

BRISC (Biological Recording in Scotland) is a voluntary body with Scottish Charity status. Our stated objectives are to advance the education of the public about biological diversity and to promote for the benefit of the public the conservation of the environment.

Specific objectives are

- *To promote the effective gathering and use of biological data and other related information as a means to develop an understanding of Scotland's biodiversity and contribute to the conservation of the natural heritage of Scotland.*
- *To stimulate biological recording in Scotland through promotion of a network of area-based local records centres and recording groups.*
- *To represent the interests of those records centres, recording groups and individual recorders to other organisations.*
- *To promote co-ordination/co-operation between and training of individuals and organisations with an interest in biological recording.*
- *To promote the adoption of good practice and minimum standards of biological recording and the accreditation of records centres.*



## **ANNUAL REPORT**

**For**

**2011-2012**



The excursion to Wester Moss, where participants learnt about sphagnum mosses and other wildlife.

**Scottish Charity No SC024418**

## Speakers at the 2011 Conference



Prof James Curran (SEPA) gave the key Note address on SEPA's initiatives involving Citizen Science and the LIFE+ project SEWeb to create a public information hub



Leanne Casey (BBCT) spoke about how using Citizen Science can help to monitor bumblebee populations



David Black (Plant Life Scotland) described some of the excellent monitoring of plants carried out by volunteers



Daisy Shepherd (Natural Talent Apprentice) talked about the wealth of biodiversity to be found on raised bogs.



The excursion leader Daisy Shepperd sharing her deep affection for Sphanum mosses



Magnificent view from the bing next to Wester Moss with Stirling Castle in the distance.

## BRISC Committee Members as of January 2012

**Jonathan Willet - Chair**  
[chair@brisc.org.uk]

*elected chair 2011*

**Duncan Davidson, Treasurer and Membership Secretary** *re-elected 2011*  
[membership@brisc.org.uk]

**Louisa Maddison, Secretary** *re-elected 2011*  
[briscsecretary@live.co.uk]

**Andy Wakelin, Website Master** *re-elected 2011*  
[webmaster@brisc.org.uk]

**Anne-Marie Smout, Editor** *Ex Officio*  
[anne-marie@smout.org]

**Gill Dowse – on maternity leave**

**David Lampard – non-attending member** *elected 2007*  
[David.lampard@dundee.gov.uk]

**Craig Macadam** *re-elected 2011*  
[info@ephemeroptera.org.uk]

**Patrick Milne Home,** *re-elected 2011*  
[patrick@milnehome.org]

**Glenn Roberts** *elected 2010*  
[glenn.roberts@aberdeenshire.gov.uk]

**Claire Seymour** *SNH representative*  
SNH. External Data Partnerships Advisory Officer  
Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW  
Tel 01463 248 032  
[claire.seymour@snh.gov.uk]

**Daisy Shepperd** *elected 2011*  
[daisyshepperd@gmail.com]

**Richard Weddle** *re-elected 2011*  
[richard.weddle@tiscali.co.uk]

**Graeme Wilson** *elected 2011*  
[graeme@wildlifeinformation.co.uk]



### BRISC Annual General Meeting for 2011-2012

To be held at

The Gilchrist Room, Easterbrook Hall,

The Crichton, Dumfries

At 11.50

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of BRISC AGM 2011 at Stirling University's Pathfoot Building on 5 November 2011
3. Chairman's Report for November 2011-Sept 2012
4. Annual Accounts and Treasurer's Report for 2011
5. Membership Report
6. Election of Honorary Officers and Council for 2012/2013
7. Future of BRISC - discussion
8. Any other business

Scottish Charity No SC024418

**Minutes of BRISC 2<sup>nd</sup> 2011 AGM**  
**On Saturday 5 November 2011**  
**At Pathfoot Building, Stirling University**

Present: Alan Cameron , Alexa Tweddle, Anne-Marie Smout, Claire Seymour, Adrian Sumner, Duncan Davidson, Gill Dowse, Glenn Roberts, Gordon Corbet, Graeme Wilson, Jonathan Willet, Louisa Maddison, Mike Beard, Natalie Harmsworth, Patrick Milne-Home, Richard Weddle, Thomas Huxley

1. Apologies: Richard Sutcliffe, Barbara Sumner, Craig MacAdam, Andy Wakelin, Peter Slater, David Lampard
2. The minutes of AGM of 10 March 2010 in Glasgow were accepted with no changes:  
Proposer: Anne-Marie Smout  
Seconder: Gill Dowse
3. Chairman's update for 2011 was tabled
4. Annual accounts and Treasurer's report for 2010 were tabled
  - Accounts showing payments were tabled
5. Membership has been fairly static for the past few years
  - Letters and reminders have been sent to those who fall behind in membership payments; setting up a standard order prevents this.
6. Projects update
  - The Chairman's report has information on current projects
  - The future of BRISC is being discussed in committee as well as the benefits to members.
  - The data-scoping project is ongoing, this work will hopefully start soon

