

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS WITH WDNA 2017/'18 ACTIONS

Introduction

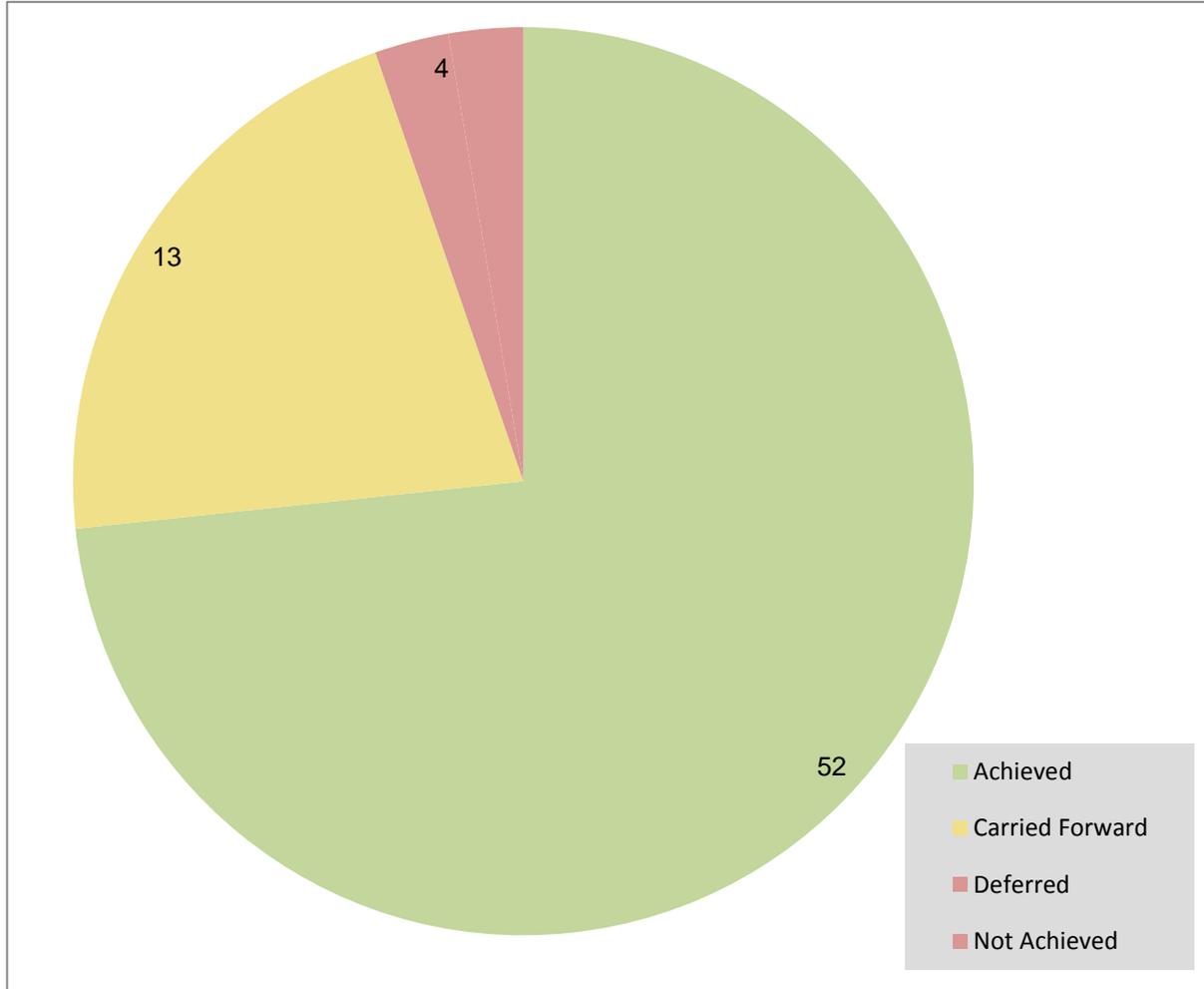
Below is a list of the 69 actions delivered through the 2017/'18 WDNA Action Plan. The following descriptions have been used to assess action status:

Achieved: Where a time bound project or activity has been achieved or a specific stage of a project or activity has been achieved;

Carried Forward: Where an activity has not been achieved within the timescale but will be continued into the following year;

Deferred: Where an action has been postponed, the intention is still there to do it but not within the next year;

Not achieved: Where an action has not been achieved and there are no immediate plans to carry it out.



