



Penrith & District Red Squirrel Group

Newsletter

Winter 2015/Spring 2016



A Sad Loss...



Darell Thompson-Schwab

It is with great sadness we announce the sad loss of both Sam Bertram and Darell Thompson-Schwab. Darell passed away on the 27th of March 2016, but left us these words of support after kindly donating the funds for another full time ranger (Andrew Hodgkinson):

We have been feeding red squirrels at Kingfield for some 45 years. It was in 2000 that the first grey invader was seen in the garden (very soon after shot!). Since 2000 reds continued to feed around the house and numbered up to 10. Sadly the greys were also increasing in spite of trapping & shooting and from September 2014 the red squirrels have left. They have been driven up the Liddle Valley by increasing grey presence. In 2015 on Kingfield we shot/trapped 97 greys and always hope the reds will return.

Julie has been my hope and inspiration and gave me the great pleasure to support the work of Andrew who is doing such an essential job in trying to keep greys out of a large area. Good luck Andrew and thank you.

What is needed urgently is the support and donations of all landowners to have more Rangers like Andrew. I cannot stress enough how vital it is for the greys to be exterminated and with more Rangers carrying out this work, Red Squirrels will not be driven away and might well come back to areas where they once were, in the absence of the grey army.

Please support if you can, the Red need an army too!

Sam Bertram (pictured right) was a long standing and very active member of the Penrith & District Red Squirrel Group, not only did Sam make squirrel feeders for the group over the years, he actively monitored several woods around the Penrith area often to be seen walking his beloved dogs whilst filling feeders or out with one of the rangers keeping an eye out for both red and grey squirrels. Sam held a deep passion for the red squirrels and was held in great regard amongst the group. Both will be remembered with many fond memories, but greatly missed by all that knew them.



Sam Bertram

Winter/Spring Summary



Image - Sarah McNeil

What a winter it has been! Needless to say it has been a very testing period for both humans and wildlife alike over the winter months. With consistent torrential rain, floods, high winds and at times bitterly cold weather it has certainly been a challenging time.

Work has of course continued as best as possible with the rangers and volunteers monitoring the various areas, carrying out grey control and dealing with the challenges at hand. Unfortunately the pox virus has once again reared its ugly head in some areas having a varying degree of impact amongst the red squirrel population. In most cases, with the various actions taken by

both the rangers and volunteers, the pox was soon contained with healthy reds thankfully still being seen.

Overall the figures seem promising, data is gathered on a monthly basis from local people, volunteers and the rangers which is reported throughout our region. Comparing Winter/Spring 2014/15 to the same period of 2015/16 red squirrel sightings are up 0.6%, grey squirrel sightings are down 46% and grey squirrel dispatches are down 55%. There can be numerous factors for these figures which will always be variable, but in general, it paints an encouraging picture with many reports of reds having been seen in places they haven't visited for some time.

Many thanks once again go to all our volunteers for their hard work and vigilance, to our members for their support and to all those individuals, be it local businesses or further afield, who continue to support our group.



Don't forget to look for us on Facebook and like our group. You can find all sorts of interesting things and get your picture posted!



Raising Awareness & Funds



Image: Paul Fowle

Once again the groups' volunteers have been busy since the last newsletter raising awareness & funds to help keep the cogs turning for red squirrel conservation in our district.

Over the years Penrith & District Red Squirrel Group has worked closely with the National Trust in several locations including Acorn Bank (Temple Sowerby) and Aira Force located near Ullswater. In 2015 the Trust made a generous donation to



our group towards the costs of our rangers who work full time in and around The National Trust area.

We are delighted to announce that they have made the same donation for 2016 and agreed to look into sponsoring the publication of this newsletter - for both we are extremely grateful!



Since 1994 an organisation has been evolving to help protect our beautiful countryside - since 2008 it has been known as 'Nurture Lakeland'. The organisation works tirelessly to raise funds with the sole aim of supporting local conservation projects and tourism businesses that work hand in hand to raise awareness and funds. Nichola Connell, one of our dedicated volunteers, has been working with the organisation over the last couple of years on the 'Visitor Giving Scheme' which is a simple way of inviting voluntary donations from visitors from the tourism businesses. There is no expense involved for the business merely acting as a conduit between the customer and conservation, giving great opportunities for positive publicity and marketing.

So far the scheme has raised £1957.54 - a superb start I'm sure you'll agree!

