



# Tay Estuary Forum newsletter

No. 4

Autumn 2000

## IN THIS ISSUE...

❖ SEAS OF CHANGE	2
❖ NEWBURGH TRAILS	2
❖ COAST-ARCH	2
❖ TEF STEERING GROUP UPDATE	3
❖ CHANGING NATURE	3
❖ TEF ENVIRONMENT GROUP	4
❖ CONNECT ARCHAEOLOGY	5
❖ TAY WASTEWATER PROJECT	5
❖ SHOREWATCH	6
❖ LITTORAL 2000	6
❖ TAY ESTUARY WILDLIFE REPORT	7
❖ ANGUS COASTAL BURNS PROJECT	7
❖ NATTERER'S BATS IN FIFE	7

## Seas of Change

*RSPB research identifying potential sites for managed re-alignment in Scotland*

In 1999, the RSPB's ground breaking Seas of Change project assessed the potential for managed re-alignment in England. In October 2000 this project is being extended to cover the soft coasts of Scotland.

The aim of the project is to identify the most appropriate sites for inter-tidal habitat creation particularly in Scotland's Firth's.

The objectives include:

- **identifying the area of inter-tidal habitat creation likely to be practicable**
- **identifying the key sites where managed realignment is most likely to be practical, for further investigation**

It is hoped that the results will support work within the RSPB, the Executive, statutory agencies and environmental NGOs on assessing sustainable responses to the rising sea levels and increased storminess that are predicted to affect Scotland's coasts as a result of climate change.

For more information, please contact:

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## Newburgh Trails

A local group in Newburgh have produced a pack highlighting popular, historical walks in and around the Tay shoreline town of Newburgh, linking up with longer trails leading over Ormiston Hill into the Howe of Fife and westwards into Perthshire.

The pack includes information on a nature trail running alongside the picturesque River Tay, which is popular with local schoolchildren, and a historical trail suitable for people with disabilities and longer public rights of way trails.

The group received financial support for the scheme through the Fife Environment Trusts new small grants scheme, in addition to awards from other funding bodies such as Scottish Natural Heritage, Fife Council, Forward Scotland and the St. Katherine's Trust.

Fife Environment Trusts Chairman Councillor Bill Kay said *"The Trust are keen to back projects which show evidence of direct participation by local people and we are delighted to support such an innovative scheme that highlights the achievements of such a dedicated group. This is the first project to be completed under the Trusts new small grants scheme and we encourage community groups to contact the Project Development Officer to discuss their ideas"*.

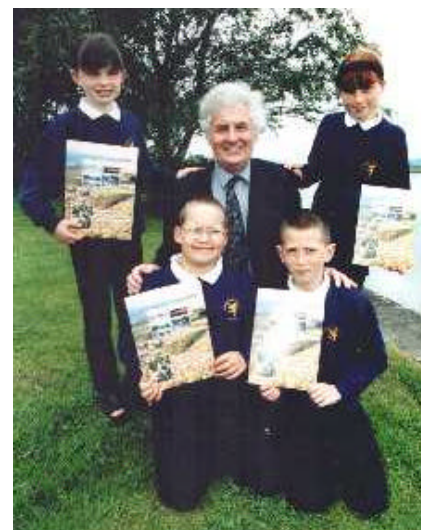
## New Electronic Discussion List for Coastal Archaeology

**COAST-ARCH**, hosted by Mailbase, is a new electronic discussion list devoted to the exploration of all topics relating to coastal archaeology in the UK and abroad.

The list has a WWW home page at

[www.mailbase.ac.uk/lists/coast-arch](http://www.mailbase.ac.uk/lists/coast-arch)

and there you will find more information, an archive of past messages and easy instructions for joining.



**Fife Environmental Trust  
Chairman, Councillor Bill Kay  
with children from Newburgh  
Primary School.**

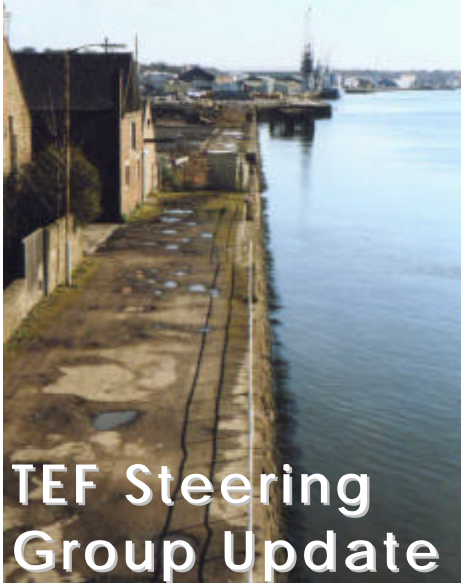
For a copy of the 'Newburgh Trails' pack please contact Rae Mitchinson (01337 840534) or alternatively the pack can be purchased from retail outlets in Newburgh and Ladybank or the Perth & Kinross Tourist Information Centre.

