

| ADMG Benchmark Assessment | DMG: Balquhidder | Date of Assessment Meeting: 19 April 2019 |
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| Criteria | Scoring and evidence of delivery | Future Actions for the Group |
| 1. Area and boundaries | | |
| 1.1. Identify the appropriate boundaries for the group to operate in. | Group boundary is appropriate and has also had further discussion at meetings - recognising surrounding groups. | Ongoing review as a when issues on boundaries of groups arise. |
| 1.2. Define appropriate sub populations where applicable | discussion on sub groups to help deliver more focussed culls and collaboration. Group is relatively small so no need for proper sub group. | as required continue to have focussed groups to help deliver local objectives. 'South Sub Group' allowed those involved more freedom to discuss - however ultimately group wide concerns. |
| 2. Membership | | |
| 2.1. All property owners within a deer range should be members of a DMG, including private and public land owners; also, where possible, agricultural occupiers, foresters, crofters and others on adjoining land where deer may be present. In some cases this may extend to householders with private gardens. | Good membership covering nearly all properties now. Improved attendance since 2016 and 1 key property carrying out deer management now when hadn't been previously. | continue to encourage participation to those that are critical for delivering group wide objectives. For others continue to share information. |
| 3. Meetings | | |
| 3.1. DMGs should meet regularly. Two formal meetings per year is the norm but more frequent interaction between members, between meetings, should be encouraged. | 2x meetings per year, with further meetings to discuss local focussed issues - Katrine/ Goats etc taken place as required. Most members are engaging with each other and regular contact via email as required. | Continue as current model as a minimum. Potentially set up further meetings to focus on and move forward key issues. |
| 3.2. For effective collaborative management to take place it is important that all DMG Members should attend every meeting or be represented by someone authorised to make appropriate decisions on their behalf. | From 2016 overall attendance at meetings has improved - i.e. Edinchip, Blaircreich. However more recent meeting has unfortunately seen no representation from 2 of the larger properties in the DMG due to other commitments but info still shared. Information on culls etc was still passed but can miss critical decision making. Decisions still made and minutes circulated. | continue to encourage complete attendance, and if main individuals can not attend try for someone else & response to key agenda topics. |
| 3.3. In addition to landholding Members, including public sector owners, public agencies such as SNH and Forestry Commission Scotland should be in attendance and other relevant authorities such as Police Scotland may be invited to attend DMG meetings. | SNH, LLTNPA, Police Scotland all attend the group meetings. Forest Enterprise are members, but to now no need for FCS to attend. | continue to liaise with agencies |
| 3.4. Meetings should operate to an agenda and be accurately minuted. Attendees should be encouraged to participate and agreed actions and decisions should be recorded. | meetings run to an agenda and are accurately minuted. Information is shared well before and soon after meetings. Members are encouraged to discuss and agreed actions. DMG have moved significantly forward on secretariat since 2014. | The group would be well placed to continue with current format regarding meeting agenda / minutes/ sharing of info. |
| 3.5. Group can demonstrate a capacity to deal with issues between meetings as they arise, and to provide an ongoing source of communication and advice as required. | More recent focussed meeting for Leskine/ Dochart etc. Also been done in the past and has been offered again (Katrine discussion). There is a level of ongoing discussion and information flow between members outwith meetings. DMG will be tested in coming period. | ensure sensible collective discussion around key issues - either Katrine or overall wider group culls etc before too long. Aim to improve understanding and openness about objectives and implications of neighbouring actions. |
| 4. Constitution & Finances | | |
| 4.1. All DMGs should have a Constitution which defines the area of the Group, sets out its purpose, its operating principles, membership and procedures, in addition to providing for appointing office bearers, voting, raising subscriptions and maintaining financial records | Updated constitution providing more modern direction | continue and update as required |
| 4.2. Good management and budgeting of finances | yes and all open/ transparent for members | n/a |
| 5. Deer Management Plans | | |
| 5.1. All DMGs should have an up to date, effective and forward looking Deer Management Plan (DMP). | 2016-2021 DMP in place and aiming to drive DMG forward. | continue to encourage members to be aware of DMP/ critical parts of it, follow it and revise as required. |
| 5.2. The DMP should record all the land management objectives within the DMG area. | DMP covers all large land holdings and provides a background on objectives. | continue to update as required with regards to changes in objectives |