Pie chart summary of Actions progress

WDNA Priority: Collaborative and Effective Deer Management Planning and Implementation

Actions Achieved:

Action	Progress narrative for the action
Deliver a workshop session on conflict management guidance	The workshop for DMG Chairs and Secretaries was held in July 2017 it focussed on two main areas: Delivery of DMPs for Environmental Outcomes and Adapting to Change (Including a session on managing conflict)
Develop the metrics for assessing delivery of the Public Interests in the Deer Management Group assessment	A set of public interest metrics for DMG Assessments has been developed.
Support ADMG in the provision and interpretation of woodland data that aids development of deer management plans	FCS has made all Native Woodland Survey of Scotland data available in several different formats to assist with accessibility and interpretation. There have been no requests for access or support in interpretation directly from ADMG; however we continue to engage with ADMG and LDNS to make them aware of the data availability and support that is available.
Support deer management planning activity in the Assynt area through gathering data, training land managers and investigating opportunities to create businesses from deer products	SWT have delivered or facilitated training and skills development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DSC1 – 10 participants from local estates including Assynt Crofters Trust, Scottish Wildlife Trust, Culag Community Woodland Trust, John Muir Trust, Inverpolly • Fragile Earth Sensitive ATV training – 4 Participants from Woodland Trust, Assynt Foundation, Scottish Wildlife Trust, Culag Community Woodland Trust • 2 participants on UHI MSc unit Sustainable Deer Management Supported Deer Management Planning by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing framework for Habitat Assessment Programme for WSDMG • Developing specifications for Venison Marketing Research to be implemented 2018-19
Review Deer Management Planning in forestry to better connect with SNH's official DMP process	This is ongoing and will be part of internal work renewing grant support in the next SRDP period.
Agree methodology for monitoring the extent of compliance with the Deer Code	The outline approach and methodology for reviewing the extent of compliance with the Deer Code has been agreed.
Develop short video clips as online tutorials to complement the WDBP guides	
Refresh the WDBPG website	
Deliver a series of activity sessions for children based on deer management	
Include a deer management event in the Cairngorms Nature Festival Weekend	Deer management event established as part of CNF weekend annually at Balmoral. Audience: open invitation to general public
Deliver the "Hill to the Grill" programme with partners as part of the Outdoor and Woodland Learning Project	Activity for 35 S2 students from Ullapool High School (https://www.johnmuirtrust.org/latest/news/1414-staff-blog-hill-to-grill-with-ullapool-high-school). This is an ongoing programme to be delivered each year of the project.
Promote deerscotland.info website	

Actions Carried Forward into next year indicating some slippage in delivery:

Action	Progress narrative for the action
Develop handy bespoke guides on conflict management tools and techniques	
Support DMGs in developing and implementing their DMPs	This work continues to be ongoing. 44 Deer Management Plans have been produced with ADMG actively supporting the development of new plans for fledgling groups such as Lewis and Harris, Uists and Skye as well as supporting and helping to facilitate a number of new Groups in areas not previously represented by a DMG such as Cowal.
Provide training for FCS woodland officers to support their contribution to commenting on DMG deer management plans	In progress but not complete
Address the 2016 Authorisation Panel Recommendations	Hardware (night and thermal image intensifying scopes) purchased, liaison with FES concluded and plan in place. Authorization for use granted by SG but work suspended till October as night shooting season comes back into play.
Agree how to present monitoring reports to parliament on a three yearly basis	The methodology for pulling together the reports has been agreed but the final presentation is yet to be confirmed.
Develop new WDBP Guides for DMGs	This was originally a ADMG action but was taken on by SNH. Work is in progress with an external contractor to develop these guides
Develop SWARD for deer managers	SWARD will be progressed over the next period by engaging a consultant organisation to undertake a scoping review of some of the more technical/IT components.
Identify how to deliver the research priorities and knowledge exchange gaps set out in the report on Wild Deer Research	A draft action plan has been developed identifying how the research priorities will be met. This will be completed and start to be implemented in the year ahead.

