

SCOTTISH BADGERS ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16

CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

This has been a time of change for us.

With the culmination of two successful projects, we embarked on two more innovative assignments, recruiting two new people to join the team. Members are encouraged to join our Advisory Group. We meet many at our Annual Conference and also provide our Membership with three Newsletters each year. Keeping in touch is important to us.

Badgers in Scotland continue to face increasing threats, principally from development, forestry and persecution. Scottish Badgers will continue to address these problems both directly and indirectly.

I am continually grateful for the dedicated work of our Trustees and Advisory Group, together they make a formidable team.

Eddie Palmer, Chair

FINANCES – 2015/16

This was possibly our best ever year.

We:

- Successfully applied for Heritage Lottery Funding for a new project, set in South Lanarkshire for 2016 – 19
- Rounded off our SNH-funded project 'Volunteers, Engagement and Urban Nature' set in the Central Belt.
- Ended the UK-wide 'Operation meles' project upon the retirement of Ian Hutchison
- Sought new funding for a new post concerned with persecution for 2016-19

Below are rounded-up figures – the full Annual Accounts are on the Scottish Badgers website.

	INCOME
Grants and Trust Funds	£68,400
Memberships	£4,000
Environmental Search Fees	£8,400
Gift Aid	£630
Donations	£1,800
Training Fees	£4,900
Conference surplus	£900
Merchandise	£380
Mike Harris Bursary Fund	£100
Misc	£1,300

The full income was £92,045.67

	EXPENDITURE
Remuneration	£44,000
Travel and subsistence	£5,400
Equipment and Office costs	£2,100
Vehicle costs	£60.00
Training costs	£626.00
Web and Paypal	£700.00
Org subs	£800.00
Insurance	£320.00
Merchandise	£2,700
Annual Report production	£900.00
HLF advance costs	£100
Misc	£190

The full expenditure was £59,585.90

The apparent surplus for the year of £32,545 is all tied in to grants received in advance for the 2016/17 year.

FUNDERS

Scottish Natural Heritage

LUSH Charity Pots

Primrose Trust

Patagonia Environmental Grants of Tides Foundation

Sylvia Aitken Trust

YOUR LEGACY FOR SCOTLAND'S BADGERS

Scottish Badgers has a vision of a Scotland free from badger persecution and cruelty by 2020. Badgers in Scotland suffer unimaginable cruelties every day. They are forced to defend themselves against dogs in organised fighting, beaten with spades by badger-baiters, snared, shot, and poisoned. Their dependent cubs are left to die. Road accidents cause thousands of deaths each year on Scotland's roads.

In May 2016 we were very grateful to receive a legacy from a committed supporter of our work. This gift along with other donations and grants (we raise all our funds ourselves) enables us to commit to crucial work ahead in crime prevention, engaging with communities where baiting takes place, providing advice in the interests of badgers to farmers, gamekeepers, forestry workers and developers, working with law enforcement agencies and training badger workers in the protection of badgers, their setts and habitats. The work we carry out costs us thousands of pounds every year.

IF THE TIME COMES WHEN YOU WANT TO INCLUDE A CHARITY IN YOUR WILL, OR MAKE A GIFT IN MEMORY OF A LOVED ONE, WE HOPE THAT YOU WILL CONSIDER SCOTTISH BADGERS.

Our support for badgers must never stop.

To find out more, please contact Elspeth Stirling, SB Secretary:

secretary@scottishbadgers.org.uk

OUR TREASURER SAYS.....

The 2015/2016 year has been a great one for Scottish Badgers. We have seen an increase in income from memberships (up by £300 from 2014/2015), training fees, which increased by almost £3,000 from last year and conference surplus (up on £200 from last year). This year also saw us receive the first part of a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund which will support our work in the coming years. Search fees obtained from data searches were on par with those generated last year, although the monies received from sale of goods were slightly less than last year.

In terms of expenditure, we spent more on remuneration and travel subsistence than in the previous year. The Scottish Badgers' car, which was requiring more money to be spent on it as it got older was sold, bringing in some extra money to our funds. Another small but important source of income for us is through Gift Aid – this year we were able to claim over £600 in tax relief from your donations and membership fees.

Overall, we'd like to thank you for your support; we are reliant on your generosity and financial support for much of what we do and we very much appreciate your help.

