

## Highland Environment Forum Work Groups

Work Group	Purpose	Current Work	Lead
<b>Biodiversity</b>	<p>The Biodiversity Working Group was set up to help partners to deliver strategic biodiversity projects and support local biodiversity groups across Highland.</p> <p>It oversaw the production of the Highland Biodiversity Action Plan (2015-2020), which provides a strategic framework for biodiversity work across the Highlands and proposes a range of projects that partners would like to see delivered by 2020.</p> <p>The Working Group will help HEF to deliver the Highland BAP by working up specific projects with partners, identifying ways to address gaps and helping to secure funding for future work.</p>	<p>The working group is currently supporting Janet Bromham in writing the Highland Biodiversity Action Plan 2015 - 2020. This has been out to public consultation. All the comments arising from this will now be used to finalise the plan - it is intended to launch the plan during summer 2015.</p>	<p>Janet Bromham, Highland Council Biodiversity Officer  <a href="mailto:janet.bromham@highland.gov.uk">janet.bromham@highland.gov.uk</a></p>
<b>Carbon CLEVER declaration</b>	<p>To oversee the delivery of support and promotion related to the Carbon CLEVER Declaration. The Declaration aims to encourage organisations throughout Highland to reduce carbon emissions from their operations by promoting success and sharing good practice. The group was established by the Highland Environment Forum in September 2013.</p> <p>The group is co-chaired by Changeworks and Highland Council. The membership of the group is open to all members of the Highland Environment Forum; currently representatives from Resource Efficient Scotland, Energy Saving Trust, Scottish Natural Heritage, The Highland Environmental Network and The Highland Council sit on the working group.</p>	<p>The priorities for the Declaration Working Group over the next six months are to:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To promote the success of organizations in Highland to encourage others and share good practice.</li> <li>2. Develop an online presence to highlight good practice and share ideas</li> <li>3. Work with partners to share progress on carbon savings and to minimise reporting for organisations</li> <li>4. Work with signatories to understand what support they require</li> <li>5. Expand the working group to meet changing priorities</li> </ol>	<p>Stephen Carr, Highland Council, Lead Officer on Climate Change  <a href="mailto:stephen.Carr@highland.gov.uk">stephen.Carr@highland.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Alison Craig, Changeworks  <a href="mailto:alison.craig@hi.homeenergyscotland.org">alison.craig@hi.homeenergyscotland.org</a></p>

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<b>Invasive non-native species</b>	<p>To deliver the aims of the Highland Invasive Species Forum through projects specified as being of priority by the Forum.</p> <p>The aims of the Highland Invasive Species Group are to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bring together the key players and take stock of the situation regarding invasive non-native species in Highland</li> <li>2. Raise awareness and spread good practice</li> <li>3. Identify any major gaps and prioritise key areas for future work</li> <li>4. Work together to secure new resources and funding.</li> </ol>	<p>Work on riparian Invasive Species continues on all the catchments affected, a very large stand of Japanese Knotweed in Beauly is now being treated.</p> <p>Invasive Plant Species around Fort William have been surveyed in detail - funding streams for its control have still to be identified; some control work will take place this year but nothing on a strategic scale. On the Broom Catchment the landowners, NTS and Highland Council have funded a survey to identify the extent of the Japanese Knotweed and a control programme has been started in 2015. A similar survey and control project will take place in Mallaig during 2015 in partnership with the major landowner and Highland Council.</p> <p>Links with Network Rail have been good and potential joint action project areas have been identified. FCS continues its work eradicating Rhododendron from its landholdings.</p> <p>There is a will to undertake mink trapping in the Wester Ross, Lochaber and Skye and Lochalsh, but currently not the funding to fully support this.</p>	<p>Jonathan Willet, Highland Council Biodiversity Officer</p> <p><a href="mailto:jonathan.Willet@highland.gov.uk">jonathan.Willet@highland.gov.uk</a></p> <p>John Parrott, Coille Alba</p> <p><a href="mailto:john.parrott@coillealba.org.uk">john.parrott@coillealba.org.uk</a></p>

