

Highland Perthshire Communities Land Trust

Minutes of Meeting of Trustees held on Tuesday 7 August 2007 at 7:15 p.m.
At Stillness, Weem

Present: Gordon Evans, Tim Fison, Bill Hoare, Robin Hull, Paul Jarvis, Margaret Jarvis, Ann Partridge, and Clare Thomas (chairperson).

1. Apologies: Rob Coope, Julie Gardiner and Andrew Pointer

2. Minutes of previous meeting of 5 June 2007: The following emendations were made:
Item 3, paragraph 4: “RH and BH... “ to end of paragraph to be emboldened.
Item 4c: Substitute “Ruska” for “Eriska”.
Item 4d: Insert after “his section of the fence.” “This means that a bill for the up-to-£1500 that we promised to contribute may be due soon.”

3. Visit from Carrifran Group PJ reported that this visit of 11 people from the Carrifran Wildwood Group in the Borders was a great success. TF, MJ, AP and BH also joined the group for a walk around DC on a beautiful day. A golden eagle was spotted in the basin and a peregrine falcon over Schiehallion, as well as many plants.

4. Matters arising: RH reported that he had not yet received any submissions for a newsletter. (See also Item 7, p. 2). RH also reported that he had left a message for R. Wickenden concerning the website, but had not yet received a response.

5. Reports from Groups:

a). Woodlands PJ reported that about 90 per cent of this year’s planting is growing, and last year’s planting is also doing well, although there are still some gaps. There is an area of concern, however, of about three to four hectares above the Allt Mhor, where bracken is growing on the moundings. **PJ will ask Willie Shorthouse** to spray this area, as well as another strip that was previously missed. Otherwise, the plantings are good, but there is a need for some active replacement to be done in September. Natural regeneration is not expected.

b). Visitor Access and Car Park PJ has measured the area where the two new stiles are to be placed, and this project will be completed shortly. The stiles will be a little lower than before.

BH reported that no completion certificate is necessary from PKC for the car park, although Colin Liddell had requested some documentation. **PJ will ask CL what certification he needs.**

c). Observation and Educational Facility (OEF) We now have planning consent for the “Ruska” hut to be built. A building warrant is not required.

In response to the public viewing for planning permission, Ian Wotherspoon raised some concern about activities at DC, but after BH met with him and explained the plans for DC, IW was reassured. (See also Item 7, p. 4)

RH has met with a representative from Willie Grieve’s firm about erecting “Ruska”. Our deadline to finish the building had been 30 September, according to PKC, who might supply some funding. This deadline has now been extended to January 2008.

RH has written to all appropriate Trustees about preparing information sheets for OEF. Questions were raised at the meeting about what size and style the sheets should be. RH emphasised that simplicity was uppermost. The text should be simple and all names should be in English. The sheets should be written up on A4 paper. When completed, the sheets will be placed in the OEF for visitors to read.

d). Maintenance, Fencing and RSS Both TF and PJ have recently walked around the DC boundaries. TF saw a few sheep droppings. He also saw some goats. The southern section of the Allt Mohr was all right, but the boundary towards Schiehallion had a number of openings, and the northwest section of the boundary needs major repair. After discussion, it was decided that **PJ, BH, and TF would decide how best to carry out these repairs.** TF also said that the fence had been cut in a few places, but for what purpose was not clear. PJ suggested that Hamish Murray could be asked to repair it. **PJ will phone him and ask HM to meet TF at DC.**

During this discussion, it became evident that the Trustees require a large-scale map of DC which should be available at all meetings to enable clarifications of locations of particular areas. **Action is needed.**

It is not possible to get anyone to take silage this year, but grazing might be possible. There are too many docks in the RSS. BH suggested that in the future the management plan for both areas of the RSS should be re-examined.

The sacrificial crop is growing well. Oats, sunflower and quinoa are among the crop.

e). Natural and Cultural Heritage CT was contacted by Alastair Godfrey, Perth Society for Natural Sciences, about a visit on Monday 30 July by their Botanical Section to DC. They will do a survey and will send CT a copy of it with their observations.

f). Keltneyburn Hydro Scheme PJ said there is nothing new.

g). Education Activities There were 17 people on the SWT walk at DC, which was a good outing with people from various locations.

The visit to DC by the Beaver Scouts of Aberfeldy was very successful. There will be a note about this visit in the next issue of *Comment*.

h). Public Relations and Website No plans will be made about a future meeting in Pitlochry until the OEF has been finished.

The website is still in need of attention. MJ suggested that her daughter could work on the website. She has a lot of experience in setting up websites as part of her job. It was agreed that it would be best if she started by bringing the site up to date first, and then perhaps later making other changes. **MJ will arrange for her daughter to meet APO to talk about the website.**

6. Treasurer's Report

Bank balance:	Current account:	£ 6,259.72
	Reserve account:	35,020
	OEF account:	8,117.57

The treasurer handed out detailed income and expenditure sheets.

A subscription reminder will be sent out in the near future.

7. Any Other Business PJ received a letter from PKC to attend a meeting on 15 August 2007 at 7:30 p.m. in Fisher's Hotel in Pitlochry. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss access to the countryside and the core path network in northwest Perthshire. The letter was sent out to a large number of landowners in the area. **CT will try to attend this meeting. BH will be attending as a Community councillor, but is also willing to represent HPCLT.**

The question of the newsletter was raised again. All agreed that we must have a newsletter for our subscribers. BH volunteered to take charge of collecting together information for a newsletter from Trustees. He would then hope to pass on the submissions he receives to JG for formatting. The following Trustees agreed to prepare material:

RH -- OEF. Scrapes. Water Voles.

PJ -- Trees

BH -- RSS. Access. New stiles.

TF -- School visits

MJ -- Flowers

CT -- News of the path network meeting and summary of report from Alastair Godfrey, if received by then .

Articles should be sent to BH by 20 August 2007. Include pictures too where possible.

The public enquiry continues about the pylon lines. We have been asked to sign a way leave concerning the shifting of one pylon line, as well as a smaller line, and a change in a link. If we sign, then we will be paid an annual sum, regardless of whether the new pylon line goes through or not. PJ has spoken to Colin Liddell about the matter. CL says that as long as we send a letter that makes clear that we do not support the new pylon line, then it would be all right for us to sign the way leave. CL has wording for such a letter. All agreed that as long as the way leave can in no way be construed as supporting the new pylon line, then we should sign. **PJ will seek approval from CL.**

BH has had a meeting with Ian Wotherspoon, who is concerned about the bracken on DC. IW said that high bracken could help to increase the tick population, which has been very high this year. BH explained that we have sprayed the bracken. IW is having a person from the Game Conservancy to meet with him and invited the Trustees to join him, if we wished. It was agreed that someone from the committee would certainly go to the meeting. A discussion then followed about tick problems and what relationship if any they have to bracken. **TF will look into this matter from the point of view of a veterinarian.**

8. Future Meetings The next meeting will be held on **Tuesday 27 November 2007** at 7:15 p.m. at the home of GE.

The meeting ended at 9:25 p.m.