CHAIR'S REPORT TO AGM SCOTTISH BADGERS 24 SEPTEMBER 2016

In the past year I have led on the following matters, brought them before the Advisory Group or Board of Trustees as appropriate, and attended to our charities' responsibilities and communications in relation to our projects and achieving our objectives:

SECRETARY'S REPORT TO AGM SCOTTISH BADGERS 24 SEPTEMBER 2016

In the past year I have ensured the following matters have been attended to and that our charities' links, memberships, payments and other obligations are maintained up to date:

- Maintained positive working relationships with relevant other environmental organisations as agreed with the board, advisory group and contracted staff.
- Appointed two contracted badger workers assisted by other trustees.
- Regularly met contractors to update on progress with projects.
- Managed transitions from previous to current staff / contracted workers.
- Provided quarterly reports on our projects/ work for funders.
- Maintained SB status with both SNH and HLF as SB representative.
- Set up and maintained new and regular co-ordination on behalf of SB with SNH through their Wildlife Crime Head.
- Together with SB's Species Protection Co-ordinator, maintained links with Police Scotland.
- Maintained links with Scottish Environment LINK at strategic level by membership of Stakeholder Group.
- Led/ worked as part of SELINK Land Group; sub group on Wildlife; and sub group on Wildlife Crime.
- Led on strategic funding in long-term on behalf of SB, and continue to explore new possible sources of funding.
- Attended relevant meetings and training sessions of SEFF (Scottish Environmental Funding Forum).
- Together with SB Secretary, planned meeting agendas, and provision of papers.
- Maintained SB link with OSCR on Annual Return, and complete Annual Return.
- Maintained contact with SB accountant re. Annual Accounts.
- Maintained contact with SCVO over any current Scottish governance issues.
- Corresponded with the 'Eurobadger' project.
- Maintained individual links with Advisory Group members, and been in communication over any items of concern.

- Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) annual payment and standards.
- The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) annual membership.
- Zurich Insurance through TCV annual premium for appropriate cover for members and public liability.
- Health and Safety procedures and information updated as required by law/ insurance.
- Annual Reports accounts on our projects/ work provided for funders.
- OSCR (the Scottish Charity regulator) requirements on charities regularly checked and taken before the board.
- Business Plan (2015-2020) requirements regularly checked and taken before the board.
- Arranged Advisory Group meetings, agenda's, papers and minutes 3 times/ year.
- Arranged Board of Trustee meetings, agenda's, papers and minutes 4 times/ year.
- Arranged AGM agenda, papers and minutes once a year.
- Provided trustee article for members' Newsletter.
- Provided information/ dealt with communications concerning legacies/ commemorative donations/ Mike Harris Memorial Fund for research and education.
- Served as corresponding link with SELINK Agriculture Group
- Authored applications for funding streams with other trustees.

THREE YEAR REPORT SNH PROJECT 'VOLUNTEERS, ENGAGEMENT AND URBAN NATURE'

As 2015 was the last year of this project, we have decided to summarise the three years' results. Susan Tierney was the Development Officer June 2013 until September 2015, being replaced by Elaine Rainey in October 2015. Susan went to work for the Badger Trust in England, and we wish her well and every success.

This project was set up in order to further the objectives of Scottish Badgers in raising awareness amongst the public, providing more in the way of public education, and to accelerate both the recruitment of new members, and their gaining of skills.

The project was based in the central belt of Scotland, and we worked in all local authority areas apart from the three Ayrshires, mainly because we were invited in by the areas we worked with.

Glasgow was a very important centre for us, and we also established far more of a presence in important badger areas such as Stirling, Falkirk, and North and South Lanarkshire. It was interesting to note that whereas we had been told that Clackmannanshire 'had no badgers', this did not prove to be the case.

Very good relationships were formed with Ranger Services, which during this time became much more stretched due to diminishing resources. Centres such as Chatelherault, near Hamilton, and Palacerigg, at Cumbernauld proved invaluable to us.

There were four main activities over the three years:

- 1) Public events, such as summer shows, country park fairs, and specific environment sector events provided to educate and engage the public.
- 2) Basic training events open to the public, not just SB members, including basic surveys
- 3) 'Badger Blitzes', or more general 'Countryside Blitzes', where quite large numbers of the public can be engaged usually for a day, surveying for all types of species in all sorts of habitats.
- 4) Youth project. We moved within this project from a reliance on provision of time and premises by schools, to events run within Country parks with the co-operation of Ranger services.