| 5.3. Where applicable, the plan should include a rolling 5 year population model | 5 year population has been used for guidance. However difficulty for group due to level of forest cover with group area. complete helicopter deer count has been just recently completed (march 2019) and awaiting information to update Pop'n model. | As per email of 22nd March DMG requesting guidance on population modelling given some of their complexities. SNH / ADMG / FCS to follow up. |
| 5.4. Appropriate use of maps to illustrate relevant detail. | Maps provided via website (removed from documents to help share document easier). Mapping info is being updated by DMG as required. | for potential future discussions encourage use of maps to illustrate work. Continue to update as required. |
| 5.5. The DMP should identify the public interest aspects of deer management | DMP covers Public Interests in detail, with meetings focussed on highlighting actions as a minimum, with more focussed discussions on several key items - HIA/ Woodlands etc. | As DMG members become more comfortable / aware of PIs then consider just a written update prior to the meetings - allowing more time to focus on key elements of discussion. |
| 5.6. DMP should make appropriate reference to other species of deer within the DMG area, and provide a level of detail proportionate to this interest. | Roe deer referenced, no other resident deer species | Continue as current, sharing info on roe culls as required |
| 5.7. It should include a list of actions that deliver the collective objectives of DMG Members as well as public interest objectives. These actions should be updated annually | DMP is broken down into 3 parts - which provides information on this. Actions are updated annually within the working plan | continue as per current approach, review as required for benefit of group members. |
| 5.8. It is important that all DMG Members should play a full part in the planning process and in the implementation of agreed actions | DMP is regularly shared with members. Actions and background is discussed at meetings with the aim to encourage contributions. Members have opportunity to feed into this as they wish. | continue as per current approach, review as required for benefit of group members. |
| 5.9. The DMP may identify potential conflicts and how they can be prevented or addressed to ensure an equitable approach to the shared deer population. | DMP has and will continue to identify conflicts, and potential ways to get reduce these. Delivery of this is more problematic - more focussed work over last 2 years to achieve culls and more trust. Clear there are still issues which group need to resolve to move forward. South Group DMG meeting on 17 Apr 2019 assisted with moving forward actions. | DMG need to aim to move forward on some long standing issues between objectives. Feb 2019 Count evidence has helped focussed discussion going forward and provide a new baseline. |
| 5.10. Relevant local interests should be consulted on new DMPs and advised of any changes as they come forward. | This was carried out, with minimal feedback received. Commitment within DMP to do as required. | continue as described in DMP |
| 6. Code of Practice on Deer Management | | |
| 6.1. The Code should be endorsed by all DMGs and referenced in both the Constitution and Deer Management Plan of every Group. The terms of the Code should be delivered through the Group Deer Management Plan. | Code of Practice endorsed by DMG, incorporated within Constitution and a main element of DMP/ meetings & discussion. | continue to endorse the Code and if any breaches raise within DMG or SNH/ ADMG |
| 7. ADMG Principles of Collaboration | | |
| 7.1. The Principles of Collaboration should be incorporated into all DMG Constitutions and Deer Management Plans. | Principles of Collaboration were a keystone of the previous and current constitution and DMP. | continue to endorse and if any breaches raise within DMG or SNH/ ADMG. |
| 8. Best Practice | | |
| 8.1. All deer management should be carried out in accordance with Best Practice. | Best Practice is endorsed and encourage by the DMG & within the DMP | continue to make members aware of Best Practice - in particular any updates. |

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| 8.2. All Deer Management Plans should reference and follow WDBP which will continue to evolve. | WDBP is highlighted within the DMP, with regular discussions on aspects of this. | update DMP with relevant changes to Best Practice - in particular any updates. |
| 9. Data and Evidence gathering- Deer counts | | |
| 9.1. Accurate deer counting forms the basis of population modelling. An ethos that reflects this should be in evidence | Population modelling in its simplest form is difficult for the DMG given amount of open woodland cover and potential movement within the area. Population modelling has been used for illustration purposes, with the DMG aiming to incorporate something that is more useful to them. DMG have requested further guidance from SNH/ ADMG/ FES on this (22nd March 19), this has been provided but further focussed discussion is needed. | Take forward guidance and develop population modelling that is relevant to the DMG. |
| 9.2. As publicly funded aerial counts are now exceptional, DMGs should aim to carry out a regular well planned coordinated foot count of the whole open range deer population. The norm is to count annually. | DMG aim to count annually by foot. March 2019 a full group helicopter deer count was carried out for 1st time since 2011. Foot counts over last 3 years have delivered between 75-95% of open range area. However, given evidence on helicopter count there is concern over the level of accuracy of the foot counts. | Complete evaluation of current counting policy is needed and see where improvements can be made to ensure better information is gathered. |