Actions Deferred:

Deliver training on conflict management tools	
Update the Joint Agency Fencing Guidelines	Some limited discussions with policy staff around deer fencing issues took place in 2018/19, but the situation remains that it is not seen by all as a priority and progress is unlikely for some time.

WDNA Priority: Healthy Ecosystems

Actions Achieved:

Action	Progress narrative for the action
Implement the Invasive Non-Native Species Code as and when necessary and monitor and act upon any reported sightings of Muntjac	One confirmed sighting of a muntjac in May near Polbeth in West Lothian. The animal had escaped from Five Sisters Zoo and was recaptured. There were other unconfirmed sights, assessed as false alarms, at Garrion Bridge in South Lanarkshire in December and at Piershill in Edinburgh in March. FES will continue to investigate any reported sighting on the NFE and report directly back to SNH.
Run a session on restoring native woodlands for DMGs	
Review and co-ordinate guidance on woodland monitoring	3/4 awareness raising days, work on consistency has been carried out. Further development publishing and training will be undertaken in 2018/19.
Support DMGs in planning for and implementing opportunities for woodland expansion in their areas	Birnam Workshop provided DMGs with advice about woodland expansion opportunities and the Grant funding available through FCS.
Deliver a range of peatland restoration projects	Peatland restoration projects within CNP well established with over 500 ha under restoration and a total of over 13 projects with, funding application or expression of interest. CNPA employing full-time Peatland Officer, with second PO currently advertised (May 2018). Peatland Restoration limited only by funding availability and PO capacity.
Support establishment of riparian woodlands through Natural Heritage Grant Scheme Small Tree Planting Funding	NPGS funded riparian tree planting on the Balvaig River at Stroneslaney.
Contribute to addressing herbivore impacts which are contributing to unfavourable condition of designated features in woodlands	FES increased its overall deer cull from 32000 in 2016/17 to 37000 in 2017/18. We also now have a Sheep Trespass policy which we can action. FES are also using the Woodland grazing toolbox Herbivore Impacts Assessment in all ancient and semi-natural woodlands (many of which are designated as SAC or SSSI) and on Plantations on Ancient Woodland sites.
Contribute to addressing herbivore impacts which are contributing to unfavourable condition of designated features in the uplands	Roll out of revised HIA guides and support for consultants to provide training.
Carry out a deer census programme	Counts completed in West Ross, West Lochaber, South Perthshire, Morvern, East Loch Erich, Strathtay, Caenlochan and on the Uists. Also delivered estate-funded counts in Letterewe, Cabrach, Marlodge, Mid West, Reay Forest and Wildland. Monadiaths 50% DMG / 50% SNH funded.
Review training on distinguishing herbivore impacts for those involved with Site Condition Monitoring and Habitat Impact Assessments	3 days of upland HIA training was given to 3 DMGs within the Park and one day of Woodland Training was given (this was in May 2018). We discussed the difficulties in differentiating between deer and sheep with practioners.

WDNA Priority: Healthy Ecosystems

Actions Carried Forward into next year indicating some slippage in delivery:

Action	Progress narrative for the action
Contribute to restoring native woodland into satisfactory condition	There is continued work on woodland restoration through grant provision and collaboration with SNH to develop deer management plans that are fit for purpose. Renewed activity by FCS to identify and improve woodland condition through delivery of a SRDP funded projects. Currently FCS have grants covering 6, 007 hectares under the sustainable management of forests options which includes an element of habitat monitoring, active deer management based on agreed cull targets and reporting on annually. A further 5,027 ha is under the Woodland Improvement Grant to draft a FCS deer management plan and are expected to come under similar active management before April 2020.
Contribute to meeting 2020 targets on new woodland creation	Although the 2020 target for new native woodlands was not met this year we continue to make grants available to support new woodland creation including working on regional initiatives that focus on new native woodlands. In 2017-18 3,042 ha of new native woodland expansion was achieved.
Carry out deer management to contribute to achieving Favourable Condition	Ongoing work. The only area we are struggling with UFC and deer now is at Abernethy in Cairngorms SAC. We have taken this matter up with CNPA who offered to broker meetings with neighbours.