URBAN NATURE PROJECT RESULTS AND STATISTICS

OPEN ACCESS PUBLIC EVENTS

These events usually took place during the summer months, and most were either outdoors, or in marquees. Some were indoors at Country Parks, and some, such as the Glasgow Green Fair in Glasgow attracted many thousands of people.

We attended 25 events over the three summers, had 6,000 people engaged with us over those days, and used 83 days of experienced volunteer time, as well as our paid staff.

TRAINING COURSES & SURVEYS

This did not include the Scottish Badgers structured Level 1 and 2 courses, but did include a new basic 'Badger Awareness' Course. These events ran mainly, but not solely, during the autumn and winter (October to April), the main surveying season, when vegetation is down.

58 events were mounted, with 478 participants, and 95 days of experience volunteer time helping the Development Officer.

BADGER BLITZES

20 events were run, in all months of the year. They attracted 245 people, not only badger lovers, but those involved, or wishing to be involved in general wildlife work. There were 32 volunteer days of volunteer helper time.

YOUTH PROJECT

12 days of engagement were run, involving 375 children, and 32 volunteer days of help. Helpers included teachers and Countryside Rangers with child safe-guarding measures in place. New relationships have been formed during this time, including with RZSS at Edinburgh, who are developing their resources concerning Scottish native species.

BADGER SETTS

163 new setts were recorded over this period. It was sobering to discover that it appeared that at least a quarter of the total had been interfered with in some way, (some in distant past), and that in South Lanarkshire, from, inner Glasgow south to Lanark, that over 50% had been dug in the last few years.

URBAN NATURE PROJECT OVERALL CONCLUSIONS AND FINDINGS

- 1) Many of lessons learned have been integrated into the new project just commenced (April 2016) using a Heritage Lottery Funding Award for work in South Lanarkshire over the 2016-19 period.
- 2) The number of SB members has risen from 200 to 400 over the last three years, no doubt due to our greater public presence.
- 3) The inspection of so many disturbed setts has led to great efforts to interact with Police Scotland over this problem
- 4) Scottish Badgers is enthusiastic as an NGO that we are working in the right direction to involve more of the public; our training courses are popular; we have good

relationships with the forestry and agriculture industries, and other wildlife NGOs.

- 5) Our membership of Scottish Environment LINK is extremely valuable, and continuing.

SPECIES PROTECTION OFFICER REPORT 2015/16

Ian Hutchison continued to maintain regular contact with partners during the course of the year, and continued to carry out duties in relation to the secretariat concerning Operation Badger (formerly Meles).

He continued to maintain a monthly return of incidents reported by NGOs in relation to badger crime which is available to anyone who asks thus providing an accurate and contemporaneous source of information on badger crime in the UK.

Articles were placed on the Scottish Badgers Facebook page which has seen a fluctuating audience but does provoke engagement with an otherwise untapped audience.

Ian took part in a telephone conference call with partners from the Badger Persecution Priority Delivery Group in York on the 10th December. He attached a copy of the most recent badger persecution master sheet and the updated Badger Persecution Priority Delivery Group plan to the trustees only.

THE REPORTING OF BADGER CRIME OVER THE PERIOD 2015/16

A sequential log is kept of all badger incidents reported to NGOs. This log contains details of the date, source, incident type, disposal and outcome where that is available. During the course of 2015, 457 incidents were recorded, of which 42 took place in Scotland. To date 7 incidents have been reported in 2016 the most serious of which was a report of a snared badger at McDuff. This badger was alive and made good its escape after being

released from the snare but a further dead badger apparently killed by a snare was found at the locus. SSPCA are making further enquiries in relation to this incident.

The total number of calls about all incidents, of any type, can be up to 400 in a year for Scotland.

A significant decision was made by a judge at York Magistrates Court in that in the matter of an appeal against conviction the judge stated that an expert witness needs to visit the scene of an incident on the day it takes place to be able to prove current use. On that basis he overturned the conviction saying that a visit three days after the incident was too long a time lapse to have a sufficiency of proof for a conviction.

This decision has caused much discussion, but the COPFS in Scotland has discounted this judgement, it having no precedent in Scotland. Each Sherriff will make judgement based on the individual case.

Ian also issued an advisory note on the use of covert cameras and the steps volunteers could take to gather evidence at the scene of an alleged crime.

SPECIES PROTECTION OFFICER EDUCATIONAL ROLE

Ian continued to provide assistance/input to the various training modules/courses when required. A badger awareness day for police officers at Ayr was mounted which was attended by 10 wildlife crime officers. This was again well received and hopefully this can continue with other officers in the future. A letter of appreciation from their area commander was received.