| 9.3. Recruitment and mortality counts are also essential for population modelling. | recruitment count carried out by 2 or 3 of the estates on an annual basis and feed into discussions as required. Mortality counts slightly more difficult due to woodland cover, but carcasses noted and reported to group as required. | as per future discussion on population modelling use data as required but recognise limitations for such a group. |
| 9.4. Other census methods may be required in some circumstances, e.g. dung counting in woodland or other concealing habitats or on adjoining open ground. | Group recognise the unknown number of deer that may be present within conifer forests. DMG recently (Mar 2019) requested further information/ advice from SNH and FCS on assessing population within woodland. Further discussion needed to bottom out how best DMG wish to take forward. | consider how and if further population monitoring of woodlands is required based on responses. Put time aside to ensure this is bottomed out and a sensible / practical approach is taken to benefit the group. |
| 10. Data and evidence gathering- Culls | | |
| 10.1. All DMGs should agree a target deer population or density which meets the collective requirements of Members without detriment to the public interest. | Target stag cull & therefore number of hinds (density for FCS) is set across group which takes account of the individual members objectives. | continue to review population targets as required. Agree population modelling element above. |
| 10.2. The cull should be apportioned among Members to deliver the objectives of the DMP and individual management objectives while maintaining the agreed target population and favourable environmental condition. | Mechanism for this although actual success is slightly different. Culls are discussed (or indicated) before meetings (along with additional meetings to focus on the South area (Katrine)). Culls have been set on the known count data, however count accuracy has not assisted with delivering suitable cull planning. | using March 2019 count info set culls that aim to deliver balance of objectives, ensuring members cull throughout the required period and ensuring no areas where deer can go 'unseen'. |
| 10.3. The Group cull target should be reviewed and, if necessary, adjusted annually. | this has been carried out to date, with annual count data supporting decisions. There is now an opportunity to review culls based on full DMG deer count. | continue to use March 2019 count info going forwards, with input of info from 2019/20 culls. Consider improved counting. |
| 11. Data and evidence gathering- Habitat Monitoring | | |
| 11.1. DMGs should carry out habitat monitoring. Habitat Impact Assessments (HIA) measure progress towards agreed habitat condition targets on both designated sites and the wider deer range. | DMG in agreement that open range HIA should be carried out - currently 7 of 16 (58% of open range) properties now carry out monitoring every 1, 2 or 3 years. This is nearly doubled since 2016. There are also 4 properties that have SAC/ SSSI open range monitoring carried out by SNH. DMG have compiled a summary HIA report (2018) of most recent. 1 further estate is starting in 2019. | DMG have promoted HIA to a high level since 2014 - with training days being run, HIA reports and good discussion around impacts being observed. Some members indicate willingness to carry this out but ultimately resource issues. Particularly on the back of Sporting Rates. |
| 11.2. HIAs should be carried out on a systematic and regular basis. A three year cycle is the norm but many find annual monitoring useful. | DMG agreement to try and carry out monitoring across all properties every 2 years, to a set methodology where possible. | continue to promote and encourage uptake - aim for similar method for ease of sharing information - although not imperative. |
| 11.3. Data is required on other herbivores present and their impact on the habitat. | DMG regularly request updated livestock figures and those carrying out HIA take this on board. There is ongoing work with Goats. Counting of goats takes 2 forms - Thermal Image along Loch Lomond side as a norm and also during helicopters counts when possible. | monitor and review changes in livestock/ goats to see how this affects management decisions. |
| 11.4. DMPs should include a section on habitat monitoring methods and procedures and record annual results so as to measure change and record trends. | Habitat monitoring methods have been discussed within meetings & training events. Procedures and sharing of annual results are discussed with the pros (and cons) of monitoring being discussed. Majority of land managers see the benefit of it, but finding resources for this (in house or contractor) is difficult. | evaluate whether DMP is explicit and supporting enough to help further monitoring take place. |
| 12. Competence | | |
| 12.1. It is recommended that in addition to DSC 1 deer managers should also attain DSC 2 or equivalent. | DMG promote a level of competence across the group - this is level 1 minimum. An audit of this is carried out every year. | continue as present - if any changes could consider training |
| 12.2. Deer managers supplying venison for public consumption are required to certify carcasses as fit for human consumption to demonstrate due diligence. "Trained Hunter" status is required for carcass certification. | As above DMG promote Level 1 as a minimum and therefore trained hunter status. Most venison is sold direct to a venison dealer. | continue as present - if any changes could consider training |