For more information on Fife Environment Trusts small grants scheme please contact Patricia Galfskiy (01592 413124).

*Much more information about the Tay Estuary Forum and links to other related websites can be found on our website...*

<http://www.dundee.ac.uk/crsem/Tef.htm>

*Comments, feedback and suggestions are welcomed and encouraged, as are contributions for future issues of the TEF Newsletter, so please contact us.*



The Tay Estuary Forum is approaching the end of its partner-contribution financial security. Throughout 1998 and 1999, the Steering Group made considerable efforts to gain sufficient funds from the partner organisations towards the costs of employing a project officer for one year. That post culminates in December, and Helene will be moving on to a lectureship position at University College London.

Throughout the year, funding has been a priority issue. The Steering Group made two funding applications at the end of the summer, but these have, unfortunately, been returned unsuccessful.

Funding applications demand considerable thought and forward thinking. Most potential funding bodies require 'tangible outputs' or 'on the ground projects' and yet many aspects of progressing the Forum, especially at this early stage, are concerned with the running costs of a partnership.

Currently, the priorities of the Forum lie in maintaining communication within the Forum network and organising meetings for the Forum to progress discussion on issues of concern. These factors are not attractive to potential funders.

The core funding problems of the Forum are not unique: throughout the UK, coastal partnerships are having similar problems securing basic funding support for core costs, and many are questioning the sustainability of the voluntary approach to coastal zone management. As more advanced partnerships reach positions of increased responsibility, they are generally able to attract greater financial commitment from their partner organisations and the development of a management strategy identifies implementation projects that have greater external funding potential.

The Forum Steering Group are now considering how the partnership can be most effectively progressed over the next year. Sufficient funds are available to cover the costs of a part-time Project Officer post, and at present, this is how the Steering Group would like to proceed. The appointment may need to rely on a secondment from one of the partner organisations and aspects of staff management, overheads and employment costs will all be considered before the post can be advertised or filled.

Before the appointment process however, the Steering Group will

concentrate their efforts on defining the programme of work for the Forum. The Project Officer has already 'surveyed' the opinions of the Steering Group, with the aim of identifying a clearer view of how those committed to the Forum hope it will progress over the next few years. It is hoped that this can be used to produce a clearer statement of position, purpose and direction so that all those committed to the ideal of the Forum and the integrated coastal zone management of the Tay Estuary and adjacent coastline, can also commit to a common goal, with agreed aims, objectives and targets.

The Tay coastal region is a very important place, ecologically, culturally and economically. It is essential that the Forum continues to operate to ensure that future management decisions are integrated, informed and co-ordinated to sustain this unique environment for future generations.

*Many thanks for your continued support and participation, and I look forward to meeting you at a TEF event in the near future.*

**Allan Watt**  
TEF Chairman



## **Changing Nature**

**Changing Nature**, the Dundee City Council Millennium project which aims to record various aspects of Dundee's environment, is about to show the results of the year long project at a display which opens on 15<sup>th</sup> December at McManus Galleries, Dundee.

The display will show the findings of the numerous surveys that were carried out with the help of local people. Over 5000 people have been involved in a variety of subjects including the Dighty burn, air quality, urban wildlife, garden birds, architecture, and memories of the changing

environment. Another focal point of the project was the "Mouth of the Tay", where studies of marine wildlife, land use and pollution have been carried out. The Tay theme was used at over 30 of the projects events.

The display, which will run for at least a year, is described as "a celebration of the efforts of local people to discover and record the Dundee environment." The display will be tailored to appeal to all ages and admission will be free.

For further information on the Changing Nature project, or the forthcoming display, contact Graham McLean on 01382 432069.

## ENVIRONMENT GROUP UPDATE

AUGUST 2000

### *Issue – Coastal Erosion & Defence*

Coastal erosion and defence has emerged as a priority issue for the Tay Estuary Forum.

Discussions within the Environment Theme Group at the AGM workshop in May and the follow-up meeting in June suggested that this issue required immediate discussion and action. In response to this, the first TEF meeting dedicated to the coastal issue of erosion and defence was held in August.