Great work Nichola and many thanks to Nurture Lakeland for your continued support.



MACDONALD
HOTELS & RESORTS

Fluffy red squirrel teddies (pictured below right) have always been popular on our stands at local shows. We have been very fortunate that two local hotels - Leeming House Hotel on Ullswater and Shap Wells Hotel, kindly agreed to display them in their reception area with information on our group/red squirrel conservation and how they can purchase one with proceeds going towards the cause. They have also been putting the teddies in each room with the same information, again to encourage guests to purchase them. To date, the two

hotels have raised £1152.50 - that's a lot of fluffy squirrels! Many thanks indeed to both Leeming House & Shap Wells (and Nichola Connell once again for setting this up!).



Julie Bailey (P&DRSG Administrator) has as ever been working hard to secure funding in all the different forms it comes. After endless forms and paper work (necessary when applying for funding and grants) Julie has been successful in securing a very welcome £8500 through a grant from 'Lafarge Aggregates & Concrete UK Landfill Communities Fund'.

The project is to carry out red squirrel conservation work in selected sites within P&DRSG's area of operations. Great work Julie and once again, many thanks to Lafarge!

John Turner, a long standing member of the group agreed to put together another appeal on our behalf to Charitable Trusts, involving many hours hard work of pooling together all the information required. This also required writing a letter of appeal and sending them to over 600 recipients! So far the appeal has raised £10,700 - a colossal effort from John for which we thank him greatly and of course all those who have generously and kindly donated.

We would also like to welcome onboard and thank the Sharrow Bay Hotel at Ullswater who have become a corporate sponsor of our group. Sharrow Bay is situated at the edge of the lake near Howtown and has stunning grounds and views across the lake. They also have reasonably regular visits from red squirrels so it's well worth a visit, keep your eyes peeled if you visit the hotel!



SHARROW BAY



Collection boxes have long been a steady source of fundraising with many local establishments from pubs to post offices, coffee shops to tourist information, hosting a box (pictures left). If you would like to host one or know of a friend or family member who maybe owns/runs or works in an establishment that would like to host one, then please contact either your local ranger (a list of rangers for the local areas can be found on the back page) or contact the group via Julie Bailey on 07788 264571 or by email - j.bailey203@btinternet.com

A Worthy Cause



Winning the prize for best fancy dress!

This May the P&DRSG were once again invited via Distant Horizons Outdoor Adventure Company (Watermillock), to support the Walking with the Wounded (WWTW) charitable event which is held annually at the sports ground in Grasmere.



The Cumbrian Challenge, now in its fourth year was set up to raise funds with the aim to support wounded veterans back into work through Walking With The Wounded programmes.

The P&DRSG provided the Marshals for the event which, in collaboration with Distant Horizons Outdoor Adventure Company, donated £1,000 to us for our efforts. So our thanks go out to our Rangers and Supporters who volunteered for the Marshalling roles; David & Lindsey Cowen, John Lisle, Edward Lowthian, David and Marion Holliday, Glyn Vaughan, Adam Wellings, David Reed and Nichola Connell.

As usual the day is a very early start with our Marshals needing to be in place by 6.30am. So we were all very grateful that the weather was kind and provided us and the Teams taking part with a fabulously sunny day.

The event has 3 routes for the Teams to follow

- The Peak (12.5km)
- The Tough (24k)
- The Tougher (31.5km)

Our Favourite Team names were as follows:

The Good, The Bald and the Ugly
 Beardy Hikers & Hairy Bikers
 Norfolk in Chance
 Norfolk in Hope
 Are we Nearly There Yet?

The Top 3 winners of the Tougher Route were:

Place	Team Name	Time (hr.min)
1	Where's the Finish?	6.47
2	Timu Haraka	7.37
3	Speedflex	7.44

And on behalf of the group we would like to say a big thank you to Nichola Connell for her continued voluntary efforts in co-ordinating with organisers of such events which help two very worthy causes at the same time - thank you Nichola and thanks also to Jason at Distant Horizons for your generosity.



Happy to see the finish line!



Edward Lowthian & Nichola Connell at one of the checkpoints, ready to spur on the competitors.



The 'Tougher Route' winners!

Where you can find us



The Penrith & District Red Squirrel Group (P&DRSG) has a web site and a Facebook page both of which we are always looking for pictures and contributions. This could be anything from where you have had the pleasure of seeing reds, be it in your garden or out and about or any of your encounters with the elusive creatures.