Actions Not Achieved:

Review the guidance on distinguishing herbivore impacts in the WDBP Guides on woodland and tall herb damage and address any gaps	
--	--

WDNA Priority: Lowland and Urban Deer

Actions Achieved:

Description	Progress notes
Deliver a Sharing Good Practice event in the lowlands in April 2017 aimed at Local Authorities	A Sharing Good Practice event on deer management in the lowlands was held in April 2017. It was well attended and a well received event.
Continue the lowlands Pilot project to understand what measures can be used to assess the delivery of public interests	Interim report received and presented to 2nd Board meeting. Update on progress due at 3rd Board meeting on 30th April. Final report due end of June.
Set up an expert panel to examine deer management in the low land deer context	The panel has met twice. Work to agree key questions for stakeholders (and a list of stakeholders - covered mainly through the combined membership of LDNS and DMRT completed and questionnaire distributed. Dates and venues of the remaining panel meetings set. The LDP chair is in contact with the chair of the independent Deer Working Group and will be attending the next DMRT. The focus is now on progressing the issues at the core of its brief.
Identify key contacts e.g. councillors for training and support for deer management communications	Within a number of key Local Authorities a number of ways of influencing key councillors have been identified. Further action will take place in 2018/19.
Deliver a communication events programme to a wide audience on deer and deer management in the low ground	LDNS has undertaken a number of outward-facing events within its communications programme for 2017/18 including: evening meetings in Airth and East Kilbride; an open event on the topic of deer vehicle collisions; displays at the Central Scotland Green Network Conference and the GWCT Scottish Game Fair; and support for training days. An annual report/newsletter and a regular programme of e-News updates to subscribers has also been undertaken.

Actions Carried Forward into next year indicating some slippage in delivery:

Description	Progress notes
Improve understanding of number of deer being culled and by whom in the lowlands and urban areas	
Develop an understanding of the role of deer on expanding woodland/forestry in urban areas	FES continues to annually carry out Thermal Imaging deer counts in many of their urban woods. This information along with cull data is shared with SNH. More work required in this area.
Commission a study of public perceptions on deer in the lowlands, building on the proposed methodology in the SNH commissioned report On deer perceptions	

Actions Not Achieved

Improve understanding of deer population dynamics in the lowlands and urban areas	
---	--

WDNA Priority: Economic & Community Development

Actions Achieved:

Description	Progress notes
Provide venison from National Nature Reserves and National Parks for local events and sales	
Further explore the use of deer larders and cold stores in the low grounds	Have explored through a number of channels such as through LDNS questionnaire sent through LDNS members but with very poor feedback.
Provide a deer management sporting lease opportunity on the Isle of Rum NNR	5 year lease let. Contributed to deer management on the island, economic activity on Rum.
Co-ordinate a series of events through "Eat Scottish Venison Day"	
Refine a cost benefit analysis of deer culling and deer fencing	A joint FCS, SNH paper on the cost benefit analysis of deer culling and fencing was completed.
Continue to raise awareness amongst staff and stalkers of deer-related human disease risks such as Lyme disease from ticks	FC ran a national campaign in 2017 'ticked off' in regards to diseases and illness associated with tick bits. This was a tool box kit which covered how to prevent against getting them, how to extract ticks from your and your dog's body using tool supplied and when to seek medical advice. Wildlife staff have also the option of being supplied with tick preventative clothing.
Collate DVC records from main data sources of Road operating companies, SSPCA records and Human injury records	Another year's report has been drafted.
Continue work on DVCs, including looking at identifying hotspots	
Facilitate the annual Spring and Autumn Deer Campaign to help raise awareness amongst road users of the likelihood of deer movements	
Support responsible access and responsible land management by operating the Heading for the Scottish Hills web service	
Encourage and support the use of CNPA developed and provided signs on deer stalking and education on wider moorland management	120 access/information/'Welcome to the Moor', stalking, dog walking signs produced and distributed through three Moorland Groups operating across CNP.