The day began with a field visit along the Monifieth shoreline, under the guidance of Dr Rob Duck from the University of Dundee. The trip was attended by 25

people, and the sun shone throughout the 3 hour walk!

There was plenty of opportunity for people to add to the discussion and ask questions about the history of management and shoreline modifications, and the current erosion problems at that site.



A more formal meeting followed lunch at the University of Dundee, during which it was recognised that there was a great need for an audit of research, plans and information relating to the Tay coastal region.

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OCTOBER 2000

### *Ewing Building, University of Dundee*

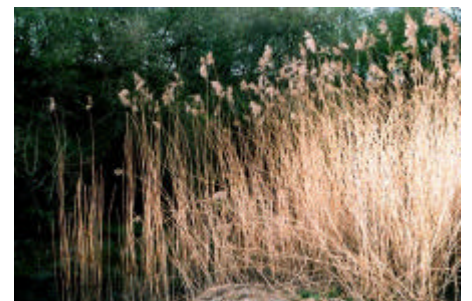
The group has acknowledged the need to identify what information exists and how it can be used to aid understanding and future decision making in relation to

coastal erosion and defence and many other aspects of coastal zone management.

The TEF hope to produce an audit of the Tay coastal environment, to assist in the continued improved understanding of coastal environments and processes. The Forum are urged to contribute to this audit, in the first instance to collate references of various reports, documents and publications which could provide valuable information to a coastal audit. If you know of a study or report that you think could be relevant to a TEF coastal audit, please contact the TEF Project Officer.

The next Environment Group meeting will follow the format of the August meeting and will comprise a morning field visit and afternoon meeting. On the 1<sup>st</sup> December, the Tay Estuary Forum Environment Group will focus on the Inner Tay coastal environment, with a morning trip to sites on the north shore of the Tay followed by an afternoon meeting at the North of Scotland Water Authority base, Bullion House.

Whilst coastal erosion and protection was the main issue at Monifieth, the group will consider the potential threat of flooding and sea level rise within the Inner Tay, and possible impacts on intertidal habitats. Those interested in participating in this meeting should contact the TEF Project Officer.



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Minutes from these meetings are available from the TEF on request or can be accessed on the TEF website.

## New contract archaeology unit for the North...

St Andrews to launch



**Connect  
Archaeology**

A new contract archaeology unit specialising in coastal and maritime archaeological projects is currently in development within the School of History at the University of St Andrews.



The **School of History** is the overarching umbrella for the University of St Andrews maritime research and client services, which include the Archaeological Diving Unit, National Register of Historic Vessels, and the National Monuments Record (Scotland) Maritime Record Project.

The expertise within **CONNECT's** directors is wide, ranging from the underwater excavation and the in-situ management of underwater remains, to the development of databases for

maritime heritage management, building recording, and coastal archaeological surveys linked national problems of coastal erosion.

The team also has a demonstrable track record for the successful completion of desk-based assessments and watching briefs in Fife.

The company will be utilising St Andrews' undoubted, in-house expertise, but also aims to act as the hub or consultancy to bring together teams of experts from other universities and organisations for particular projects.

The Directors have previously had considerable input into the *Built and Archaeological Heritage Topic Group* within the **Forth Estuary Forum**, and we are looking forward to being able to work with colleagues in the **Tay Estuary Forum** in the future.



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## Toward a European Strategy for ICZM

Based on the experiences of the ICZM Demonstration Programme, the European Commission has recently adopted a Communication to the Council and Parliament outlining a European Strategy for Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM). As a component of this Strategy, the Commission has also adopted a Proposal for a European Parliament and Council Recommendation to the Member States on ICZM. These documents can be downloaded from the EU ICZM website at...

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/iczm/home.htm>

## SCOTTISH COASTAL FORUM WEBSITE



The Scottish Coastal Forum has launched a website to provide a focus for coastal issues in Scotland...

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/environment/coastalforum>

The website provides links to all local coastal partnerships in Scotland, Scottish Coastal Forum newsletters and dissemination of work progressed by the Forum.

## Tay Wastewater Project

One of the biggest ongoing projects in the TEF region at the moment is that of the **Tay Wastewater Project**. For those of you who haven't noticed the roadworks, pipelines and diversions, or haven't read the information boards along the Dundee to Carnoustie coastline, North of Scotland Water Authority and Catchment Tay Ltd are currently ~ 80% of the way through the new wastewater network of the Tay Wastewater Project.

The new pipeline runs from Riverside to Hatton, where a new treatment plant is being built to treat all wastewater before being discharged far out to sea. The civils structures (tanks) at Hatton are ~ 95% complete, with work continuing on the buildings and installation of the treatment works to start soon.

