

Highland Perthshire Communities Land Trust  
**Scottish Charity Number: SC032801**

**Draft Minutes of Trustees' Meeting held at Keltneyburn, Aberfeldy  
on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> November, 2018 at 7.30 pm.**

**Present:** Andy Walker (AW) (chairman), Margaret Jarvis (MJ), James Banks (JB), Izzy Filor (IF), Bill Hoare (BH), Mike Nixon (MN), Richard Paul (RP), Richard Rees (minutes) (RR), Tim Fison (TF), Heather Hamilton (HH), John Marshall (JM), Willie McGhee (WMcG)

1. **Apologies:** Trish Waite, Bobby Wardle.

2. **Minutes of previous meeting 24<sup>th</sup> September 2018:** The minutes were Agreed as an accurate record and Approved (proposed by BH, seconded by RR).

3. **Matters arising:** Subscription year 1<sup>st</sup> January start date implementation. Agreed that members who had already paid their 2019 subscription will change to the 1<sup>st</sup> Jan date in 2020. All those who had not yet paid will be advised that their 2019 subscription will be due on 1<sup>st</sup> Jan 2019. AW will write to members to advise of this change, and would also write to lapsed members.  
**Action: AW**

BH also reported that the security camera for the DC Hut had been installed.

4. **Appreciation:** The Chair (AW) reported that Margaret Jarvis was stepping back from her role as minute-taker. The Trustees expressed their appreciation of the contribution Margaret had made to the HPCLT secretariat since its creation. Richard Rees agreed to take the minutes for this meeting.  
**Action RR**

**5. Financial report:**

MN circulated an income/expenditure spreadsheet for 2018 to date.

MN noted that there was a surplus of £12300 in the business account, but a deficit of £3K in the project account. Additionally HH had subsequently presented approx. £5K of expense invoices. MN asked for approval from the Trustees for a transfer of £6K from the business account to the project account: this was given. BH commented that the unrestricted funds were very limited and could not sustain repeated transfers out.

The major and very positive change from the previous report was the receipts from the Thrift Shop. BH reported sales of approx. £2000 and net receipts of £1760, an exceptional result. As this income is unrestricted, it is particularly useful. AW thanked all who had made this happen and BH in particular.

MN noted that £51K of budgeted grant monies had not yet been received. Also no invoices had been received from Rob Coope re deer control since March 2018. Willie McGhee will speak to RC and also to Forest Enterprise

**Action WMcG**

BH reported that capitalisation process for the SSEB wayleaves was now complete, and an initial sum of £4803 (net £4799 after solicitor's fees) had now been received into the HPCLT

account. AW noted that this process was a one-off event, and the 2018 accounts should be read accordingly. The transfer from Wayleave to a Deed of Servitude has yielded HPCLT approx. £9800 in total.

MN will send the finalised figures to Tim Ambrose for assessment.

**Action MN**

## **6. Project Officer's Report:**

### **Rural Skills Course:**

We are now 75% of the way through the 5<sup>th</sup> training course. Again we have another good group working their way through the course and all 4 will be graduating in the New Year. Publicity for the next course will be distributed before Christmas and we will be looking to start with the next group of trainees in early February 2018.

### **Volunteer Tuesdays:**

Volunteer numbers remain good, averaging 5-6 per week, with a total of 12 regularly attending.

Good progress was being made in repairing the trails on DC, including the red trail along the Allt Mor, which needed one more day with brushcutters. HH and AW both had brush-cutter certificates but more volunteers with a brush-cutter certificate were needed. The green and white trail had been cut, and the trainees were due to clear the green trail by mid-December. AW explained the concept of adding a link path between the green and white trail and the red trail to enable a circular walk on Dun Coillich. BH noted that more posts were needed in the White Bridge area.

One of the scrapes has also been cleared. The other scrapes need a bit more thought as there is a lot of *Juncus* present, which is very hard to remove by hand.

The electric fence has been removed as there was no evidence it was keeping out the deer, and it was hard to maintain. The vast majority of the trees on Dun Beag now have tubes on them and are, on the whole, growing well.

### **Schools Outreach: Pitlochry Young Rangers**

HPCLT is now part of the Young Rangers group at Pitlochry School. The project is run in conjunction with Cairngorms National Park and involves a group of S3's (5 this year) getting involved in various conservation-based tasks over the year. They have to complete 20 days over the time and we will be hosting them on 5 days. It is exciting to be involved with this project and good to get to work more closely with local rangers as well. The groups have been out on DC twice now and have helped re-mark one of the trails, done some regen monitoring and tree planting and maintenance.

The S1's will also be out for their regular tree planting day in March (15<sup>th</sup>) 2019.

### **Schools outreach: Breadalbane Academy**

HPCLT and Breadalbane have now finalised the partnership agreement that sets out how we will work together over the next three years. This will involve HPCLT working with the school to recruit trainees for the Rural Skills course, but also hosting the Rural Skills classes and others from the high school a couple of times a year.

Last week all of the Rural Skills pupils (26) were at DC planting trees and all of the S1's will be out over the next couple of weeks working with us and JMT planting trees at Braes of Foss and on DC.

HH was complimented by the Trustees on all her work, especially the successful development of these outreach relationships with Breadalbane Academy and Pitlochry High School. And also for organising another excellent BBQ in October!

**Dates for the diary:**

Perthshire Black Grouse Meeting: Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

Breadalbane S1 treeplanting: Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> November, Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2018

Trainee Graduation: Friday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2019

Pitlochry S1 Tree planting: 15<sup>th</sup> March 2019

**7.1 Forestry and Deer culling report:**

BH advised that a deer count had been carried out with 14 volunteers walking the DC land. 5-6 roe deer had been spotted: 2 of these were later shot by Rob Coope. Several reports of browsing damage to rowan trees. HH noted trees on Dun Beag were growing well.