| 13. Training | | |
| 13.1. All DMGs should have a training policy and incorporate it in the DMP | Training Policy is in place and regularly discussed at meetings. In addition within a meeting there has been pulling/ offering of collective training days. | Implement training policy as required |
| 13.2. All DMG Members or those acting on their behalf should undergo the necessary training to demonstrate Competence. | as section 12 above - DMG members encouraging Level 1 minimum. As most members are active stalkers then standard is being met. | continue to raise training and whether anything is required for members. Good links with neighbouring DMGs so possibility for sharing opportunities. |
| 13.3. The training policy should promote and record continuing professional development through Best Practice Guidance. | ongoing discussion about Best Practice and improvements to deer management by sharing ideas. | |
| 14. Venison Marketing | | |
| 14.1. Membership of the Scottish Quality Wild Venison scheme is recommended by ADMG. | audit list showing 10 of 23 properties have SQWV larders. Improvements are being made to facilities all the time. continued promotion of this. | |
| 14.2. There is evidence of collaborative venison production within the Group | there is one venison dealer operating within DMG area. Providing an opportunity for this. Other venison dealers also collect on regular days throughout the year. | |
| 15. Communications | | |
| 15.1. DMGs should include a Communications Policy in their DMP. External communication should be directed at parties not directly involved but with an interest in deer management including individuals, local bodies such as community councils, local authorities, local media and other specialist interests. | Comms plan has been written and shared on the website, providing information. Contact is kept with local groups /community councils through local attendance. MSPs have been invited to attend in the more recent years. | consider further avenues for education on land management & for the benefits that the DMG are delivering for the local area/ wider public. |
| 15.2. An annual communication programme suitable to local circumstances is advised. This might include a DMG website or a page on www.deer-management.co.uk , an annual Newsletter, annual open meeting, or attending local meetings by invitation. | website with minutes, agenda, DMP is live. Meetings are also open and some individuals are invited directly to the meetings. | |
| 15.3. A Deer Management Plan should be accessible and publicly available, and local consultation during its development is advised. | DMP is available online, and was available during drafting. | continue as per current practice |
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| | <i>Delivery is good</i> | |
| | <i>Delivery is partial/variable in quality</i> | |
| | <i>Delivery is poor</i> | |
| | <i>Priority criteria</i> | |

| | DMG Public Interest Assessment | <i>Balquhidder</i> | <i>Date of Assessment Meeting: 19 Apr 2019</i> |
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| Public interest categories 1-14 | Criteria | Scoring and evidence of delivery | Future Actions for the Group |
| 1. ACTIONS to develop mechanisms to manage deer | 1.1. Carry out an assessment of effectiveness against the Benchmark | Carried out 19 April 2019 | DMG consider carrying out internal assessment at regular intervals |
| | 1.2. Develop a series of actions to be implemented and assign roles | actions set against all aspects of DMP, timescales are being drawn out for some items which are the building blocks of the DMG and need to consolidated and moved forward within next few months. | tighten up on several key elements of DMP - population modelling, HIA. Consider setting up of Exec Comm/ specific groups to take forward key aspects of DMP and reduce burden on Secretary or other office bearers. |
| | 1.3. Produce and publish a forward-looking, effective deer management plan which includes the public interest elements relevant to local circumstances. The plan should contain an action plan which sets out agreed actions and monitors delivery. Minutes of DMG meetings should be made publicly available. | DMP produced and being followed/ used as a base for assisting direction of travel of group. Action Plan is part of this DMP and is helping drive group. Minutes and further information is being shared via website. | focus attention on tidying up several key elements in next few months - as above |
| 2. ACTIONS for the delivery of designated features into Favourable Condition. | 2.1. Identify designated features, the reported condition and herbivore pressures affecting designated sites in the DMG area. | DMP Part 2 (p.53) takes stock of designated site condition within DMG area, summarising whether there is herbivore pressure affecting individual sites. | continue to review and amend as required |
| | 2.2. Identify and agree actions to manage herbivore impacts affecting the favourable condition of designated features. | Ongoing local discussion at site level between land managers & SNH/ LLTNPA/ FCS to help improve condition particularly of the designated woods - Pollochro woods (Loch Lomond Woods), Edinchip. DMG have assisted with pushing forward and encouraging a level of ownership and awareness over last 5 years. | continue to promote awareness of designated sites from within DMG. Ensure that if local management is not having desired affects then land managers are aware to raise concerns within DMG particularly if improved neighbourly discussions needed. |
