initials, and will be published on the AAG website.

Regarding matters arising, the following points were noted:

- JK confirmed that she is now the marine representative from Orkney Islands Council
- ES noted that her department is now changing to Development and Marine Planning
- HHJ reiterated the need to get NFU involvement in the meetings, and to build landowner liaison into the work on small water bodies.

Actions

- EJ to meet JK and SS and give introduction to Area Advisory Group
- HHJ and EJ to consider landowner involvement, EJ to seek NFU membership actively.

On the action points from the previous meeting, the following progress was noted:

	Action	By	When	Progress
1	Investigate potential for a blog or comments system for the online data tools.	EJ	Standing action until complete	Ongoing – has been raised as part of website development bid, no decision yet
2	Update the AAG on electrofishing results upstream of previous	MT	May 2012	No update yet. Carry forward.

	barriers on Suso Burn, once this is carried out.			
3	Provide a list of invasive species of concern to AAG members, and provide early sight of the INNS implementation plan if possible.	EJ	List by December 2011, INNS plan when available	Information on invasive species sent with minutes. Circulate link to INNS plan when available. Carry forward.
4	Circulate any national materials on diffuse pollution. All to consider how to use these in Orkney	EJ / all	Feb 2012	Leaflets tabled by EJ. Closed. New action: send links with minutes.
5	Email out Mill of Rango draft information sheet, and develop new sections of the Area Management Plan to cover small water bodies	EJ	AMP progress by May 2012	Information sheet sent following minutes. Closed.
5	Use agreed template, and develop sheets for top 15 lochs, top 8 burns.	Small water body group	Give update May 2012	On agenda. Closed.
6	Check the Small Water Body priority sites for Scottish Water assets	SW	Feb 2012	No update yet. Carry forward
7	Work on a list of environmentally valuable but unthreatened small waterbodies	EM	Give update May 2012	KT updated, SS will help with this work. NEW ACTION: EJ to circulate this list when ready.
8	Develop the ad-hoc ecological monitoring delivered by SEPA – work this year was welcomed by the task group	PG	Give update May 2012	Update given, discussed further under Item 2 below. Closed. New action: add this to agenda under SWB item for next meeting.
9	Provide information from monitoring by Pete Kirby for Scapa Landscape Partnership	MT	Give update May 2012	No update given yet. Carry forward.
10	Meet with JK and John Orr regarding the AAG.	EJ	By March 2012	Delayed – carry forward.

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RBMP information

EJ gave a short presentation covering the second RBMP cycle, results of the ‘Getting involved in RBMP’ consultation with AAGs, restoration funding, progress on morphology measures, and Scotland’s Environment Web.

There was discussion about citizen science, and the group were keen to link more closely with the rapid ecology work being delivered by SEPA’s visiting ecologist.






Actions:

- PG / CM to ensure that SEPA ecologist liaises with SS, KT, MT when visiting – potential for training, citizen science and possible contribution to Science Festival in

	<p>September.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PG to clarify which diatoms sampled in rapid assessment methodology. <p>The group highlighted a need for action, particularly finding resources and starting to deliver change in a catchment e.g. Loch of Stenness.</p> <p>Communication issues were also discussed, with group members highlighting the ways in which they communicate RBMP issues to their organisations and sectors. CM highlighted potential to present information to incoming councillors via the Environment Forum, and the opportunity to build links with community planning groups.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EJ to organise restoration visit, and provide more information on restoration funding to land managers All to consider opportunities to build links with sectors, EJ to support this process with information, materials and presentations as requested.
3	<p>Round table updates</p> <p>CM asked the group for updates on their work relating to the water environment. The following issues were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FM: noted there had been 2 poor years for velvet crab fisheries, and asked if there had been any biological issues. <p>Action: PG to enquire with SEPA Marine Science re data on this issue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HHJ: raised concerns from farming community regarding Local Nature Conservation Sites. ES: updated the group that the modified proposed Local Plan is about to go out for consultation until 18 June. Local Nature Conservation Sites and Landscape areas were removed from the proposal maps, and will be considered in supplementary guidance on natural heritage and landscape respectively. Noted that a consultation on aquaculture out, but due to close shortly. AY: proposals have been submitted for the autumn round of Rural Priorities, including some on small water body sites. Next year is very uncertain re funding, with decisions dependent on Europe.
4	<p>Data on Orkney's water bodies</p> <p>PG gave a presentation (attached for information) on the status of Orkney waterbodies, showing data from 2009, 2010 and draft data for 2011. He also highlighted that classification data is now available for 2010 on Scotland's Environment Web and the AAG webpages. He mentioned that UK classification standards are currently being reviewed, and that a consultation is underway.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PG to let JK know about sample sites and technique details. Investigate possibility for JK to meet SEPA Marine Science on their next monitoring visit, and consider how to reduce duplication. OIC do phytoplankton monitoring and could take on additional monitoring. PG to get an update / agenda item from Marine Science for next AAG, or subgroup meeting.
5	<p>Small water bodies task group</p> <p>KT gave an update for the group, explaining that the task group had been focusing on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Information sheets</u>: to date, 15 sheets have been drafted for the highest priority

