

As Approved March 2017

## Highland Perthshire Communities Land Trust Incorporating the Dùn Coilich Project

Minutes of Annual General Meeting held in the Town Hall, Aberfeldy,  
2.00pm Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

*Welcome and Introduction:* The Chairman, Bill Hoare, welcomed about 40 people to the fourteenth AGM of the Highland Perthshire Communities Land Trust.

1. *Apologies:* Tim Fison, Margaret Jarvis, Willie McGhee, Julie Gardiner. Colin Liddell, J & H Mitchell

2. *Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 28 March 2015 (circulated):* Approved (proposed by Richard Paul; seconded by (Margaret Thomas).

3. *Matters arising;* Proposed suggestion to mark the Geographic Centre of Scotland, which is close to Whitebridge on Dun Coilich. It was decided not to make formal claim to this, as there are numerous methods of calculating the centre of Scotland and correspondingly numerous claims. No other matters arising.

4. *Trustees' Report and Accounts for the year to 30 November 2015 (circulated previously):*

The report was projected onto the screen. The Chairman made some comments as follows:

The **Woodland Grant scheme** had progressed. c. 13,000 trees planted in 2015, and another 3000 should be planted shortly. Richard Jarvis asked how much damage there had been from deer, this was variable, depending on location. Some trees are now 7-8ft tall, some are not, but there is also good natural regeneration in some areas, so the Trust is confident of agreement with FC. A number of FC approved surveys have been undertaken. It was noted that some Pine Needle blight is apparent, but nothing can be done about this.

**Deer control and fence maintenance** is ongoing, and a new deer leap has been constructed, thanks to Richard Paul. Severe spates in Dec2015 and January 2016 damaged the watergate on the Allt Mhor, and estimates are being sought for a professional solution. In the meantime temporary fencing has been placed across the burn and a camera is monitoring its effectiveness. Periodic deer counts have been conducted and deer control continues thanks to the efforts of local stalkers.

**Beauldy-Denny power line.** SSE and their contractors finished re-instating the area around Whitebridge in 2015, and the area around the bellmouth and adjacent fencing has also been improved. S1 Pupils from Pitlochry High School planted 150 trees in early March, and more will be planted shortly. The area around the new pylon has been left to regenerate naturally with minimum intervention.

**Membership** numbers remain about the same as in previous years. The Chairman asked if the mini-updates are worthwhile, and the consensus was yes.

**Visits** from schools, colleges and other organisations have continued and are very welcome. Yorkhill Children's Hospital and the RSPB both plan to make repeat visits in 2016. The Trust felt that the numbers of visits and visitor experience could be further improved if there was someone on site, to encourage, co-ordinate and manage visits. To this end the Trust raised funds and will collaborate with Breathe (Aberfeldy) and JMT and advertise a Project Officer post in late March 2016. This will provide opportunities for young people to gain experience in practical land management skills. Thanks to Willie McGhee and Mike Riddell who have assisted greatly in securing the funding for this post.

**Keltneyburn Hydro Scheme.** Good relations continue with KH. The income from the scheme was as per contact, and the Trust is also very grateful for an additional donation this year.

**Partnership Activity** - this continued with The Woodland Trust, and JMT.

**Walking routes** have been marked on the ground, and maps are available in the hall. Some additional way-marking is required, and there could be more sign-age and information at the car parks.

**Wildlife and bio-diversity** – slow changes continue on Dun Coilich. Blackcock numbers are good, and RSPB will visit again on March 20<sup>th</sup> to observe them from the JMT path. Watervoles still present but

elusive. Trail cameras proving useful and educational. Barn Owl seen for first time in 2015.

**Website and Facebook.** Thanks were given to Alice Jarvis for her work in maintaining the website, and Richard Paul for his work and content on the Trust's Facebook page. The Chair also thanked all Trustees, spouses, members, schools and visiting groups of all ages and interests for their continued support.

5. *Approval of Trustees' Report and Accounts for the year to 30 November 2015:* The document was approved as a whole (proposed by Patricia Waite; seconded by Robin Hull).

6. *Retirement and Election of Trustees:* Harry Ross, Innes Smith, Jim Lowe, and Richard Paul retired as Trustees in 2015. Bill Hoare confirmed his intention to stand down as Chair. Three valid nominations were received for new Trustees: Emma O'Shea, Andy Walker, and James Anderson. No elections necessary.

7. *Subscriptions:* no proposed change to subscription rates so they remain at £10 annually per household. membership is necessary as numbers of members are often a requirement in funding applications. There were no objections to this.

8. *Appointment of the Independent Financial Examiner:* Tim Ambrose was thanked for his efforts over many years. He is willing to continue and was duly appointed (Ian Wilkinson proposed, Sandra Winter seconded).

9 *Award of Honorary Life Membership:* Richard Paul announced that Trustees had decided to make two awards, to Bill Hoare and Margaret Jarvis (in absentia), in recognition of the immense amount of work they had done in previous years for the Trust. This was acclaimed by all.

*Any other competent business:* Richard Paul asked for some details on the funding for the Project Officer post. This primarily came from SSE (Griffin), The Hugh Fraser Foundation, and the Robertson Trust. The Chairman stated funding should be enough for one year, and additional funding from the Gannochy Trust beyond that is also a possibility, and that the Trust was very grateful to these organisations for their assistance with the funding.

The formal meeting adjourned at 14.50.

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The Chairman then thanked Sandra and her team in advance for the coffee, tea and cakes, and introduced the Guest Speaker, Emma Rawling; whose talk on Scottish Wildcats was very interesting, and was enjoyed by all. There was time for a short Q & A afterwards, before the tea, coffee and cakes were served.