The North of Scotland Water Authority are confident that replacing the existing network of multiple outfalls with one treatment plant and offshore outfall will 'dramatically reduced sewage related bacteria' within the Tay coastal region and result in cleaner water and cleaner beaches.

Despite the disruptions, it is clear that this is a much needed advance in the wastewater works within this region. Progress has been good and it will be a few months before you the sight of red hoardings become a distant memory in comparison to the improved environmental quality of this coastline.

Within the next month, the Project will be starting works on the connecting pipeline section between Discovery Quay and the Tay road bridge and the section between Carnoustie Leisure centre across Carnoustie golf course to Barry Burn. Other parts of the project to be completed include continued drainage works at Broughty Ferry and work on the pumping stations at Riverside Drive, King George V Wharf, Stannergate, West Ferry, Broughty Castle, South Balmossie, West Haven, and Arbroath.

For further information or queries about the Tay Wastewater Project, please call **0345 437 437**.

# Shorewatch

...recording our coastal heritage

**Shorewatch** is community based cultural heritage project that aims to encourage people to monitor erosion (or other detrimental influences) of the archaeological remains along their local shore.

The objective is to provide long-term and continuous information on the rate of erosion (or other impact) and its effect on the coastal archaeological resource, while at the same time providing enjoyment, interest and a real sense of contribution for those who participate.

Local knowledge is critical in any understanding of long term effects on archaeological monuments and this project hopes to recognise that expertise by providing the framework within which to work.

Funded by Historic Scotland through the Council for Scottish Archaeology, **Shorewatch** is now in its Phase 3 Pilot Study stage, and we invite local groups and individuals across the country to participate.

The project involves visiting a stretch of coastline or known archaeological site on the coast and making initial and repeat surveys to give a good indication of processes at work. The groups can revisit the site as often as they prefer to make further observations and measurements.

Forms and instructions are provided, and participation at any level is encouraged. **Shorewatch** can provide some assistance (small travel subsidies for petrol where necessary, loan of basic survey equipment, expertise of the Project Co-ordinator)

and the techniques used are not complex or specialised. Simple photography, tape measurements and drawings are adequate, although the possibility of learning other methods is there too.

Local Societies, Schools and Young Archaeologist Club's are particularly well suited to this project but anyone who is interested is very welcome and encouraged to get involved.

If you would like to be involved or you have any other queries, please do not hesitate to contact:



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**Shorewatch** Project Officer  
Council for Scottish Archaeology  
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Chambers Street  
Edinburgh EH1 1JF

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phone: 0131 650 2381

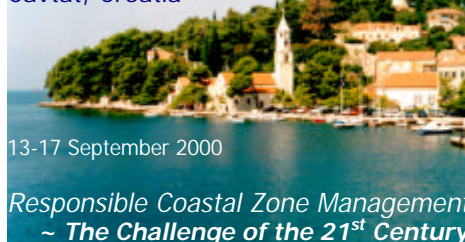
## Littoral 2000

Over 100 scientists, engineers and managers from 20 different countries attended Littoral 2000 in Cavtat, Croatia this September to present and discuss aspects of responsible coastal zone management.

The conference comprised over 80 presentations covering the themes:

- *Environmental Assessment*
- *Responsible Use of Natural Resources*
- *Coastal Engineering*
- *Financing Sustainable Coastal Development*
- *National and International Legal Aspects*

5<sup>th</sup> International EUROCOAST Conference  
Cavtat, Croatia



From beach user perceptions in Italy and ICZM databases in Poland, to shellsand dredging in Australia and sardine migration in Croatia, the conference introduced a varied and comprehensive account of the complexity of issues that are faced in coastal zone management.

Evening sessions at the conference included a welcome reception from the Mayor of Dubrovnik, visits to a new inlet bridge site and a local

mariculture farm and entertainment from local folk groups.

The conference was brought to a close with a CoastNET workshop on "Communicating Science", lead by Jane Taussik (University of Portsmouth). The interactive seminar sought to explore the difficulties found in communication between scientists and managers. A follow-up account of this workshop is planned as part of the services that the network of CoastNet offers.

Papers submitted to the conference have been published in...  
*Periodicum Biologorum*, Vol 102, Supp 1

If you would like any further information or details from the conference, please contact the Project Officer.



