

Friends of the Anglesey Red Squirrels Trust

Red squirrel conservation: news and updates

Help develop our community wide project!

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What would you like to see a successful red squirrel project deliver?, How can we ensure that everyone has an opportunity to become involved?, What long term legacy should we leave for future generations?

We are looking to our members and supporters to direct us, and in this newsletter we hope to channel their views, thoughts and opinions to help us create a vi-

brant and robust project in the period 2011-2014.

On page Two, we have outlined our current plans and objectives, highlighting the areas where we believe the local community can become directly involved in the project.

We have proposed nest box and squirrel feeder construction workshops, the establishment of squirrel trails, squirrel monitoring

workshops and educational events, as well as the continued use of online media.

Anglesey has a unique success story and one that has been shaped by our membership and volunteers.

We want to build upon our impressive track record and create a wonderful opportunity to bring red squirrels back into the lives of everyone on the island.



Supported by

The National Lottery[®]
through the Heritage Lottery Fund



For Sale



'Red Squirrels'
by Philip Snow BA *

A Roaring Success— Our Zoo Partners

Enter the world of the Welsh Mountain Zoo and you enter a world of natural wonder. As one of North Wales' top attractions, high above Colwyn Bay with panoramic views and breathtaking scenery, its beautiful gardens are home to this caring conservation zoo.

The Welsh Mountain Zoo is the National Zoo of Wales, and they have been working in red squirrel conservation since 1989.

The Zoo manages a small colony of red squirrels, and also co-ordinate the UK cap-



breeding stud book for red squirrels and provide animals for release into the Anglesey woodlands.

*The image is available as a Ltd Edition Print, with 1/3rd of the proceeds going to Friends of Anglesey Red Squirrels. To purchase the print visit www.snowartandbooks.co.uk

Heritage Lottery: Our thoughts & proposals

Stakeholder consultation is vital to insure the long-term effectiveness and sustainability of the project. This broader perspective facilitates creativity and helps to challenge entrenched views and work programmes being guided by personal agendas. At the Friends of the Anglesey Red Squirrels, we strive to have good governance, transparency and open communication so that everyone can take ownership of the project design and outputs.

The first stage is naturally to outline the broad proposals and plans that we have come up with, then to invite comments and constructive criticism, and finally to ask for alternatives and complimentary proposals.

So lets start. Our current plans obviously build upon a strong proven track record of delivery; red squirrels are now increasingly common on Anglesey and grey squirrel scarce. In the next three years we wish to return red squirrels to parks and gardens across the island and in so doing seamlessly creating opportunities for people to see and learn about the animals, as well as to get directly involved by monitoring and feeding squirrels. So in parallel, we will host regular feeder and nest box construction workshops, guided walks and talks to teach people about the conservation and ecology of red squirrels.

We wish to pioneer the use of hair-tubes in gardens and parks across Anglesey. These small plastic tubes contain double sided tape that catches hair from foraging red squirrels. With our partners in the Wildgenes lab at Edinburgh Zoo, we will analyse the hairs to detect gene flow between the various red squirrel populations on Anglesey.

Recognising that Anglesey is increasingly dependent upon tourism, the spread of red squirrels will create niche and green tourism business opportunities, 'added value' to the experiences that the island will offer the visitor. We intend to establish dedicated and sign-posted woodland trails at sites across the island, walks that offer local schools and island residents the chance to search for and learn about wild red squirrels.

Building upon our You-tube catalogue and internet webcam, we have proposed the establishment of additional cameras in red squirrel woodlands, and the creation of short educational films to demonstrate how to the day to day work of the project.

We would build upon our strong partnership with Anglesey County Council Education Department and the islands schools, and work with a range of community groups to offer education and participation opportunities.

Finally, we intend to reintroduce red squirrels into the Dingle amenity woodland in Llangefni, bringing this enchanting native mammal into the centre of the town and administrative capital of the island.

We would fund several posts, encompassing education and practical conservation elements of the project. Throughout the work we would make it clear that grey squirrel eradication from Anglesey is the only way of safeguarding red squirrels and ensuring that we leave a natural heritage legacy for future generations.