| | 2.3. Monitor progress and review actions to manage herbivore impacts affecting favourable condition. | commitment from members to continue to plan for delivering of 'favourable' condition. DMG committed to ensuring DMP reflects status and raise/ discuss as required at meetings. Mix of herbivore species impacts within BqDMG - sheep, goats along with red/roe deer which are being managed. | as ongoing discussion ensure DMG members are aware of what is happening locally and aim to provide early notification to wider group of changes to management. |
| 3. ACTIONS to manage deer to retain existing native woodland cover and improve woodland condition in the medium to long term. | 3.1. Establish overall extent of woodland and determine what proportion is existing native woodland. | DMP clarifies area of woodland by type. (Part 2 p.22) | Continue to revise/ update DMP as required |
| | 3.2. Determine current condition of native woodland. | DMP summaries native woodland condition (NWSS survey data) (Part 2,p.22) providing a short summary of what is meant by an impact and has circulated maps showing sites and recorded damage. Raised at meetings to encourage land managers to engage in work for this, however DMG have other priorities to focus on. | once some breathing space from other priorities then encourage members to focus on woodlands further. A number of areas showing high impacts are probably not red now and vice versa. In due course build in woodland monitoring to more regular discussion as is currently happening with open range HIA. |
| | 3.3. Identify actions to retain and improve native woodland condition and deliver DMG woodland management objectives. | DMG have focussed attention on other aspects of DMP initially although have been raising profile of Native Woodland monitoring over last few years and encouraging discussion. A number of members are taking forward actions to improve woodland condition and this is recorded in DMP or minutes. | as above - not current main focus of DMG but is for several properties. All land holdings have some level of native woodland within property and better recognition of this will ensure improved long term vision. |
| | 3.4. Monitor progress and review actions to manage herbivore impacts. | Open range monitoring is seen as priority at present. However DMP and discussion is progressing actions on this PI at individual property level. | Continue to promote woodland management to improve condition and a longer term plan - how many land ownerships have LTFFP as this will be covered within these? |
| 4. ACTIONS to demonstrate DMG contribution to the Scottish Government woodland expansion target of 25% woodland cover. | 4.1. Identify and quantify extent of recent woodland establishment (through SRDP (last 5 years) and through other schemes). | Quantified within DMP for pre 2014/16. further smaller schemes in recent and current year. | update as required. |
| | 4.2. Identify and quantify opportunities and priorities for woodland expansion over the next 5-10 years. | promotion of increased forest cover from some group members and through LLTNP. Some members attended recent LLTNP forest strategy meeting. Discussion within meetings about forest linkage. However ultimately approx 30% of DMG area is already woodland. | encourage DMG members to discuss forestry plans at earliest opportunity to ensure DMP can be amended and sensible forward looking discussion can be taken forward. |
| | 4.3. Consider at a population level the implication of increased woodland on deer densities and distribution across the DMG. | Recognised within DMP. Not been trialled as no such schemes in last several years with discussions focussing on open range habitats. | encourage DMG members to discuss forestry plans at earliest opportunity to ensure DMP can be amended and sensible forward looking discussion can be taken forward. |
| | 4.4. Implement actions to deliver the woodland expansion proposals and review progress. | DMP captures up to date info (check??) and promotes both early notification and engagement by members. DMP also reflects that multiple land uses take place in BqDMG area and about balancing objectives. | monitor, amend and promote as per ongoing work. Consider providing further info to members (i.e. Forestry Grant summary) once DMG has time to focus on this aspect. |
| 5. ACTIONS to monitor and manage deer impacts in the wider countryside. | 5.1. Identify and quantify the habitat resource by broad type. | Captured in DMP | if improved information then consider updating |
| | 5.2. Identify required impact targets for habitat types. | Impact targets not identified within DMP, although there has been discussion on these at both meetings and training days. 7 members are at a stage of looking at Impacts and how this fits into objectives. Group have requested SNH guidance with this. | discuss and agree range of impact targets for delivery of group wide (and individual) objectives. |
| | 5.3. Quantify a sustainable level of grazing and trampling for each of these habitat types. | as above - most properties that carry out HIA are at a stage of deciding whether impacts are appropriate. No group wide level of grazing. Variety of objectives within group area. Group have requested SNH guidance with this. | whilst good discussion and uptake on HIA, find out whether members are aware of what to do with information and what is required for different habitats. SNH/ LLTNPA/ External could assist with this. |