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<b>Land Use Strategy</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Carry out an initial exercise to see what individual strategies (egg forestry, water, landscape, wind farm) already exist, how these complement one another or conflict and what gaps there are.</li><li>2. Look at key issues across Highland and to reach a consensus on these across land use sectors.</li><li>3. Look at existing cross-sectoral land use planning in order to learn from their experience (e.g. Cairngorms National Park Authority, Coigach and Assynt Living Landscape, River Spey catchment management, Nevis Partnership, Sunart Initiative, Peatland Management Plan, Monaliadh deer management plan)</li><li>4. Aim to reach a position where there is a clear view on what information and strategies already exist and what needs to be done to improve Highland land use planning.</li></ol>	<p>Work is being undertaken to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Clarify the existing key priorities/issues paper</li><li>2. Design a draft programme of preparatory work towards a land use strategy</li></ol>	<p>Joint Leads:</p> <p>Nicole Wallace, Highland Council <a href="mailto:nicole.wallace@highland.gov.uk">nicole.wallace@highland.gov.uk</a></p> <p>George Hogg <a href="mailto:george.hogg@snh.gov.uk">george.hogg@snh.gov.uk</a></p>

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<b>Volunteering collaboration</b>	<p>To provide:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Better links between groups and organisations providing volunteering</li> <li>2. An easily accessible way for people to find out about volunteering opportunities.</li> <li>3. Improved volunteer support</li> </ol>	<p>Work is being undertaken to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Write up an outline collaborative volunteering strategy.</li> <li>2. Collate information on the benefits of volunteering - including health and employability.</li> <li>3. Publicise volunteering outputs</li> <li>4. Agree a system of grading volunteering activity - blue/red/black or numbers of boots are examples.</li> </ol> <p>Members of the group will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Meet twice a year to plan volunteering calendar.</li> <li>2. Keep in touch by email in between meetings</li> <li>3. Provide information to Highland Third Sector Interface on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• volunteering opportunities and where</li> <li>• volunteering training opportunities and where</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<p>Jonathan Willet, Highland Council Biodiversity Officer</p> <p><a href="mailto:jonathan.Willet@highland.gov.uk">jonathan.Willet@highland.gov.uk</a></p>
<b>Wildfire reduction</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To reduce the number and severity of accidental wildfires in the Highlands.</li> <li>2. To promote partnership working through the creation of wildfire groups and increase pre-planning in preparation for peak wildfire periods.</li> <li>3. Raise awareness and spread good practice.</li> </ol>	<p>The Scottish Fire Rescue Service (SFRS) continues to work closely with the Scottish Wildfire Forum (SWF) to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Progress the 4 strands of Response and Resilience, Prevention &amp; Protection, Mapping &amp; Intelligence</li> <li>2. Learning and development: engagement includes working with Highland Council Countryside Rangers, RSPB, RSPB and Highland Deer Management Groups (DMG), supported by SNH.</li> </ol>	<p>Phil Green, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service</p> <p><a href="mailto:phil.green@firescotland.gov.uk">phil.green@firescotland.gov.uk</a></p>

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<b>Wildlife Crime</b>	To reduce all forms of wildlife crime in the Highlands	Police Scotland will review the other PAW partnerships in Scotland and consult with partners to develop a PAW partnership and strategy that meets the needs of the Highlands and Islands. The aim is that a Highland PAW, including a strategy, will be established by spring/ summer 2016.	Chief Inspector Colin Gough, Police Scotland <a href="mailto:colin.gough@scotland.pnn.police.uk">colin.gough@scotland.pnn.police.uk</a>  Keith Duncan, Scottish Natural Heritage <a href="mailto:keith.duncan@snh.gov.uk">keith.duncan@snh.gov.uk</a>

## Subjects which have been previously discussed - and conclusions

Subject	Past HEF involvement	Ongoing HEF involvement
<b>Deer Management</b>	Paper, presentation and workshop from Robbie Kernahan, SHN	HEF to be kept informed of any development in deer management. At present there is no obvious role for HEF, but this should be kept under review.
<b>Fuel Poverty</b>	Paper from Alison Craig, Presentation by Alan Grant - both Changeworks	HEF action should always consider any potential to reduce inequality, with fuel poverty being part of this consideration.
<b>Remote and Rural collaboration/networking</b>	Workshop led by Highland Environmental Network	Consideration of how to connect with remote and rural communities and involve them in forum activity should underlie all forum work strands.
<b>Procurement</b>	Presentation	Requires lead agencies to progress