

Wales Squirrel Forum

Terms of Reference

The Wales Squirrel Forum aims *to enable effective red squirrel conservation and grey squirrel management in Wales.*

In doing so, the Forum also aims to co-ordinate, support and provide advice on the implementation of the UK Red Squirrel Species Action Plan in Wales. See annex 1 for a summary of the main objectives and targets of the action plan.

Functions of the Wales Squirrel Forum

- Encourage the conservation and sustainable management of red squirrel populations in Wales
- Encourage effective woodland design and management to minimise the risk of grey squirrel damage
- Develop a Welsh red squirrel conservation strategy and identify priorities for action
- Formulate and promote best practice with regard to both red and grey squirrel management and seek wider endorsement where necessary
- Maintain an overview of current research, identify gaps in knowledge and promote research into red and grey squirrels, particularly where relevant to the Welsh situation
- Provide a forum for the discussion of and input into the development of individual organisations' policy where it relates to red and grey squirrels
- Co-ordinate, support and provide advice on the implementation of the UK Red Squirrel Action Plan in Wales and act as the lead partner for UK BAP monitoring and reporting
- Comment on and endorse the advice of the UK Red Squirrel Group and provide the Welsh context for red squirrel conservation
- Report to the UK Red Squirrel Group and the Wales Biodiversity Partnership on the progress of the Red Squirrel BAP in Wales
- Communicate with and co-ordinate meetings of the Wales Squirrel Partnership
- Provide a focus for communication and information distribution
- Annually review the effectiveness and activities of the Wales Squirrel Forum and Partnership

Operation of the Wales Squirrel Forum and Partnership

The Forum is responsible for identifying and managing the activities required to fulfil the objectives and functions of the Wales Squirrel Forum. Specific tasks may be delegated to Task and Finish Groups.

The Partnership will provide a mechanism for information exchange and networking with a wider range of stakeholders and will review the activities of the Forum. Consultation between the Partnership and Forum will be through an annual meeting or via email if there is a need to consult between meetings.

Task and Finish Groups will be established to undertake specific tasks within a set time scale as identified by the Forum. Membership will be from the Forum, Partnership and others as appropriate.

See annex 2 for structure chart

Membership of the Wales Squirrel Forum

Membership of the Forum will comprise one representative from each of the following organisation, group or sector:

- Anglesey Red Squirrel Project represented by Menter Môn
- Countryside Council for Wales
- European Squirrel Initiative
- Forestry Commission Wales
- Forest Research
- Forestry and Timber Association/ Country Land and Business Association
- Local Biodiversity Action Plan representative
- Mid Wales Red Squirrel Project
- The Wildlife Trusts/Wildlife Link
- Research Institutions
- Welsh Assembly Government – Environment: Conservation and Management

Representatives on the Forum will be responsible for ensuring that others within their organisation, group or sector are kept informed of progress. Each member of the Forum may have more than one individual that can act as their representative.

The Forum will be chaired in rotation on an annual basis starting with CCW.

Secretariat will be provided by FCW.

Membership of the Wales Squirrel Partnership

Membership of the Partnership will be open to those with an interest in red squirrel conservation and grey squirrel management including the following organisations and groups:

Countryside agencies
Experts in red and grey squirrel conservation management and research
LBAP representatives
Local red squirrel conservation groups
Non government organisations

The Partnership will be chaired by an independent chair to be selected.

Task and Finish Groups

Task and Finish Groups will be established as required and will be assigned a task to be completed within a certain time limit. Membership of these groups will be taken from both the Forum and the Partnership and with the ability to draw in other expertise and input as appropriate. A large part of the work of the Forum will be undertaken through these groups.

Final version
Liz Halliwell, 28th September 2005

Annex 1 Objectives and targets of the UK Red Squirrel SAP

The main objectives and targets of the UK Red Squirrel are:

- 1 To maintain viable self-sustaining populations of red squirrels in areas where red squirrel populations are healthy and where grey squirrels are currently rare or absent. Such areas might be either unsuitable for grey squirrels or vulnerable to grey squirrel invasion.
- 2 Wherever practicable, to maintain or expand red squirrel populations that are currently threatened because of isolation, small size or proximity to grey squirrel populations.
- 3 To reintroduce red squirrels to selected areas in their former natural range where the ecosystem can be effectively managed to support viable populations.

[Note these will need to be revised following agreement of new targets in 2005]

The main actions for the UK Red Squirrel SAP are:

- 1 To survey and monitor red squirrel populations so as to determine
 - a) their conservation status
 - b) threats to their viability
 - c) the effects upon them of different objectives of forestry management
- 2 To maintain and enhance current red squirrel populations where effective, practicable and sustainable, through good management.
- 3 To ensure the effective implementation of relevant legislation and policy.
- 4 To improve knowledge of the ecology and conservation of red (and grey) squirrels through appropriate and effective research.
- 5 To promote education and awareness of the status and needs of red squirrels.

Annex 2 Operational structure of Wales Squirrel Forum and Partnership