| | 5.4. Identify where different levels of grazing may be required and prioritise accordingly. | Not captured in DMP at present. This is coming along in line with 5.2 & 5.3. However should note that Ben More Stob Binnein SAC/ SSSI is an example of the complexities of managing for different habitats. Group have requested SNH assistance with this. | as above consider further discussion as required. Ensure members can be directed to somewhere for support if needs be. |
| | 5.5. Conduct herbivore impact assessments , and assess these against acceptable impact ranges. Where necessary identify and implement actions to attain impacts within the range. | DMG in agreement that open range HIA should be carried out - currently 7 of 16 (58% of open range) properties now carry out monitoring every 1, 2 or 3 years. this is nearly doubled since 2016. There are also 4 properties that have SAC/ SSSI open range monitoring carried out by SNH. DMG have compiled a summary HIA report (2018) of most recent. 1 further estate is starting in 2019. | develop, deliver and review HIA strategy |
| | 5.6. Regularly review information to measure progress and adapt management when necessary. | in 2018 DMG commissioned a summary of HIA info from members to help highlight impacts across group. This has provided a baseline for those people and has encouraged further members to carry out HIA. Need to ensure that members are aware of different methods and ensure a level of consistency on how information is shared if this is to be carried out in future. | share, promote and use report to make better informed management decisions. |
| 6. ACTIONS to improve Scotland's ability to store carbon by maintaining or improving ecosystem health. | 6.1. Quantify the extent of the carbon-sensitive habitats within the DMG range. | area of peatland and woodland quantified within DMP. | amend as required if improved information becomes available. |
| | 6.2. Conduct herbivore impact assessments, and assess these against acceptable impact ranges for these sensitive habitats. Identify and implement actions to attain impacts within the range. | HIA being carried out across peatland habitats over 7 properties at present. Impacts are generally acceptable for trampling. HIA report summarises this info. | continue to promote HIA as above (5) and use of information to direct management as required. |
| | 6.3. Identify opportunities for the creation/restoration of peatlands | individual members currently carrying out some work, promotion of peatland work both within DMG and from LLTNPA in particular. 4 properties had shown an interest or carried out physical peatland restoration work. | continue to promote discussion on restoration work within DMG. Continue to gather info on what members are doing and providing wider info on this. |
| | 6.4. Contribute as appropriate to River Basin Management Planning | no RBMP but DMP references that members carry out significant river management with engagement in Forth, Tay & Lomond Fisheries Trusts | |

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| 7. ACTIONS to reduce or mitigate the risk of establishment of invasive non-native species | 7.1. Manage invasive non-native species (e.g. muntjac) to prevent their establishment and spread e.g. report sightings of muntjac to SNH | clear statement of intent with regards to invasive non native species. | review and raise awareness as required. |
| | 7.2. Agree on local management of other non-natives which may be utilised as a resource e.g. sika, fallow, goats, to reduce their spread and negative impacts. | clear policy on non natives/ feral animals which fits with local objectives (both land holdings & wider community - i.e. sika & goats (and also feral pigs which may be in the area around Aberfoyle) | continue with current practice and review as required. |
| 8. ACTIONS to protect designated historic and cultural features from being damaged by | 8.1. Identify any historic or cultural features that may be impacted by deer and undertake deer management to | DMP references need for consideration of management does not negatively affect features. Full DMG area within LLTNP therefore governed by park policy on these too. | members to be mindful of activities and how they may impact upon features. |
| | 8.2. Consider the implications of fencing on the landscape with due regard to the Joint Agency Guidance on Fencing. | section within DMP on fencing and ensuring sensitive consideration on variety of aspects. Mapping of fencing information ongoing. | continue to amend mapping and ensure future consideration takes into account Agency Guidance. |
| 9. ACTIONS to contribute to delivering higher standards of competence in deer management. | 9.1. Undertake a skills and training assessment to establish current skill levels applicable to deer management within the DMG. | Captured within DMP and/ or meeting minutes. | Continue to audit and review training levels and needs |
| | 9.2. Identify training and development needs / requirements of DMG members including opportunities for Continuous Professional development (i.e. in relation to Best Practice). | ongoing discussion at meetings regarding training of various key aspects of deer management. DMG members have offered collective training over 4x4, HIA, etc. | Monitor training and development needs; consider a basis course for all stalkers given Ecoli case in the industry |
| | 9.3. Ensure all those who actively manage deer are "competent" according to current standard | Group has a good audit of current competency status. | Monitor training and development needs. |