Please contact Julie Bailey via email with any pictures etc at j.bailey203@btinternet.com

You can find our website at - <http://www.penrithredsquirrels.org.uk/>

Or Facebook at - <https://www.facebook.com/Penrith-and-District-Red-Squirrel-Group-487229667979369/?fref=ts>

Greystoke

Autumn and Winter has seen very few grey squirrels being spotted in the Greystoke area. Red numbers on the other hand have increased, being seen regularly all over the area. Greystoke forest has a very healthy red population at the moment with 13 different squirrels being seen in a morning's monitoring. As Spring gets underway an increase in grey squirrels is likely to arise as they expand territory's and look for new food sources as their Autumn caches will have been used up. Any Grey squirrel sightings please contact me (details on back page).



Matthew Stuart - employed by RSNE

Dalston & Caldew



My main area of operation lies between the M6 and the A595, south of Carlisle and includes the woods up the Caldew river and tributaries, and Chalk Beck from Curthwaite to near Caldbeck. Since August 2012, I have been pro-actively searching out grey and red squirrels throughout this area and at last am feeling more positive about the situation. Certainly I have found that it is harder to find greys now than ever before and my red sightings are up. Grey control work in woodlands to the south, east and west by fellow contracted rangers and volunteers is making a positive difference for the reds.

David Cowen - funded by P&DRSG

Northern Eden Valley

This Winter and Spring has been a bit quieter this year as far as grey squirrels go. I have had less reported sightings than in previous years and I am not seeing many myself. I have also seen a definite drop in grey kittens this year so far with very few being trapped. On the red squirrel front, although always airing on the side of caution, things do seem healthier and I am seeing a steady number of reds throughout the Eden valley as they continue to make a welcome return to the area.



John Lisle - funded by P&DRSG

Ullswater



This winter has been a challenge for all throughout Cumbria, and a particular challenge around the Ullswater area. Having weathered the storms and doing what could be done (safely) it seems the squirrels managed to get through them also with reds once again appearing at Aira Force, Patterdale hall, Watermillock and Dunmallet (Pooley Bridge) to name a few. Greys continue to appear in places but rarely finding the 'colonies' I did initially.

Christian - funded by P&DRSG

Upper Eden Valley

A bit of good news, no pox has been reported in my area of the Eden valley over the Winter/Spring period to date. One red has been seen at Flakebridge, two reds seen at Rutter Falls and two reds seen at Hoff Lodge where we lost 30 last year. Lots of reds being seen in the Kirkby Stephen area and Brough and also in the village of Orton. A squirrel trail has now been set up in Appleby Castle and is now open to the public.



Gary Murphy - funded by P&DRSG

Whinfell



Unfortunately there is still an on going pox problem at Whinfell forest, with a lot of time and effort being put in to monitor the situation. Healthy reds are still being seen however within Whinfell, which is promising and will continue to be monitored. Doesn't seem as many greys about in my areas at the moment. Feeders along with trail cameras continue to monitor. Lots of reds about in other woodlands on my patch plus the bonus of red squirrel kittens being seen regularly over the past couple of months.

Jerry Moss - employed by Center Parcs

Calthwaite & Hutton

The last few months have been rather hectic as I've been getting my teeth into my area and securing new permissions. Broadfield has proven very challenging but I think the tide is now turning in favour of the few remaining reds around the estate. I have had some outbreaks of the Pox at Brackenburgh & Middlesceugh but these thankfully seem to be very isolated cases. Over the coming months I will be looking to incorporate more areas to my list of permissions as well as keeping up the fight in my existing ones and assisting all the other rangers/supporters as much as I can.



Andrew Hodgkinson - funded by P&DRSG

Technological advances in squirrel management!



David Cowen monitoring woodlands with TIM

David Cowen, our intrepid ranger for the Dalston and Caldew area kindly agreed to write this article on the advances of squirrel conservation namely the FLIR thermal imaging monocular:

