

Highland Perthshire Communities Land Trust
Incorporating the Dùn Coillich Project

Minutes of Annual General Meeting held in Kynachan Hall, 2.00pm Saturday 22 March 2014

Welcome and Introduction: The Chairman, Bill Hoare, welcomed about 44 people to the twelfth AGM of the Highland Perthshire Communities Land Trust.

1. Apologies: Colin Liddell, J & H Mitchell, Rita Henderson, Alastair Riddell, Marjorie Keddie, Clare Thomas, Russell Jobson, Nigel Hawkins, Mais Steven, Mike Riddell, Loretta Davies-Reynolds, Colin Carmichael, Jim Low, Neil Hooper, Colin Mackay

2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 23 March 2013 (circulated): Approved (proposed by Andy Pointer, seconded by Richard Paul).

3. Matters Arising Robin Hull asked if Trustees had considered his previous suggestion of joint membership with Breadalbane Heritage Society, a successful local organisation with overlapping aims. The Chairman said that this had been overlooked but he would ensure its inclusion at the next meeting.

4. Trustees' Report and Accounts for the year to 30 November 2013 (circulated previously):

The Chairman first paid tribute to Ben Henderson who died, too young, at the end of May 2013. He was a very valuable Trustee, from an interesting and varied background, a practical man, much missed by his wife and family, and by the Trust.

Deer control: Fencing improvements, mainly in 2012, had reduced deer numbers but some culling remains necessary. Rob and Thomas Coope and James Shorthouse were thanked for their work in this regard. Innes Smith was thanked for organising two well-managed deer counts.

Beaully-Denny Pylon line: SSE work on site has ended, but not reinstatement. Jim Low was thanked for obtaining planning approval on behalf of the Trust for a small car park to be retained at Whitebridge. We need to plan how best to landscape the car park and enhance both biodiversity and community access, as soon as SSE have finished.

Woodland and WGS: About 22,000 trees were planted in the year to 2013, mostly by W. Shorthouse and Co, as part of a plan agreed with the Forestry Commission. Some 2000 were planted, enthusiastically, by schools, Cubs and Beavers, Trustees, members and friends.

This included a memorial oak wood of 100 trees in memory of Paul Jarvis, former Chairman, who died last year.

Grant applications: The Trust is seeking funding for a Project Officer who will stimulate visits to Dun Coillich, will provide a range of outdoor training opportunities and facilitate coordination and continuity of maintenance on the land. So far, we have agreement from Gannochy Trust but need more. I thank Willie McGhee and Mike Riddell for their efforts in this respect. This project may end up as a joint venture with JMT.

Keltneyburn Hydroscheme: This continues to provide HPCLT with the agreed income.

Access: The Chairman announced that walking routes on and across Dun Coillich had been post-marked. He thanked Tim and Ruth Fison, and some SWT volunteers, for that achievement. Thanks also to Liz Auty of JMT for providing the maps of these routes now available in the hall, and on the website in future. A substantial footbridge is now in place, below the car park, to allow dry-shod crossing of the Glengoulandie burn. Of the many involved, Tim, Richard, Sandra, Innes and John Taylor are due especial thanks.

Biodiversity: HPCLT now feels the time is ripe to determine the changes since the land has been in Trust ownership and to provide a baseline with which to compare future changes.

Finance Ian Wilkinson presented the annual report, previously circulated. He reminded those present to check their subscription status and the correctness of their email addresses.

Conclusion: We still have some way to go to meet our WGS agreement but we believe we will get there. We have had a steady trickle of visits from school and other youth groups. Relationships with FC and our neighbours are good.

I would now like to thank all those (Trustees, Advisors etc), who contributed to this report; the treasurer, our Independent Financial Examiner, Tim Ambrose; our Company Secretary, Colin Liddell, and our Honorary webmaster Alice Jarvis. I also thank Margaret Jarvis, for her sterling work as minutes secretary, among many other things. I have accepted her offer to continue to take the minutes even though she is retiring as a Trustee.

The chairman then asked for questions. There were none.

5. Approval of Trustees' Report and Accounts for the year to 30 November 2013: The document was approved as a whole (proposed by Robin Hull, seconded by Margaret Jarvis).

6. Retirement and Election of Trustees. Two Trustees (Richard Legate and Sandra Winter) had retired during the year and did not seek re-election; Margaret Jarvis retired and is not eligible for re-election. With the death of Ben Henderson, this leaves six vacancies. Bill was co-opted and seeks election. Trish Waite and James Shorthouse retire and seek re-election. Valid nominations for these three were submitted, they were elected unanimously. This results in a total of nine, leaving three vacancies. The Chairman emphasized the need for more Trustees and more active members and asked people interested to volunteer.

7. Subscriptions: It was proposed and agreed that subscription rates would remain unchanged at £10 annually per household. The Trustees also suggest that Life Membership should be available to be bought, for oneself or as a gift, at a cost of £200. This income should be amortized. (proposed Bill Hoare, seconded George Macdonald)

8. Appointment of the Independent Financial Examiner: Tim Ambrose is prepared to continue. His re-appointment was proposed by Ian Wilkinson, seconded by Margaret Jarvis, and unanimously agreed. Tim Ambrose was thanked for his efforts over many years.

9 Award of Honorary Life Membership:

The Trust had the great pleasure of awarding Honorary Life Memberships:

Firstly to Professor Robin Hull, a founder member, organiser of wildlife recording, initiator of the creation of the scrapes contributing to habitat diversity, and of the Observation and Education Facility (OEF); author of 'Ravens over the Hill' – a history of Dun Coillich, and much more. Robin was presented with a certificate by the chairman.

Secondly, to Ron Greer, who is in Germany and so could not be present. A tireless proponent of recreating woodland cover in many parts of Highland Perthshire, and an inspiration to others with similar aims. The certificate will be presented to him on 21 April at a SWT meeting at which he will be speaking.

Any other competent business: George Macdonald had noticed a problem with ventilation in the hut. The Chairman will look into this.

The Chairman drew the attention of those present to the notices asking for volunteers to do various tasks, that he had placed around the hall.

The meeting adjourned at 14.40

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The Chairman then introduced the speaker, Simon Pepper

Addendum: A huge vote of thanks to Bill Hoare for accepting the Chairmanship and working extremely hard on Dun Coillich's behalf during the past year (proposed by Tim Fison, seconded by Andy Pointer and certainly agreed by all Trustees, advisors and friends.