| | 9.4. Promote and facilitate the uptake of formal and CDP training opportunities for those participating in deer management. | discussion at group meeting of promoting training requirements | Monitor training and development needs |
| 10. ACTIONS to identify and promote opportunities contributing to public health and wellbeing. | 10.1. Identify and quantify public safety issues associated with deer within the DMG area. e.g. DVCs, airports etc. | local discussion held for DVCs around Lochearnhead and ongoing work with police/ members and neighbouring DMG. Further discussion and gathering of info on other roads on edge of DMG. | continue to review DVC situation at Lochearnhead and if required assess mitigation options |
| | 10.2. Identify actions with landowners, Local Authority, DMG to reduce or mitigate public safety risk and monitor effectiveness of actions. | local discussion held for DVCs around Lochearnhead and ongoing work with police/ members and neighbouring DMG. Lochearnhead meeting Aug 2017 and further subsequent discussions and gathering of data | continue to review DVC situation at Lochearnhead and if required assess mitigation options |
| | 10.3. Identify means of ensuring food safety is maintained in carcass handling and venison processing and compliance with BPG in relation to meat hygiene | DMG discussion at meetings raising changes to carcass handling | continue to review and promote as required |
| | 10.4. Ensure deer managers are familiar with notifiable diseases, that a system for recording is in place and all deer managers are familiar with course of action to take. | due to level of competence then most members have level 1 minimum. Regular discussion/ awareness raising through DMG meetings | continue to review and promote as required |
| | 10.5. Ensure that appropriate bio security measures are enacted when visitors from areas where CWD is present are involved with deer management activities | Regular discussion/ awareness raising through DMG meetings on CWD and how to take sensible precautions | continue to review and promote as required |
| | 10.6. Identify opportunities to raise awareness of the risks associated with Lyme Disease | DMP provides some information on this and members discuss ticks / lyme Disease. | continue to review and promote as required |
| | 10.7. Identify main access and recreational activity within the DMG area and assess how this fits with deer management activity. | Members have been working with various access taking for many years - Munro/ Corbett bagging, West Highland Way & wild camping etc. Members have come to accept that access is part of land management in the area, however there are some ongoing issues with camping/ vandalism/ littering that continues to cause annoyance. | continue to review and promote responsible access etc. Consider whether options for further education/ signage through DMG/ LLTNP/ SNH etc for sensitive areas. |
| | 10.8. Identify actions to mitigate any public access and recreation activity during peak periods of deer culling e.g. use of Hill phones and web sites | All members with Munros take part in Heading for the Scottish Hills. Promote for other managers with Corbets or other classes hills. Members have been aware and dealing with access for many years and therefore have altered management to minimise disruption to their objectives where possible. | discuss and see if improvements can be made. |
| | 10.9. Facilitate public access promote positive communication between visiting public and wildlife managers. | DMP highlights need for engagement with wider public to provide education/ improved understanding of land management in the area. Number of properties have close links with public events. | consider options for promoting education within schools/ on site public events/ wilfife tours and raise awareness of land management. |
| 11. ACTIONS to maximise economic benefits associated with deer | 11.1. Identify and quantify the main sources of revenue related to deer (sport, tourism etc.) | DMP has provided brief overview of objectives and revenue through objectives but does not quantify. | gather information from ADMG survey, assess local information and consider how best to display/ educate on how supports land management/ wider community |
| | 11.2. Identify and quantify deer-related employment. Identify opportunities to increase and improve prospects throughout the DMG. | Quantified within DMP for current employment / work withing deer management. | review and update as required. |
| | 11.3. Identify opportunities to add value to products from deer management (SQWV, venison branding) | members support local venison dealer promoting wild venison. Several members also SQWV accredited. | continue to promote and raise awareness of branding/ SQWV and ultimately quality local product. |
| | 11.4. Explore options for larder sharing, infrastructure improvement and carcass collection to ensure maximum benefit from venison production whilst reducing carbon costs. | most properties have their own facilities or move carcass quickly to local chill. Regular carcass collections by 2 or 3 venison dealers. | Members to review and consider options for larder improvements to meet various standards. |
| 12. ACTIONS to minimise the economic costs of deer, and ensure deer management is cost-effective | 12.1. Identify and quantify capital investment in deer management related infrastructure. | Not covered within DMP in any detail. Some survey responses from 2014/2016 but unsure on level of info. | gather info from ADMG and other surveys and consider how group would like show summarise 'fixed costs' for delivery of deer (or land management) management - i.e. Full/ Part Time jobs, vehicles, rifles, etc - not in great detail but identify and add a multiplier. |