In late 2012, when I first contracted a medical condition known as Squirrelitis, my earliest experiences of Grey squirrel control were limited to sneaking about with a gun disguised as a tree, hardly daring to blink for fear of spooking a most elusive and cunning opponent. Then, with the aid of strategically deployed feeders I was advised that the squirrels will come to you, and that saved a lot of sneaking. However, squirrels don't always come to feeders and the sneaking continued. In October 2014, the sneaking took on a new dimension with the arrival of a device known as a Thermal Imaging Monocular (TIM to its close friends). This device enabled me to get a 'heads up' on the presence of a squirrel long before I could see it with my eyes. The apparatus is not actually a 'squirrel detector' it's a heat source locator and requires some skill in its operation. Observing through the eyepiece is quite restrictive and whilst you are contemplating whether the bright spot might be a hover fly 2m away or a cow 400m distant, a squirrel might be sat right above you. So it's not the be all and end all! It is affectionately known by some as the FLIR (an acronym for its mode of operation Forward Looking Infra- Red. After some intensive training the FLIR can also be used as a BLIR (Backward Looking Infra- Red). The sensitivity of the instrument is such that on one occasion when I knew a squirrel had dropped from the canopy and not hit the ground I was able to confirm the latter by observing a 'hotspot' on the bark where the squirrel had dallied whilst I waited for it to move and was shuffling around the trunk. TIM has become a close friend and a great help in finding squirrels in the woods.

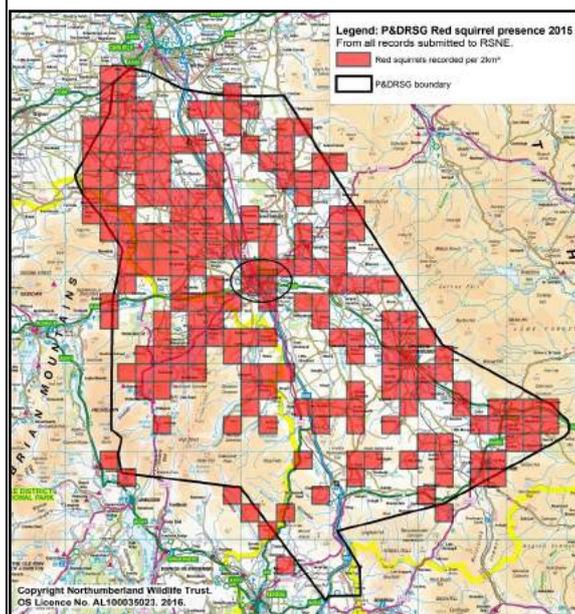
Show Dates 2016

The P&DRSG will once again be attending the main shows around the district, we would love to see you there and talk everything squirrels!

- Ullswater Country Fair** - June 26th 2016
- Skelton Show** - July 2nd 2016
- Penrith Show** - July 23rd 2016
- Dalston Show** - August 13th 2016
- Lowther Show** - August 13th & 14th 2016
- Brough Show** - August 18th 2016
- Dufton Show** - August 27th 2016
- Acorn Bank Apple Day** - October 9th 2016



The Big Picture



This map shows the P&DRSG's area of operation and boundaries (Penrith is circled in the middle). The red squares show red squirrel sighting reports either from the public, volunteers or recorded by our rangers. This is very encouraging indeed. Please keep reporting your sightings.

Treasurer bids farewell



Change is always afoot, and never more so in the squirrel world and their army of volunteers. Jane Scott (pictured left) became the P&DRSG's Treasurer in July of 2014 and since has done an amazing job at not only keeping the books right, but volunteering herself for the other tasks that come with running a charity.

Always willing to help, contributing with thoughts and ideas at meetings, Jane will be sadly missed as she unfortunately had to hand in her resignation in April of 2016. Many thanks on behalf of the group Jane, for all your help and input over the years.

Artist Residency at Acorn Bank



Julie Bailey recently had the great privilege of spending a day with artist Freya Pocklington who has been awarded the 2016 Dorothy Una Ratcliffe, artist in residency fellowship at Acorn Bank which is part of a larger programme of activities across National Trust properties that celebrate the legacy of Beatrix Potter marking the 150th anniversary of her birth in 1866.

Often working on a large scale, Freya's drawings combine layered ink and pastel to give them a distinctly painterly finish. She depicts largely female characters set against fantastic and domestic backdrops. She re-contextualises her characters and will be creating a new series of drawings during her three month residency. Freya has been seeking out contemporaries of Beatrix Potter, recording conversations with them which will hopefully inspire future generations as well as being a digital archive of this time. She will be drawing and making animations about the women she meets and the animals they are so passionate about which will form a physical archive and which will be accumulated into an exhibition over

summer at Acorn Bank and other venues. Freya grew up in the South Lakes and studied her BA in Drawing and Painting at Edinburgh College of Art (2006) and an MA in Drawing at UAL (2009).

