Lower Nithsdale Red Squirrel Group

The Lower Nithsdale Red Squirrel Group had their inaugural meeting on 26th September 2018 in Dumfries. Twelve people attended plus SSRS staff including myself, Conservation Officer Stephanie Johnstone, Grey Squirrel Officer Ian Kerr (also known as Rusty). Melanie Allen, Chair of Mid Nithsdale RS Network, also attended.

We're still in the planning stages of how the group will move forwards, but the group did decide on their remit area: the will cover, roughly, the Lower Nith Valley and Dumfries. This will more or less cover the gap between the Mid Nithsdale Red Squirrel Network, the Annandale Red Squirrel Group and the Solway Forests Red Squirrel Network. The Northern Boundary will be around Auldgirth, the Southern boundary will be at the mouth of the Nith, Mabie Forest will be the Western boundary and the western edge of the Annandale RSG remit area will mark the Eastern boundary.

At present, mainly made up of volunteers involved in grey squirrel control, with control being carried out in the lower Nith valley. Currently there are two dispatchers and also some members of the Group who have traps on their own land.

While we do hope to attract fundraising & events volunteers to the group in the future, it's great that there is a dispatch team forming in the area, especially in the wake of the Heathall squirrelpox outbreak.

The group is due to have their second meeting next month, when they will decide on who will be taking on which roles in the group, how the group will be formally set up and what their main objectives will be.