

Ayrshire Red Squirrel Group Action Plan 2006-2008

‘A healthy population of red squirrels in Ayrshire’

The overall objectives of the group can be summarised as:

- To co-ordinate surveys and sightings of red and grey squirrels to establish the distribution of both populations and changes taking place.
- To raise awareness of the plight of the red squirrel in Ayrshire among the public and landowners and to work with landowners to promote red squirrel friendly woodland management practices.

In order to achieve these objectives, the group will:

1. Campaign to extend the group’s knowledge of Ayrshire’s Red Squirrel and Grey Squirrel populations through systematic ecological surveys.
2. Campaign to engage Ayrshire landowners and other land managers in promoting red squirrel populations and in halting incoming grey squirrel populations.
3. Campaign to extend popular awareness of the threat to Ayrshire’s red squirrels and the ways in which ordinary members of the local community can help.
4. Construction and implementation of activities, meetings and events for the Ayrshire Red Squirrel Group, open to all interested members of the public.
5. Campaign to raise funds for the Red Squirrel Rescue project and the other activities of Ayrshire Red Squirrel Group.

Underlying assumptions were made as follows:

1. The rate of grey incursion is not so fast that they will be well established in all the woods in Ayrshire in the next 3 years.
2. Funding is obtained to allow the implementation of the Ayrshire Red Squirrel Rescue project (activities and targets included in this plan) from July 2006 to June 2008.

Ayrshire Red Squirrel Group Action Plan July 2006 – June 2008

<u>Objective</u>	<u>Aim</u>	<u>Who?</u>	<u>When?</u>
Campaign to extend the groups knowledge of Ayrshire's Red & Grey Squirrel Populations	Compile a map to show the current data regarding grey and red squirrel distribution	Management committee	By July 2006.
	Identification of local priority woods for the group to consider for surveying and the most appropriate method for survey. (Hair tubes, walked transects, feeders.)	Management committee	By July 2006
	Carry out surveys of all national and local priority woods in Ayrshire	Management committee & contractor	By April 2008
	Produce an updated map showing current distribution	Contractor	End of 2006, 2007, 2008
	Co-ordinate activities with the local biodiversity action plan, with the local authority officers responsible for the plan's implementation.	Management committee	Meeting once per year
	Collect and collate sightings from the public and pass information on to the Ayrshire Biological Records Office, Scottish Natural Heritage and Scottish Wildlife Trust.	Contractor	Increase records annually by 10%. End of 2006, 2007, 2008
Campaign to engage Ayrshire landowners and other land managers in promoting red squirrel populations and in halting incoming grey squirrel populations.	Identify sympathetic land managers/owners who can provide realistic advice and credibility to the campaign. 5 managers to be actively involved.	Contractor	By Dec 2006.
	Construct information packs, suggestion packs and other PR material for use with land owners/managers who would like to lend their practical support.	Contractor	By Dec 2006.
	Identify woods where grey squirrel control is taking place and woods where grey squirrel control would be beneficial.	Management committee	By Dec 2006.
	Distribute traps to a minimum of 3 appropriate land owners/managers per year and run at least 3 grey squirrel control training courses, and co-ordinate control activities.	Contractor	By Dec 2006, Dec 2007.
	Distribute parapoxy testing kits to 10 appropriate people each year resulting in tests on 40 grey squirrels being carried out	Contractor	By Dec 2006, Dec 2007
	Provide advice to 3 land managers of priority woods per year on appropriate woodland management for red squirrel conservation.	Contractor	By Dec 2006, Dec 2007.
Campaign to extend popular awareness of the threat to Ayrshire's red squirrels and the ways in which ordinary members of the local community can help.	Attend 6 local events each year to promote red squirrel conservation and request sightings from the public	Management committee & contractor	By June 2007, June 2008
	Submit 3 articles per year to local newspapers and publications, about the group and its work	Management committee & contractor	By June 2007, June 2008
	Review the content of the website on a yearly basis	Management committee	By Dec 2006, Dec 2007, June 2008 2007

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	Update news items section of website on a monthly basis	Contractor	Reviewed quarterly at end of Mar, June, Sept and Dec of each year.
	Produce an educational video for distribution to local primary schools	Contractor	By Sept 2007
	Give at least 6 talks per year to local schools or organisations	Contractor	By June 2007, June 2008
	Provide display materials for local country parks (Culzean Castle, Eglinton and Dean Castle Park) to raise awareness and encourage sightings from the public	Management committee	By Dec 2006
	Involve local B&B's by placing leaflets and donation boxes on their premises. At least 5 B&Bs to be involved per year	Contractor	By June 2007, June 2008.
	Produce and distribute an information leaflet for the public on feeding of squirrels	Management committee & contractor	By Sept 2006
	Identify opportunities for nature based tourism involving red squirrels	Contractor	By Dec 2007.
Implementation of activities, meetings and events for the Ayrshire Red Squirrel Group, open to all interested members of the public.	Run 4 guided walks per year and 2 indoor meetings for members.	Management committee & contractor	By June 2007, June 2008
	Provide two training sessions per year on how to carry out squirrel surveys, to volunteers and land managers Ensure that at each membership meeting there is an update (where appropriate) about progress on each of the campaigns including, where possible, a call for volunteers or other forms of assistance.	Contractor Management committee & contractor	By Mar 2007, Mar 2008 At AGM in Mar 2007, Mar 2008
Campaign to raise funds for the Red Squirrel Rescue Project and the other activities of Ayrshire Red Squirrel Group.	Draw up a detailed budget for the group and for the 2 year Red Squirrel Rescue Project	Management committee	By Jan 2005
	Submit bids to at least 4 funding bodies	Management committee	By Jan 2005
	Buy items for resale at local events and to members. Target to raise £500 per year through membership contributions, sponsored events and sales	Management committee	By June 2007, June 2008
	Hold a raffle with prizes donated by local organisations	Management committee & contractor	By Dec 2007

Ayrshire Red Squirrel Group Action Plan December 2004- December 2007