Her work is held in collections such as The British Museum, The Royal Scottish Academy, Victoria and Albert Museum, Glasgow Airport, Chichester Cathedral, West Dean College and The National Open Art. She has exhibited at The Jerwood Drawing Prize, James Freeman Gallery, Breese Little, Mall Galleries, Sluice Art Fair, Moorwood Art, The Art Shop and Chapel in Wales, Somerset House and many others. Residencies include an Arts Council Funded project in Portugal, The Royal Scottish Academy John Kinross scholarship to Italy, Chichester Cathedral, Somerset House for NOA, West Dean College, The Florence Trust Studios in London and presently at Acorn Bank National Trust property in Cumbria. Her work has been featured in Elephant Magazine, BBC online, Art Daily, The Week, Wall Street International Magazine, Country Life and Printmaking Today.

Road Safety

We have had some new, larger (A1 size) road signs made for the Rangers to locate on their patch. They are also available to purchase from the group at the princely sum of £5.

There is also a larger triangular 'Slow Down - Red Squirrels' sign available at the cost of £30.

If you are interested in purchasing or would like to find out more information on them please contact Julie Bailey Tel. 07788 264571.



Ways You Can Help P&DRSG

You can help us by:-

- ✓ Making a donation and/or becoming a member
- ✓ Volunteering to monitor squirrel numbers
- ✓ Promptly reporting sightings of grey squirrels or sickly reds to group contacts – list on last page
- ✓ Reporting grey kills by you or others in or outside of this group, with date, location etc.
- ✓ Recruiting new members and corporate sponsors
- ✓ Promoting the view that red squirrel conservation is predominantly about grey squirrel control
- ✓ Organising a fund raising event – coffee mornings, garden open days, selling quiz or raffle tickets etc.
- ✓ Host or find hosts for our charity collection boxes
- ✓ Raise awareness locally – schools, organisations, parish councils / magazines etc. & talks to groups

Would Your Group Like A Red Squirrel Talk?

Volunteers Trish Mansbridge & Emma Tapp are waiting to hear from schools and groups who would like a talk on red squirrel conservation.

Our PowerPoint presentation slide show outlines the plight of the red squirrel, gives a brief history, distribution, facts, explains who and what is involved with their conservation and what can be done. If you would like to find out more please contact Trish via email - trish.mansbridge@gmail.com



Penrith & District
Red Squirrel
Group

A registered charity
number 1127428

Protecting
our
red squirrels



Slide show equipment generously funded by the John Spedan Lewis Foundation

Individual or Family Membership

Membership is the life blood of any organisation and we are no exception. Please sign up and become a member today!

All memberships are for the calendar year but are payable at any time. Members who join later in the year and wish to pay by cash/cheque are invited to make a pro rata adjustment to take in membership for the following year. For example a family taking out membership in June 2016 may wish to pay £45 for it to run until the end of 2017.

A plea to all members - Please consider paying your subscription by standing order - Ideally by a 'monthly' standing order, as it smoothes out our cash flow, though of course an 'annual' standing order still does away with the expense of sending renewal letters.

Membership as a Major or Corporate Sponsor



This scheme is simply for those who wish to give more than our standard membership, whether they are private individuals, landowners or businesses. Starting from as little as **£10.00 per month**, all payments should be tax deductible, as charitable donations or set against our invoice for advertising / services rendered etc.

Your regular standing order payments will not only allow us to budget our commitments but will also provide you with valuable marketing opportunities. You can use our corporate sponsor logo on your literature and have a links to/from our website. What an opportunity for you to show your clients and customers that you not only care but are prepared to do something about it.

Penrith & District Red Squirrel Group

Membership Form

Membership is for the calendar year, payable at any time - Please tick the appropriate membership level or feel free to enter a higher amount should you wish to increase your subscription by including a donation or pro rata it, to take in the following year

Individual Membership £20	<input type="checkbox"/> By Cash/Cheque or £..... pro rata adjusted / including donation
	<input type="checkbox"/> By Annual Standing Order or £..... pro rata adjusted / including donation
	<input type="checkbox"/> By Monthly Standing Order £5 <input type="checkbox"/> £10 <input type="checkbox"/> Other £ <input type="text"/>
Family Membership £30	<input type="checkbox"/> By Cash/Cheque or £..... pro rata adjusted / including donation
	<input type="checkbox"/> By Annual Standing Order or £..... pro rata adjusted / including donation
	<input type="checkbox"/> By Monthly Standing Order £5 <input type="checkbox"/> £10 <input type="checkbox"/> Other £ <input type="text"/>