**Receipts and Payments Accounts Comparison**

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<i>1. Receipts</i>							
Membership Subs	2137.00	1821.25	1975.00	2385.00	1640.00	1855.00	2610.00
Conference Bookings	710.00	621.00	1657.00	3622.63	578.00	588.00	448.00
Donations	156.50	340.00	10022.00	15.00	0.00	25.00	0.00
Sales	81.25	176.60	25.00	815.00	550.00	20.00	30.00
Project Admin / Grants			200.00		2500.00		
Gift Aid			292.86				
Bank Account Interest	221.29	185.30	327.47	216.82	18.29	14.24	5.84
	<b>3306.04</b>	<b>3144.15</b>	<b>14499.33</b>	<b>7054.45</b>	<b>5286.29</b>	<b>2502.24</b>	<b>3093.84</b>
<i>2. Payments</i>							
Conference & AGM Costs	449.44	199.63	1142.98	3296.53	814.37	423.00	1128.80
Subscriptions	127.00	296.00	5.00		5.00	10.00	45.00
Newsletter	628.41	504.24	737.67	959.50	1066.97	1431.92	1201.94
Members Expenses	523.01	466.00	410.76	353.58	547.22	422.78	547.20
Website Costs		56.38		56.38			
Data Protection Registration	35.00	35.00	35.00	35.00	35.00	35.00	35.00
Miscellaneous	202.45		4109.00	2311.05	3244.75	456.23	1411.25
Bank Acct Tax deducted	44.21	37.03	65.44	42.75	3.60	2.75	1.12
	<b>2009.52</b>	<b>1594.28</b>	<b>6505.85</b>	<b>7054.79</b>	<b>5716.91</b>	<b>2781.68</b>	<b>4370.31</b>
<i>3. Excess of Receipts over Payments</i>							
	<b>1296.52</b>	<b>1549.87</b>	<b>7993.48</b>	<b>(0.34)</b>	<b>(430.62)</b>	<b>(279.44)</b>	<b>(1,276.47)</b>

## Treasurer's Report for 2011

<b>Treasurer's Report for 2011 (1 January – 31 December)</b>			
<b>Opening Balance at 1 January 2011</b>		<b>£13,687.74</b>	
<b>Income</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>£</b>
Membership Subscriptions	2610.00	Conference	864.00
Conference Bookings	448.00	AGM	264.80
Donations	0.00	Subscriptions	45.00
Sales	30.00	Newsletter	1201.94
Bank Interest	5.84	Members Expenses	547.20
		Tax deducted	1.12
		Website Costs	35.00
		Bursaries & Donations	661.25
		Loans	750.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>3093.84</b>		<b>4370.31</b>
<b>Closing Balance at 31 December 2011</b>		<b>£12,411.27</b>	

Notes:

Conference & AGM: 2011 was the first year that the AGM and conference were held separately, so there were individual costs for each.

Bursaries & Donations: three bursaries of approx £150 each were awarded, £100 was donated to Glasgow University Zoo Soc and £100 was donated to the Highland Biological Recording Group.

Loans: £750 was loaned to HBRG to help with publication of their Mammal Atlas.

- The e-petition has resulted in the planning stages of a Scottish Environmental Information Forum meeting working toward addressing the issues of data collection, management and sharing in Scotland. First meeting of Forum planned for April 2012

7. Election of Honorary Officers and Council for 2011/12  
Sam Ranscombe and Peter Slater have stepped down from the committee. Gill Dowse will be stepping down from 2012. Our thanks go to them.

New committee members:

Daisy Shepperd and Gwen Potter will share a seat

Proposer: Anne-Marie Smout

Second: Richard Weddle

Graeme Wilson

Proposer: Mike Beard

Second: Adrian Sumner

All other officers were duly elected at the previous AGM held in Glasgow

8. AOCB

- Thomas Huxley recommended that contact with OSCR (Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator) is made. Duncan Davidson reported that we already submit annual reports to them.
- Anne-Marie Smout reports from a recent Fife Nature meeting that SNH grant decisions are to be centralised which may affect some organisations. Claire Seymour reported that although the structure of how money is held has been changed, the priorities for delivering it has not. Money for any particular area cannot be guaranteed – it must be justified. The SEIF will be a good place for discussions such as these.

There was no further business and the AGM was closed at 1300.





The 2011 Annual Conference and AGM took place in the Pathfoot Building, Stirling University



Two excursions were laid on. One of these went to the raised bog at Wester Moss



A wet handful of Sphagnum moss



The Industrial activity not far from Wester Moss is interesting in that it appears to have little impact on the biodiversity of the moss

**BRISC Chairman's Report.  
November 2011 to September 2012.**

**Membership Report for 2011.**

The membership year runs from the 1<sup>st</sup> of April to the 31<sup>st</sup> of March.