It is anticipated that there are now only 20-30 grey squirrels on Anglesey; the project would seek to catch and remove these animals and would loan traps to local people who wished to help remove these destructive and non-native animals. There would also be a wider cull of grey squirrels on the mainland, focussing upon the Faenol and Treborth gardens woodlands, sites that are currently being re-colonised by red squirrels dispersing over the Menai Straits.

We aim to find a way of preventing grey squirrels from crossing the Straits, working in partnership with Rail-track and Euro-tunnel. To that end, our proposals aim to create a unique island refuge for red squirrels, a location supporting 600-800 adults, and the largest and most genetically diverse population in Wales.

These are our plans, and we would like to know what you think? Let us know how we improve the proposals, if there are elements that you are not happy about, do you have alternative suggestions?

To make a successful application to the Heritage Lottery Fund requires that projects not only conserve natural heritage but that they offer the chance for communities to get involved and to learn. Consequently, your input is a vital element.

We have outlined the way in which people can contact us and provide feedback on page 3.

Forest future management

In the July newsletter we outlined concerns about the Science Review process being chaired by the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW). A process that will decide the fate of large areas of Newborough forest.

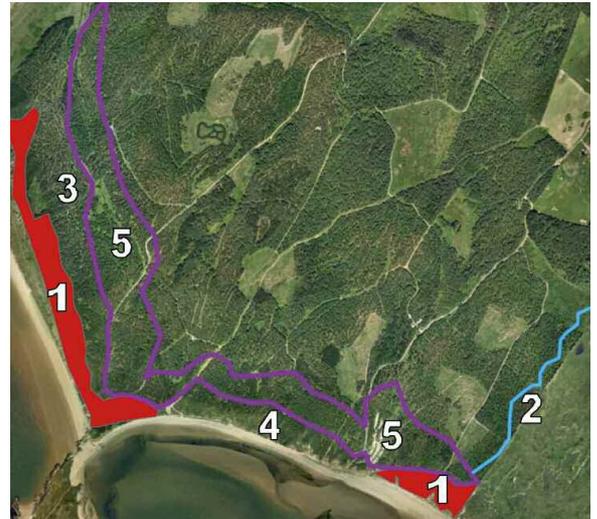
Since then we have met with the agency, and received a sincere apology for a failure to respond to our letters.

The Newborough Science Review has now delivered some clear differences in scientific opinion and interpretation of the Habitats Directive, and will proceed into a process of independent arbitration later this year.

In the meantime, the Countryside Council for Wales has outlined areas of proposed forest felling including 'area 3' which is an important red squirrel habitat. We look forward to working with CCW, Forestry Commission Wales, and our scientific partners in the arbitration process.

The Friends would also like to extend our thanks to the indomitable Dr Ian Miller for his expertise and support for robust conservation with the forest and open sand dunes that sit within the designated Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

We would welcome any thoughts that our members or supporters have regarding the current CCW proposals.



Key

***Zone 1** Clearfell - Encourage Natural coastal Processes

***Zone 2** Hydrological Experiment & Realignment

***Zone 3** Monitor & Review requirements for creating dune zones

Zone 4 Natural Processes, Limited Intervention

Zone 5 Forest Protection - Underplant
*Subject to the final science review

How to give us your views...

Your thoughts and feedback are a vital part of the Development phase of our HLF project and there are a number of ways that you can get in touch with us.

You can complete the attached form and post to us, or send us your views via email: Craig@redsquirrels.info

Alternatively, we will be at the Anglesey Forest Festival at Carregwlyd estate, Llanfaethlu (25th September) 10.00am-4.30pm. And why not join us and Red Squirrel volunteer groups from across the UK at,

SquirrelFest 2010 - The Lake District Visitor Centre - Brockhole - Windermere

Sunday September 26th at 12 Noon

We will also have events throughout Red Squirrel Week 2nd-10th Oct (check our website for details). www.redsquirrels.info

Interested in volunteering? Get in touch, we would love to hear from you!

Visit the website or give us a call.

Details on page 4.