WDNA Priority: Economic & Community Development

Actions Achieved continued:

Description	Progress notes
Promote Scottish Outdoor Access Code advice relating to stalking to members and to the general public via the website linking to the HFSH / Hill phones when the scheme is launched each summer	A link from the Ramblers Scotland homepage to a webpage on deer stalking, which highlighted the HFSH guidance during the main stalking period. This message was also circulated in our member e-newsletter to our Scottish members, and promoted through social media at the time
Take opportunities to publicise and promote the rights and responsibilities of the public with regard to walking during the stalking season	Ramblers Scotland have promoted the HFSH advice to the public through our social media channels during the main stalking period.
Liaise over issues relating to access and stalking through the National Access Forum	There was only one discussion relating to access and stalking during this period at the NAF, which related to a research project based on an estate in Glen Lyon. However, we did take part in this discussion, and will continue to do so if the matter arises again
Encourage responsible access through the Land Management Access Forum	The Local Access Forum meets quarterly and there is now a land management representative with a stalking background attending.
Review existing data and scope the feasibility of identifying new data on the impacts of deer on forestry	The review of existing data has resulted in the development of a revised Woodland Herbivore Impact Assessment (WHIA), and discussion on the future development of a plot-based quantitative assessment system based around the existing qualitative WHIA.
Develop the Woodland Herbivore Impact Assessment as a methodology for monitor impacts of deer on forestry	The existing WHIA methodology was revised and updated. A FCS, SNH funded project completed a review of the consistency of surveyors in using the methodology. Three awareness raising workshops on the use of the WHIA were run in Seven Lochs project area, Loch Falloch and Flanders Moss.

WDNA Priority: Training & Wild Deer Welfare

Actions Achieved:

Description	Progress notes
Hold a WDBP Demonstration Day for colleges	
Deliver annual DSC1 courses, including female only option	DSC1 course offered through local contractor and subsidised thru CNPA Rural Skills Training on annual basis
Offer a DSC 2 subsidised opportunity	DSC2 opportunities offered through local contractor and subsidised thru CNPA Rural Skills Training on annual basis
Encourage the use of the CNP as an education resource and provide support for education activities	CNPA actively engaged in hosting knowledge transfer with several university and higher education establishments each year. CNPA active in improving coverage of HIA thru DMGs and analysing larder data to advise/focus DMP and culling effort towards reducing densities and improving deer welfare
Run an event on best practice in food hygiene and carcase preparation	A number of events were run.
Hold Open Range Days and Run DSC courses	
Run the advanced Deer Management course	
Deliver 2 Habitat Impact Assessment Training Days	We delivered 2 HIA days in partnership with SNH and another 1 in partnership with SAC/ FAS.
Review the SVQs and Modern Apprenticeship in game keeping and wildlife management	Lantra, along with SQA and guidance from college staff and industry representatives, reviewed the content of SVQ 2 (SCQF Level 5) and 3 (SCQF Level 7) units covering Gamekeeping, Game Rearing, Deer, Upland/Grouse and Lowland learning pathways, as well as the framework for the Modern Apprenticeship SCQF Level 5. This was then opened to wider industry consultation, and the new qualification structures are now signed off
Promote awareness of and ways to prevent spread of Chronic Wasting Disease	
Contribute to contingency planning for Chronic Wasting Disease	Contributed through the CWD Technical Group.

Actions Carried Forward into next year indicating some slippage in delivery:

Promote and run training on the updated WDBP Guides on welfare	
Run welfare sessions for DMGs	