At year end 31 March 2012, we had 103 individual members having gained eight and lost two during the year. We also had 30 corporate members, having lost two through 2011.

At today's date, we have 104 individual members and 31 corporate members.

Ironically, having urged members to take advantage of the Standing Order method of payment, we found earlier this year that nearly all standing orders had been rejected by our bank, due to an error by the bank and which is described more fully in a recent edition of Recorder News BRISC Recorder News no 86 (July 2012). The challenge in the latter part of this membership year will be to get standing orders re-submitted where appropriate and lodge new standing orders for next year. Mail-shots to the 70 affected members have just begun in September. Those members are asked kindly to complete the new form when received, and return it in the stamped addressed envelope provided.

Duncan Davidson  
Membership Secretary

Overall BRISC is in good health and the committee has spent most of its time dealing with Scottish Biodiversity Information Forum (SBIF) matters and organising the 2012 AGM. Out thanks have to go (again) to Anne-Marie Smout for her editing and compiling of Recorder News and having to deal with tardy submissions from certain contributors.

**AGM.**

Our AGM in 2011 at Stirling University went well although there were the inevitable clashes with other meetings. We have done our best to avoid any this year for our Conference and AGM in Dumfries on October the 27<sup>th</sup>. To avoid future clashes Andy Wakelin our Webmaster is developing a webpage with the dates of as many AGMs and other major meetings of conservation organisations in Scotland. Mark Pollitt has done sterling work in organising the even and many thanks must go to him.

**BRISC Committee.**

The Committee has had 3 committee meetings since the last AGM, two in Perth and one in Stirling. Aside from SBIF and the 2012 Conference the main topics for discussion were The HRGB Mammal Atlas, Bursaries, the Data Scoping Project and the Future of BRISC.

Last December the Highland Mammal Atlas was published but prior to that there was a shortfall of funding to do that. The BRISC Committee agreed to donate £100 and give an interest-free loan of £750 to the HBRG to cover the shortfall. HBRG can report that it has almost sold enough copies to pay back the loan and hopes to do so in early 2013.

The GNHS/BRISC Bursaries have been going very well with 4 Bursaries funded. A generous donation has allowed a 5<sup>th</sup> Bursary to be funded. These have been very well subscribed and the Committee has been discussing ways to secure more and continued funding for them. In the future these Bursaries could tie in very well with Citizen Science initiatives.

The Data Scoping Project was developed by Gill Dowse, Craig Macadam and Anne-Marie Smout. It seeks to identify the key digitised and un-digitised datasets currently in Scotland and provide recommendations for prioritising their mobilisation. The funding is available from BRISC to deliver this project but it was decided to hold it back until the outcome of the SBIF Action Plan became known. The Committee's thinking was that this project could be part of BRISC's contribution to SBIF.

The Future of BRISC. A big question, but one that was deferred until the outputs of SBIF and its action plan was known. SBIF and its effectiveness have a great bearing on what BRISC may be required to do/ be in the future.

#### **Scottish Biodiversity Information Forum (SBIF)**

The SBIF Report this year is much more positive than last year as quite a bit started to happen from December 2011 onwards. But we are still in the very first stages and we await the first meeting of the SBIF Steering Group, it was meant to happen in the summer...

As well as helping develop and responding to the SBIF Questionnaire, BRSIC organised a workshop for data providers and data managers in Stirling on the 18<sup>th</sup> of May at the Smith Museum in Stirling. It was very well attended with over 20 participants. A strong consensus was agreed at the data providers workshop and this was put forward to the SBIF meeting a week later. The afternoon event was very successful too although I was not able to attend in the afternoon. This event would not have happened without BRISC and show the importance of our role as a coordinator representing various groups.

#### **NFBR.**

One committee meeting was attended in January and I also attended the Conference in April and I gave a talk on Biological Recording and Planning in Scotland at that. The NFBR are looking to constitute themselves as a charity and take on a more dynamic and lobbying role in England, facilitating the delivery of the "Joining the Dots" forward plan. I shall be attending at least one of their committee meetings and their conference in the coming year.

#### **Membership/ Finances.**

Our membership has not changed a great deal in the last year but as ever we do require to have more members if we are seeking to fully represent the biological recording stakeholders of Scotland. This continues to be discussed by the committee.

Our Treasurer (and Membership Secretary), Duncan Davidson, has done another year of hard work on BRISC's behalf. His reports are attached with the AGM papers. Our finances remain healthy but will be running down over the next few years due to the Data Scoping Project and the continuing support of the Bursaries.

#### **And finally.**

Out congratulations go to Gill Dowse who is off on maternity leave from SWT and the BRISC Committee at the moment having given birth in the spring.

Jonathan Willet  
Chairman of BRISC.  
September 2012.