He also travelled to Secret World in Somerset where training was delivered to vets, rehab workers and badger group members over the period of two days. About 40 persons attended and a request was made to repeat at some time in the future.

Ian retired on 31 March 2016, and this was marked at the February Advisory group meeting, with cake, refreshments, and a gift presentation.

The post has been re-designed as 'Species Protection Co-ordinator'. It is ably carried out by Emily Platt who commenced on 1 March 2016.

WILDLIFE CRIME AWARENESS

We raise awareness about wildlife crime by reaching as wide an audience as possible. We:

- Attend and manage a large number of events e.g. wildlife events, retail outlet charity days and open days. We now have a dedicated Events Team specialising in delivering our message in a fun but professional way.
- Provide informative talks to local groups, communities, universities and colleges.
- Provide up to date information and raise discussion through social media, our member's newsletter and e-newsletter.

TRAINING

- Last year we reviewed our training courses and made a number of changes.
- We are now providing more training, to more people, in more areas of Scotland, than ever before.
- We have currently eighty seven individuals in training or booked for training as Level 1 Badger Workers.
- Our Badger Awareness Course has proved a huge success ensuring that people unable to commit to the extensive study and practical work involved in our more formal courses can still learn something about badgers and help to protect them
- This year we have provided two specialised forestry training courses. One to foresters and one for ecological consultants. Further courses are in preparation.

OUR VISION

Our vision is of a Scotland free from badger persecution and cruelty by 2020.

Scotland's wildlife legislation will be strengthened and enforced by informed and sufficiently-resourced and informed law-makers, police and prosecution services.

In parallel, Scotland's communities will recognise the value of our native badger as part of our wider natural heritage and will act to protect local populations.

OUR MISSION

Scottish Badgers will play its part in achieving our vision. Our mission is to:

- Operate as Scotland's leading charity concerned with the conservation, welfare and persecution of badgers;
- Engage with all parts of the Scottish community to ensure we have active members in all parts of Scotland;
- Actively influence law-makers and decision-makers by engaging with the political and local planning processes, drawing on our members' extensive expertise and experience;
- Act as an equal partner with Scotland's crime enforcement and prosecution services;
- Act as a resource for expertise, raising standards in badger survey and mitigation amongst professionals and amateurs;
- Contribute towards an environmentally-informed and sustainable Scotland.

NAMES, ADDRESSES, CONTACTS

ADVISORY GROUP MEMBERS 04/15-03/16

Eddie Palmer T	Chair
Roger Cottis T	Vice Chair
Laura Carter-Davis T	Treasurer
Elsbeth Stirling T	Secretary
John Ellis T	until Sept. 2015
Tricia Alderson T	
Steve Jackson-Matthews T	Business Plan
Andy Riches T	Training
Allan Bantick	
Andy Christie	Rehabilitation

Jackie Clarke

Melanie Craig

Ann Innes

Gill Smart

Ian Hutchison, Susan Tierney and Elaine Rainey also attended the Advisory Group.

T = Trustee.

Newsletter

Badger crime, legislation, planning and mitigation:

Species Protection Coordinator, Emily Platt

07866 844 232

speciesprotection@scottishbadgers.org.uk

Data searches

datasearch@scottishbadgers.org.uk

To log badger records:

<http://www.scottishbadgers.org.uk>

and use the buttons on the front page.

Training, web presence, volunteering, newsletter and general enquiries

info@scottishbadgers.org.uk

Events

events@scottishbadgers.org.uk

'Badgers in the Landscape, Community Building for Wildlife'

Project Officer, Elaine Rainey

07565 813401

projectofficer@scottishbadgers.org.uk

Local branches

info@scottishbadgers.org.uk

BECOME A MEMBER OF SCOTTISH BADGERS

join via our website

www.scottishbadgers.org.uk

Donate online: www.charitychoice.co.uk

Like us on Facebook: Scottish Badgers

Follow us on Twitter: @scottishbadgers

Scottish Badgers is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) No. SC034297

The income and expenditure figures were extracted from the full audited accounts. Copies can be obtained from the website. The annual accounts have been submitted to the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR)

OFFICIAL ADDRESS OF SCIO: Hillhead Farmhouse, North Mains of Kinnettles, Forfar, Angus DD8 1XF