| | 12.2. Identify where deer are impacting on other land uses and include all relevant stakeholders to assist the group in understanding costs of deer within the DMG (e.g. woodland, agriculture, DVCs) | DMP aims to highlight this and for need for sensible, equitable discussion on how best to take the cull. Minimal agricultural damage issues within group area. Discussion on DVCs taken forward. Wider discussion and agreements on culls to deliver woodland/ open range objectives. | members to continue to engage in forward thinking discussion regarding delivery of objectives. Open dialogue - following along the three Cs is key to supporting this. |
| | 12.3. Where there are management changes, assess the likely changes to the economic costs across the DMG | No change of ownership but local management changes in terms of delivery of objectives. This focussing discussion for neighbours and economics are part of this discussion. Currently unsure on what implications are (as in actual £) on change to management | members to continue to review/ engage in a sensible way to deliver objectives. |
| | 12.4. Formulate a strategy to minimise the negative economic impacts in an equitable way. | DMP covers background thinking on this, and has been used over last 2 years regarding Katrine discussion. Using recent count info and a further 'South' Group discussion was held on 17th April 2019 to discuss equitable splits of stag culls. | consider and review depending on updated count/ cull info. |
| 13. ACTIONS to ensure effective communication on deer management issues. | 13.1. Provide regular opportunity for wider community and public agency engagement in planning and communications. | DMP has been shared with wider interests for feedback/ comment. | ensure this is carried out as and when updating DMP/ significant management objectives. |
| | 13.2. Identify and implement actions to address community issues on deer or deer management activity. | Community Councils are invited / represented by current DMG members. Any issues can be brought to the attention of members - i.e. DVC risk at Lochearnhead a good example of this involvement. | continue to share info with Community Councils / share info/ meeting dates etc to engage as required. |
| | 13.3. Support and promote wider opportunities to further education on deer. | as per 10.8 & 10.9 - DMP refers to improving education on deer/ land management. Ample opportunities for members to assist with this as required. Within the group membership there are 3 members that carry out educational visits, 1 has at least provided an opportunity for local schools to hear about deer, and there is the opportunity to share info on the website. | quantify level of school visits (killin??), other education events - shows/ events within local areas/ (RPSB/ WT public talks etc). Consider other options for direct face to face education or signage etc. |
| 14. ACTIONS to ensure deer welfare is taken fully into account at individual | 14.1. Agree, collate and review data available within the DMG which might be used as a proxy for deer health/welfare i.e. recruitment, winter mortality, larder weights etc. | referenced within DMP WRT to possible indicators. Unsure how or if information is being gathered and used. There is discussion on mortality and recruitment but not for purpose of welfare discussion. | consider whether mortality through lack of culling is an issue within the group. Are there major differences in deer condition within group area - calving rates/ fecundity etc - assess and discuss. Particularly given recent count info then being aware of local differences will help better informed discussion |
| | 14.2. Take reasonable actions to ensure that deer culling operations safeguard welfare; for culled and surviving animals (e.g. for example by following BPG) | referenced within DMP, however further discussion around this may be needed following on from up coming discussions on culls etc. Ultimately welfare should not be compromised but achieving culls is required. | provide clarity on DMG position and take forward discussion as and when required. |
| | 14.3. Take reasonable actions to ensure that the welfare of surviving populations is safeguarded (e.g. provision and access to food and shelter) | Referenced with DMP - ample woodland cover within DMG area, no actual feeding of deer (other than access to livestock feed). In general welfare of living deer appears to be very good. | ensure members take forward concerns as and when they become aware of them. Discuss and review management considerations as required. |

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| animal and population level. | <p>14.4. Periodically review information on actions to safeguard welfare, identify and implement changes as required.</p> | <p>DMG do not have a welfare issue for living populations - i.e. natural mortality is always pretty minimum baring 2017/18 year. DMG have appointed a Deer Welfare Liaison Officer. There is ongoing review of mortality and recruitment as part of population modelling but not maybe as part of welfare. At meeting on 17 Apr 19 - there was further discussion of standards to ensure welfare, but also gathering of information to help improve welfare understanding - larder weights, fecundity rates, sexing calves etc.</p> | <p>Consider improvements to gathering and storing information on welfare indicators - weights/fecundity etc and see if any change over time.</p> |
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