

Highland Perthshire Communities Land Trust

Minutes of Meeting of Trustees held on Monday 9 November 2009 at 7:15 p.m. at the home of Clare Thomas

Present: Clare Thomas, chairperson, Rob Coope, Gordon Evans, Julie Gardiner, Margaret Gimblett, Margaret Jarvis(minutes), Richard Paul, Bill Hoare (by invitation). BH was welcomed to the meeting.

1. Apologies: Tim Fison, Paul Jarvis, Ann Partridge, June Riddell

2. Minutes of previous meeting of 1 Sept 2009: Approved.

3. Matters Arising: None.

4. Reports from Groups:

- a. **Woodlands and WGS** RC asked if JG could send out to everyone a brief summary of the detailed report, with maps, given to Tim Barrett at the FC Perth office (**ACTION JG**). No feedback had yet been received. RC expressed mild concern about some seemingly unplanted areas. JG explained that there were more mounds than needed to achieve the required stocking density. One area where the planted trees had been smothered by bracken would need replanting. BH commented that areas of planted Scots pine seen from the weir were looking good. RC reported that there had been no new incursions of red deer; three yearlings remained (no young). He had shot one red deer and four roe deer last week. More culling was planned on neighbouring land and this might increase the pressure on our fence. There were still more roe deer inside our fence than outside. We need to keep control but RC was generally optimistic and commented that recent deer damage was scarce.
- b. **Visitor Access.** TF had reported that Sandy McAdam will place stepping stones in the burn by the scrapes; the burn is currently difficult or impossible to cross when in spate. It was agreed that Rab Robertson will be asked install a nine-foot gate to replace the wicket gate in the head dike; this will not be wide enough for large machines, but access for these is possible via the new gate at the other end of the wall, as well as at White Bridge. He had mentioned to PJ the possibility of some Bailey Bridge sections at Kinloch Rannoch being available for bridging the burn. PJ was asked to follow up this idea. (**ACTION PJ**). The question of the legality of a notice requesting 'No Overnight Camping' was discussed but was deferred until the spring.
- c. **Observation and Education Facility.** BH said that the small leak in the window is weather-dependent and unavoidable. A letter from Robin Hull agreeing that some of the money in the OEF account could be used towards the cost of a composting toilet, had been circulated in September. MJ had received some information about such toilets, installed by a Community Woodlands Association member in Assynt, and passed it to JG. A photograph was circulated JG will investigate further. (**ACTION JG**).
- d. **RSS.** The final grant, of £1510, had been applied for and received BH reported that the cattle were not yet on the road side of the Allt Mor- and also that the electric fence needs to be more powerful. JG would like to have cattle-grazing on the other side of the burn, and also on the area of sacrificial crop.
- e. **Natural and Cultural Heritage.** CT explained that some of the archaeological sites were being obscured by vegetation. She is planning to begin detailed mapping, at 1:200 or 1:500 scale, of the two groups of shieling huts closest to the summit. The maps would go to RCAHMS and be available on our website, and as laminated information sheets, with suitable explanation, in the OEF and stored in our archive. The work would be done in February and March when there is least vegetation. Signage on the sites was rejected as being obtrusive. CT explained that there were probably no artefacts present, because the

people were poor and the soil acid, and that the sites might be hunting camps, and much older than the shielings would be. Because the required mapping using plane tables is time-consuming and requires great concentration, it was unanimously agreed to contract CT for (about) five hours at a discounted rate of £17 per hour. CT reminded the trustees that she had recommended such plans in her 2005 report on the Archaeology of Dun Coillich. Preparing these plans was not part of her responsibilities as a trustee, hence she believed that it would be in order for her to be paid. She was only asking for payment for 5 hours spent at the drawing board, not for preparation, walking to the site, or producing a finished copy of the plans.

5. **Keltneyburn Hydroscheme** ‘Aberfeldy Groundworks’ had replaced ‘Grieve Groundworks’ - but this should not cause any problem to HPCLT. All work is continuing and going satisfactorily. BH circulated photographs taken in September. The straw silt traps are working well and the previously huge-looking concrete construction was less obtrusive. The possibility of somehow softening the hard lines of the weir was discussed. The biggest pool on the Allt Mor had been created – a new habitat! The temporary repair to the damaged fence had been satisfactory. RC offered to check this fence when the works were complete. (**ACTION RC**). BH expected the scheme to be on stream in six months or so.
6. **Education Activities** Six pupils from Pitlochry High School will be working on fencing with Rab Robertson on 23rd November. The visit of 44 S1 pupils in September had been a success although the tree-planting had to be re-located to entry via the North gate, because the burn was in spate and not-crossable.
7. **Publicity and Website** BH suggested that the KBH photos should go on the website; also the report on the bonfire party, which had been an enjoyable event. The Newsletter has still to be put on the site. (**ACTION MJ**).

8. Treasurer’s Report (MJ)

a. Current position

Current account:	£5058.11
Reserve account:	£5263.87
OEF Reserve acc:	£5452.57

b. Notes.

There are no unpaid bills or loans outstanding.

GE and MJ arranged a bank transfer to repay the loan of £57,000 to the Volant Trust as required before the end of October.

Our financial year ends on 30th November, so these balances are likely to be close to the end of year statement.

A further rental payment from KBH is due in December.

9. Any Other Business

- a. **Black Grouse survey** RC reported that the person who had been doing a survey of black grouse had ‘vanished’, and was not responding to emails. The Game and Wildlife conservation Trust were planning another survey, which would not overlap, but could not get any response either.
- b. **Changes to the Memorandum and Articles** GE introduced a discussion in response to Colin Liddell’s letter, circulated to everyone by PJ, about changes in regulations for charities, allowing changes to be made to the Memorandum and Articles There was a unanimous decision to discuss possible changes with Colin. The formal requirements could become much less demanding. (**ACTION PJ, GE**).
- c. **Risk Assessment** CT handed round photocopies of a document ‘Generic Risk Assessment for Dun Coillich’ and ‘Guidelines’ prepared for HPCLT by Lynnette

Borradaile. She admitted that many of the risks identified by LB appeared to many local people as a normal part of life; however, she accepted that that other people might not be aware of some of the potential hazards, e.g. rough ground, rocks, branches etc. The pits from the mounding are a considerable hazard, especially where vegetation obscures them.. RC agreed that HPCLT had a particular duty to warn all visitors of hazards that HPCLT had created, such as the pits and the stepping stones to be installed across the Goulandie burn. CT felt that HPCLT needed to have such a risk assessments, with suitable warning notices in place, as recommended by LB, so that, in the event of any incidents, we could prove that we had considered the issue. CT said that she would email copies of the Risk Assessments and Guidelines to all Trustees. She asked for comments to be sent to herself. She would forward them to LB. The matter could be discussed again at the next meeting, when she hoped that HPCLT would formally adopt the document.

- d. **AGM** It was intimated that the AGM will be held on 20th March in Grandtully Hall; Syd House has agreed to be our speaker. Discussion of the procedures was deferred to the next meeting.

10. **Next Meeting**

The next Trustees' meeting will be held on Tuesday 9 February 2010 at Duireaskin.

Meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.