WMcG advised that there continued to be admin problems regarding the second stage payment of the Woodland Grant. It would seem that the RPID system does not recognise the earlier Woodland Grants.

The next HoSF meeting would be on 10th December at Kynachan. IF would take part.

**7.2. Fencing:** WMcG reported. A budget of £40K for replacement of fencing had been created within the HoSF partnership, led by The Woodland and John Muir Trusts.

As part of the preparation for this, 500 meters of old fence had been removed along the Allt Mor. Before the fencing contractor was able to construct the new fence, the contractor for the hydro intake works placed pipes that prevented access to the fence site. An emergency temporary fence was built to close the gap and minimise deer ingress.

The fencing contractor has moved to replace other fencing on Dun Coillich that was budgeted for repair. £27K of the budget will be ring fenced to allow the Allt Mor work to recommence as soon as access is restored.

BH noted that the fencing contractor had suffered loss by theft of a trailer and a JCB bucket from HPCLT land. Police have been informed.

Agenda item 10 moved forward

**10. Keltneyburn Hydroscheme remedial works**

AW advised that he and WMcG had met Alex Reading of Green Highland Renewables (GHR) on site: GHR had agreed to pay (3 weeks@£1500 pw) for the use of a Hagglund low ground pressure all-terrain vehicle to transport fencing material whilst track access to the Allt Mor fence was impeded by the Hydro remedial groundworks. The Hagglund unit is being rented from David Campbell at Amulree.

JM asked whether 3 weeks would be enough, especially if there was poor weather. WMcG responded that the fencing contractor had estimated his work as taking 2.5 weeks, plus 0.5 weeks contingency. Fencing would be replaced 200 meters at a time. HH will liaise with

fencing contractor regarding the replacement of the temporary fence at Allt Mor. The temporary fencing materials can be reused elsewhere as needed. The Trustees agreed to the actions proposed.

**Action: HH**

The ground remedial work is being carried out by GHR in compliance with their planning permission. The completed work is subject to an inspection by SEPA and PKC.

GHR plan to plant birch trees near weir. BH proposed that rental rates with GHR should be reviewed in light of increased generative capacity once present remedial works activities are well past. Noted that GHR are moving to make their accounts more transparent.

Willie McGhee retired from the meeting as this point.

**8. Raptor Persecution:** AW had written to the Scottish Government about recent multiple deaths of hen harriers, so far without response. He asked Trustees be proactive and contact the Holyrood Hen Harrier Species Champion Mairi Gougeon and their own MSP about estates apparently flouting the law. WMcG had attended the recent meeting of REVIVE Grouse Moor Reform: AW alerted Trust to the video accessible through the REVIVE web site <https://www.facebook.com/ReviveScotlandCoalition/>.

**9. Wee Birks Field:** The fallen tree has been removed. HH had used this as part of Chainsaw course. The resultant brush remains on site and might be used for a bug hotel.

J&H Mitchell have forwarded the Title Deeds: BH is concerned about the wording, but this may relate to the use of arcane legal terms. BH felt that some of the text is of historical interest, but is no longer relevant.

**Action: BH**

**11. IT Google Drive:** The transfer of digitised HPCLT archive material from Dropbox to Google Drive has been completed successfully. Richard Paul is managing the Google Drive hosting, and is looking forward to receiving more (preferably already digitised) current and historical data. Google Drive is currently offering 15Gb of storage free: this sounds a lot, but is easily consumed by photographic data. This type of data (and the associated metadata) is very important in measuring and reporting progress toward HPCLT's physical objectives.

**Action: All**

**12. AGM preparation:** 2019 AGM date is 23<sup>rd</sup> March. Location: Fortingall Molteno Hall. (confirmed post meeting). Keynote speaker TBD: JB suggested that hen harrier persecution would be a topical choice. HH to speak to WM and RSPB contacts.

**Action: AW/HH**

BH noted that the make-up of the Trustee Board has to be reviewed at the AGM.

- Margaret Jarvis has to retire by rotation, but can seek nomination for a further term of office as a Trustee
- Izzy Filor and James Banks, currently co-opted to the HPCLT Board, should seek nomination to become elected members of the HPCLT Trustee Board.
- The Trustee Board has 5 vacancies at present and Trustees are encouraged to seek out new candidates.

**Action: All**

**13. Partner news:**

- JMT AGM 2019 is in Birnam (24<sup>th</sup> May): HoSF partners invited to give 10min talk. **Action: AW**
- OSCR website re Fraud [https://www.oscr.org.uk/media/3167/v10\\_fraud-how-to-reduce-the-risks-in-your-charity.pdf](https://www.oscr.org.uk/media/3167/v10_fraud-how-to-reduce-the-risks-in-your-charity.pdf).
- Breadalbane Deer Management Group <http://breadalbanedmg.deer-management.co.uk/dmg-business>
- Tayside Biodiversity Group: 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2018 at Battleby Conference Centre.
- People's Manifesto for Wildlife <https://raptorpersecutionscotland.files.wordpress.com/2018/09/a-peoples-manifesto-for-wildlife.pdf>
- A Review of the Biological Recording Infrastructure in Scotland by the Scottish Biodiversity Information Forum <https://nbn.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/SBIF-Review-extract-Executive-Summary-and-Recommendations.pdf>
- Community Woodlands Association October 2018 e-bulletin – includes useful list of funding providers.

**14.AOCB:**

BH raised issue of introducing Geo-Caching to DC. JM and HH would consider further and report back. **Action: JM/HH**

**Next Meeting:** provisionally 21<sup>st</sup> January 2019: venue MJ's house (Duireaskin).

The meeting closed at 9.30 pm with thanks to AW for the hospitality