	<p>standing water bodies. In March 2012, the group reviewed the sheets, and agreed to provide more details on assessment and specific measures, refer to wider actions required at a catchment level, and check details re catchments and trophic status.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. <u>Cross-referencing to proposed LNCS</u> to provide a basic listing of small water bodies within proposed LNCS in the Orkney LDP that might be described as “important small water bodies not in imminent or severe risk of deterioration” 3. <u>Inclusion of SWB within Orkney and Shetland RBMP</u>: EJ informed the group that SEPA’s North Regional Environment Group had welcomed the approach on small water bodies and the data sheets, and had recently agreed next steps for adding this information to the online Area Management Plan. <p>Next steps are to finalise and publish the 15 sheets and develop 8 burn information sheets, then complete the work to link with LNCS.</p> <p>KT asked the group to endorse in principle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed approach to inclusion of small water bodies in the online AMP (as per approach outlined by Eilidh) • The example information sheets. <p>The group agreed, and noted that feedback on example information sheets could be carried out by email correspondence.</p> <p>The group recorded their thanks to Eric Meek (RSPB) for all his work on small water bodies, and his contribution to the area advisory group.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EJ to add small water bodies to the online area management plan. • KT to circulate draft information sheets as these are developed, and other group members to comment on these as needed.
6	<p>Morphology – potential actions</p> <p>Eilidh gave a short presentation on morphology pressures, and links to diffuse pollution. It was agreed that discussion with land managers in the catchment around Loch of Stenness would be the best first step, along with awareness raising about restoration techniques and funding.</p>
7	<p>Ballast water policy</p> <p>FM introduced some concerns over current proposals to manage ballast water. She stated that by 2016 a new ballast water policy will be in place internationally, but the current proposal will lead to 4 years of risk regarding invasive non-native species (INNS).</p> <p>CM set out SEPA’s view that there is a risk of deterioration related to introduction of INNS, and that our response to the proposed policy had encouraged a precautionary approach.</p> <p>KT noted that SEPA and SNH responses are in the public domain, and can be supplied on request. She added that further consultation was imminent, and that interested parties could ask OIC for inclusion in the consultation.</p> <p>FM asked about wider impacts of this policy change. CM suggested that discussions with Marine Scotland and colleagues in Shetland could be helpful.</p>
8	<p>Flooding update</p> <p>SM gave an update on flood risk management and progress towards setting up local groups (copy attached with minutes for reference). He advised that the first meeting of the Orkney local advisory group would be held in autumn 2012 alongside the AAG meeting, with annual spring meetings thereafter. An update bulletin would be produced to cover the periods</p>

	<p>between meetings.</p> <p>He informed the group that coastal, fluvial and pluvial flooding maps would be available later in the year.</p> <p>ES asked if the Orkney Strategic Flood Risk Assessment would be used, and SM confirmed that it would be.</p>
9	<p>AOB and date of next meeting</p> <p>The next meeting was agreed as Wednesday 14 November 2012. As this would be a joint meeting with flooding, it was noted that a larger venue might be needed – venue in Kirkwall to be confirmed.</p>

	Action	By	When	Progress
1	Update the AAG on electrofishing results upstream of previous barrier on Suso Burn, once this is carried out.	MT	May 2012 – Carry forward	
2	Provide early sight of the INNS implementation plan if possible.	EJ	when available	
4	Provide links to national materials on diffuse pollution. All to consider how to use these in Orkney	EJ / all	Feb 2012	<p>General info available at www.sepa.org.uk/water/diffuse_pollution.aspx.</p> <p>Topic specific leaflets on General Binding Rules:</p> <p>Storage and application of fertilisers  (508k)</p> <p>Keeping of livestock  (649k)</p> <p>Cultivation of land  (1191k)</p> <p>Application of pesticide  (530k)</p> <p>Operation of sheep dipping facilities  (568k)</p>
6	Check the Small Water Body priority sites for Scottish Water assets	SW	Feb 2012, carried forward	
7	Circulate a list of environmentally valuable but unthreatened small waterbodies	EJ (KT, SS)	When available	
8	Add update item on ad-hoc ecological monitoring delivered by SEPA to next meeting agenda	PG / EJ	November 2012	
9	Provide information from monitoring by Pete Kirby for Scapa Landscape Partnership	MT	May 2012, carried forward	

10	Meet with JK and SS regarding the AAG.	EJ	By November 2012	
11	Consider how to improve landowner involvement, and seek NFU membership actively.	EJ, HHJ	By October 2012	
12	Ensure that SEPA ecologist liaises with SS, KT, MT when visiting – potential for training, citizen science and possible contribution to Science Festival in September.	PG, CM	Depends on visit time, update by Nov 2012	
13	Clarify which diatoms sampled in rapid assessment methodology	PG	By October 2012	
14	Organise restoration visit, and provide more information on restoration funding to land managers	EJ	By November 2012	
15	Consider opportunities to build links with sectors, support this process with information, materials and presentations as requested.	All, EJ	During summer 2012	
16	Enquire with SEPA Marine Science re data relevant to velvet crab fisheries over last 2 years	PG	By October 2012	
17	Discuss sample sites and technique details. Investigate possibility for JK to meet SEPA Marine Science on their next monitoring visit.	PG, JK	By September 2012	
18	Get an update / agenda item from Marine Science for next AAG, or subgroup meeting.	EJ, PG	By September 2012	
19	Add small water bodies to the online area management plan.	EJ	By August 2012	
20	Circulate draft information sheets as these are developed, and other group members to comment on these as needed.	KT, all	As required.	