



Annual Report for 2007

BRISC has not had a very high profile year, mainly because efforts have been concentrated on finding long term funding, but we are still active!

A very successful **Annual General Meeting and Conference** on the 24th March 2007, with 73 attendees for the day, was held at the Birnham Institute.

There were three talks in the morning around the theme Recording Wildlife with three in the afternoon around the use of Data, followed by a choice of Excursions to Loch of the Lowes, a walk to look at some of the remarkable Oak and Sycamore trees around Birnham or a Lichen Walk. The venue together with the facilities and catering worked very well.

For the **AGM** there were 43 Members present. The draft Minutes are attached to this report.

The progression of our activities as outlined in the **Business Plan** has not been as successful as I had hoped. As reported last year, we had obtained funding to employ a Project Officer, to assist us in our search and procurement of long term funding for the administration and management of BRISC and also to manage our proposed projects. Angela Mercer was employed to undertake this work and, with help from Committee Members, identified a number of potential funders, prepared applications and spoke to the organisations. Unfortunately we were unable to obtain funding to take forward the scheme in its entirety, although there was every possibility that the identified projects within the plan could have been funded on a stand alone basis. At the time of writing this report, the Committee has yet to discuss how we should take forward BRISCs plans. The work involved with this has distracted us from other activities, such as ad hoc training and recording days.

However, what has gone from strength to strength has been **The Wildlife Counts Project** under the Chairmanship of Craig Macadam and the Project Officer John McFarlane. A very comprehensive exit report has been produced and I commend its contents. The success of the project has been noted and commented on, for one in the Scottish Government, Scotland's Biodiversity Progress Report 2005 – 2007. This project completes in March 2008 and, at the time of writing, we have not been able to obtain adequate continuation funding to carry it forward ourselves but hope that it may be continued, with BRISC involvement, by another agency.

BRISC has not organized any **training days** this year, other than those associated with the Wildlife Counts Project.

We ended our membership of **LINK** because the advantages that BRISC derived from Membership did not adequately justify our subscription level.

Our main form of **Communication** is **Recorder News**. We have had four editions of this during the year and are most grateful to the continuation of its editing by Anne-Marie Smout.

The **Website** has been maintained by Andy Wakelin.

Our **finances** have been looked after by Duncan Davidson and a copy of the accounts for the year is available. We remain in a healthy position.

Membership remains pretty static. Our Membership Secretary, Duncan Davidson, did issue a questionnaire last year asking you to provide more information. A considerable number of you responded on this but it would be most helpful if those who have not yet done so would complete the form. I am always surprised at how little knowledge we have of our members, their interests and how to contact them. It really does require a lot of chasing up by the Membership Secretary and it is greatly appreciated when you can make life easier for him, and me, by providing full details. Originally we had been hoping to provide these contact details and interests to all members via the web site but we have had to put that on hold until we are certain that you are relaxed about this. It seems to me that it is only right that this information is available to everyone; personally I am not keen on joining a society where one cannot ascertain who the members are.

We had reduced **Committee Meetings** to three per year but unfortunately one had to be cancelled in 2007. It is not easy to get everyone together but there is nothing like a discussion round the table to pull things out and decide on a course of action! I have attended the **National Federation for Biological Recording (NFBR)** and **NBN Local Records Steering Group** meetings in London on behalf of BRISC. Jonathan Willet represented BRISC on the **Scottish Biodiversity Local Biodiversity Working Group** that was working up an Action Plan. I have also attended meetings of **The Natural Talent Project** run by BTCV Scotland. The project is now into its second year providing apprenticeships/bursaries.

Whilst it has been a quiet year on visible activity there has been considerable activity on trying to progress the Business Plan and I hope that perhaps BRISC will be a little more visible in the coming year.

Patrick Milne Home
Chair of BRISC

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