## The Wailing of Seals and the Clattering of Bills

The Tay Estuary can be a noisy place at times; the sounds may be unusual, perhaps disquieting, but always interesting. People react to unfamiliar sounds in different ways, for instance, I heard recently that someone thought a murder was taking place on the sandbanks between Kingoodie and Balmerino. Thankfully there was nothing to report to the police, nothing more it seems than the sounds of basking common seals that had hauled themselves out of the water after an ebb tide. The seals are present most times of the year and the odd one may sometimes be seen close inshore at high water, perhaps in the company of a pup in late summer.

There was an early and large build up of waders and wildfowl by mid- September in the Inner Estuary, with over 300 wigeon and 200 teal present downstream of Mugdrum Island. Waders on the Inner Tay Estuary LNR were also present in large numbers by the same period, and encouragingly good counts of redshank, over 800 by early October, which have accounted for a significant proportion of the UK wintering population in past years, the threshold figure is 1,100.

As I write, the numbers of pink-footed geese on the reserve are building up to a peak, and the sight of the shimmering skeins bring a welcome sight to our chilly winter skies.

*Alistair Godfrey, Countryside Ranger  
Perth and Kinross Council*

## The Angus Coastal Burns Initiative



The **Scottish Agricultural College (SAC)** recently announced a major new initiative for the Angus Coastal Burns between Dundee and Arbroath.

The project will work with farmers in the area, and aims to reduce the levels of fertiliser run-off and leaching into the burns. The burns to be covered include..

**Dighty Burn  
Buddon Burn  
Pitairlie Burn  
Monikie Burn  
Elliot Burn**

The burns pass through intensively farmed areas, and are therefore under considerable pressure.

This Scottish Executive Rural Affairs Department (SERAD) commissioned work will see SAC undertaking 70 nutrient budgets on farms within the catchment of these five burns. The nutrient budgets will help to identify opportunities for reducing leakage of nutrients (nitrate and phosphate) from farmland, thus benefiting water

quality and helping the farmers to save money through reduced or better targeted inputs.

The nutrient budgets will also be linked to advice on conserving and enhancing remnants of valuable habitats, which occur in association with the coastal burns. The dens form potentially significant wildlife corridors, so Farm Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) will be drawn up for individual farms. The Farm BAPs will identify priority habitats and species (such as wetlands, riparian woodland, water vole, common frog etc) and make recommendations for future management.

Many once common species and habitats associated with farmland have declined significantly in recent years. This initiative provides an opportunity to increase farmers awareness of the importance of the species and habitats present on the farm, and make the link between farming operations and farmland biodiversity.

For further information, please contact:

**Phil Towler** [p.towler@ed.sac.ac.uk](mailto:p.towler@ed.sac.ac.uk)  
Agricultural Advisor  
SAC Forfar (01307 464033)

**Christine Hall** [c.hall@ed.sac.ac.uk](mailto:c.hall@ed.sac.ac.uk)  
Conservation Adviser  
SAC Perth (01738 636611)

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## **Natterer's Bats Bunker Down On The Tay**

Tentsmuir, on the southeastern edge of the Tay estuary, supports important numbers of Natterer's bats, a species that Britain is believed to be of international importance for. This relatively large bat is a 'gleaner', that is it feeds by landing on leaves and tussocks and creeping up on its prey.

For some years, two separate bat box colonies within Tentsmuir forest have been known. Ringing of the bats began in spring 1998 to try and find out if there was any movement between the colonies (which are 2 km apart). By August 1998 we had our answer, with at least two bats having 'swapped' over. Even more exciting has been the trapping of an adult female, originally ringed in spring 1998, at a hibernation

site near Cupar 23 km south west of Tentsmuir in October 2000.

All is not well, however, as both sites have increasingly come under pressure from unlikely and different sources. One colony has been attacked by woodpeckers, which bore a hole into the bat boxes. The second has seen Squirrels ripping off the box lids to get to the bats inside. As a torpid bat may take a long time to warm up there is a concern that some of the bats may have been eaten before they had a chance to wake up and escape. Thanks to generous funding by Forest Enterprise, Fife Bat Group and the local Forest Enterprise staff have replaced some of the traditional wooden boxes with a German design made out of

mixture of sawdust and concrete known as woodcrete. It is hoped that the bats will take to these new armoured bat bunkers and that Tentsmuir will have some puzzled woodpeckers and squirrels next year.

This species is one being featured by a Species Action Plan within the Fife Biodiversity Action Plan. The targets being set in the Plan for the next ten years will highlight the work already going on by the Fife Bat Group and Fife Ranger Service, but will also offer the opportunity to add new projects appropriate to the species' needs in Fife.

**Les Hatton, Fife Ranger Service**



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