Membership as a Major or Corporate Sponsor

Please **GiftAid** your membership - Only applicable to individuals and the self employed. Companies make payments 'pre-tax'

Sponsor Bronze £10 month	<input type="checkbox"/>	If none of the options shown left are appropriate, please indicate your level of payments; I will pay £..... by standing order Monthly <input type="checkbox"/> Annually <input type="checkbox"/> I will pay you the amount indicated left by standing order Annually <input type="checkbox"/> I will pay you the amount indicated left on invoice, Monthly <input type="checkbox"/> Annually <input type="checkbox"/> I will pay you £ on invoice Monthly <input type="checkbox"/> Annually <input type="checkbox"/>
Sponsor Silver £25 month	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sponsor Gold £50 month	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sponsor Platinum £100 month	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sponsor Patron £250 month	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Title/s: First name/s: Surname/s:

Company Name: (if applicable)

Address:
.....
.....

Postcode:

Phone: Email:

Signed: **Date:**

Please tick this box if you wish P&DRSG to claim **GiftAid** on your donation. If you are a UK income or capital gains tax payer **GiftAid** allows us to claim back the tax (currently 25p for every £1) on all of your donations.
Please note the total reclaimed tax (on this or any other donations to charities or CASC's) must not exceed the amount of tax you pay in the current tax year.
Please return this form to: **Penrith & District Red Squirrel Group, Woodside, Armathwaite, Cumbria CA4 9SX**

If you see a grey squirrel or a sickly red ... Don't delay!
Please contact one of the below - immediately

WHINFELL Penrith, Lowther, Temple Sowerby, Whinfell Forest

Jerry Moss Tel: 07736 779965 jmossjerry@aol.com

NORTHERN EDEN VALLEY Armathwaite, Lazonby, Kirkoswald, Langwathby & Melmerby

John Lisle Tel: 07841 449648 john.lisle@btinternet.com

UPPER EDEN VALLEY Appleby, Kirkby Stephen, Brough, Ravenstonedale & Tebay

Gary Murphy Tel: 07974 788434 garymurphy2408@btinternet.com

ULLSWATER Ullswater Haweswater & Shap

Christian Bensaid Tel: 07815 784381 cjb06@hotmail.co.uk

GREYSTOKE Greystoke & Caldbeck

Matthew Stuart Tel: 07949 366334 mstuart86@hotmail.com

GREYSTOKE Dalston & Caldew area

David Cowen Tel: 07542 191865 dec@davidcowen.co.uk

GREYSTOKE Calthwaite & Hutton area

Andrew Hodgkinson Tel: 07983 459918 silverhodge@hotmail.com

Penrith & District Red Squirrel Group. Woodside, Armathwaite, Cumbria CA4 9SX

The Administrator can be contacted on 07788 264571 e-mail: info@penrithredsquirrels.org.uk



Northern Red Squirrels

Use this site to report any squirrel sightings outside the P&DRSG's area or make contact with the Red Squirrel Group nearest to you. NRS - the organisation for all groups in Northern England.

NRS Cumbria Chair, Julie Bailey 07788 264571 or visit www.northernredsquirrels.org.uk

Penrith & District Red Squirrel Group Standing Order Form



To the manager.....Bank/Building Soc Sort code.....
Bank address..... Account number.....
..... Account Name.....

Instruction to your Bank / Building Society to pay by Standing Order

Please pay HSBC Bank, Market Square, Penrith, Cumbria CA11 7SN, Sort Code 40-36-10 for the credit of Penrith & District Red Squirrel Group. Account Number. 01310968

the sum of £ (Pounds and pence)

commencing on the /..... /20..... and thereafter every month/annually* on the same day until further notice in writing and debit my/our* account accordingly. (* delete as necessary)

Signed: Date:

Please tick here if you would like us to claim **GiftAid** on your donation*
*If you are a UK income or capital gains tax payer, **GiftAid** allows us to claim back the tax (currently 25p for every £1) on all of your donations. Please note the total reclaimed tax (on this or any other donations to charities or CASC's) must not exceed the amount of tax you pay in the current tax year.

Please return this original completed form to **Penrith & District Red Squirrel Group, Woodside, Armathwaite, Cumbria CA4 9SX**