

MINUTES OF MEETING OF HPCLT TRUSTEES ON MARCH 17TH AT 1915 HRS AT STILLNESS, WEEM

Present: Clare Thomas (CT), chairing the meeting, Richard Paul (RP), Margaret Jarvis (MJ), Andy Pointer (AP), Ben Henderson (BH)(not to be confused with Bill Hoare, ex-trustee!), Tim Fison (TF), Richard Legate (RL).

Apologies: June Riddell (JR), Tricia Waite (TW), Linda Cracknell (LC), James Shorthouse (JS).

Welcome to new trustees: CT warmly welcomed all the new trustees and expressed appreciation for their 'new blood'! She drew their attention to the Notes for Charities.

Approval of minutes of previous meeting (11/1/11): approval proposed by RP and seconded by CT.

Matters arising:

- 1 A new table will be bought soon to replace the one stolen (Action MJ). David Cox (DC) has kindly agreed to anchor it down for us although RL noted that one had been taken from Kinloch Rannoch despite this measure having been taken!
- 2 After conferring with Julie Gardiner (JG) and Bill Hoare, it seems that a complete new application is not necessary. Only certain areas need doing such as the south wall and railing. CT suggests that wiping with a damp cloth is the only preparation needed. There is enough left from last year to do this.
- 3 Improvement of main access route: the previous contractor has not replied so Paul Jarvis (PJ) contacted another named Tom Smeaton who is based in Kinloch Rannoch. PJ and TF had a site meeting with him on March 10th and he promised to submit a quote, in the knowledge that we needed the work completing by April 20th (the date of the first visit by Pitlochry High School (PHS) students. As of 18/3, no quote has been received (MJ to chase up on this).
- 4 Risk Assessment: BH has gone through the comprehensive document produced by Lynnette Borradaile and has concluded that the only amendment needed is a reference to visits in the dark. The final version must be shown to all visiting group leaders while at the same time making it quite clear that HPCLT expects each visiting organisation to do its own RA too.
- 5 Preparation of enclosure for forestry nursery: MJ reported that DC and his assistant, Nick Green, have kindly rotavated the whole area on a voluntary basis. They waived their fee because they knew that children were going to be involved! JG would like it now to be turned over to remove as much nettle root as possible (action all trustees!) so that it can be sprayed with Round Up (glyphosate) when green shoots appear. Tree seeds and seedlings cannot be planted till after the spraying.
- 6 Display boards: no progress to report
- 7 AGM: this took place despite the snow as planned on March 12th and there was reasonable attendance and a good talk by Victor Clements of Scottish Native Woods.
- 8 Routes for walks: TW and LC have expressed interest in taking this forward.

Election of new Chairperson: Richard Paul was unanimously proposed and, to everyone's joy, graciously accepted! AP proposed a vote of sincere thanks to PJ and JG for all their hard work on behalf of HPCLT. Both have stated they wish to continue to be involved.

Re-organisation of groups:

Woodlands and Woodland Grant Scheme (WGS): PJ, JG and TF. A meeting with Christine Stark (CS) from the Forestry Commission took place on March 15th at the Weem Hotel because snow made a site visit impossible. JG described the successive plantings from our perspective and then CS stated that we need to do some planting in the natural regeneration area along the Allt Mor and also in the wet places on the Schiehallion side if we are to meet the requirements for claiming the next tranche of the grants. FC will arrange an inspection in July or August with this in mind. JG explained that willow and alder saplings have already been ordered and that our own tree nursery will soon be producing stock for planting out. CS was concerned about the deer damage and felt strongly that we should upgrade the fence line separating out land from the FC on the north side. She requested a report on the history of our attempts at deer control.

Membership and Publicity: no names were specifically assigned to this aspect! Three suggestions were made at the AGM to increase membership: 1 significantly reduce the subscription 2 extend free membership to all members of the community 3 introduce life membership on favourable terms. AP also suggested that a donation box should be placed at the car park (MJ will investigate possible secure systems). RL drew attention to the Rannoch and Tummel Tourist Association and suggested we cross link our websites. HPCLT happy to do this and BH will propose this at the next RTTA meeting.

Education: RP and CT. RP reminded us that the next visits from PHS will be on April 20 and 27. On each occasion, two groups of 18 S1 and S2 students will be visiting DC under the guidance of Gary Leck (biology dept.) and Linda Watson (deputy head teacher) plus four other members of staff. They will expect to do various tasks which will count towards their John Muir awards. Possible tasks are: forking and raking the enclosure (the school will supply forks), planting out willow cuttings (JG to organise), apply Butinox to parts of the Visitor Hut, erect a stile above Whitebridge, planting aspen saplings (to be supplied by VC as part of SNW's aspen programme). RP spoke about his My Scotland website initiative, which is aimed at encouraging young people to write down their feelings about Scotland. For example, PHS students might describe their visit to DC and this fits well with the current oral history and local picture scheme. RP urged all trustees to help start the ball rolling by writing a couple of paragraphs each to seed the website.

Maintenance and Fencing: TW, BH and TF. In her absence, it was noted eagerly that TW has expertise in dry stone dyking and is keen to contribute this. It was suggested that GPS should be used to locate defects in the fencing. TF will obtain the HPCLT instrument from Bill Hoare and MJ has one to lend.

Visitor Access: no specific trustees assigned to this. RP noted that Duke of Edinburgh students (presumably at PHS) might use a route across DC from the car park over to Schiehallion. It was felt that marking this out would detract from the challenge which should involve map reading and initiative. TF will help RP in deciding possible routes.

Natural and Cultural Heritage: CT. This embraces the archive of publications about DC and species lists. The meeting discussed where these documents should be kept and the consensus was that shelving should be erected in the Visitor Hut (VH), either in what is now the tool room or at the back wall of the viewing room. BH mentioned that B and Q sell free standing plastic shelving which might be suitable (TF and BH to follow up). CT drew our attention to the plane table drawings of shielings and other archaeological features which she has produced. She needs access to an A3 or A2 scanner to reproduce them at an appropriate size. She will try to arrange this through the Royal Commission for Historic Monuments in Scotland or P and K Council but, failing that, will take photographs. Meanwhile the current copies can be pinned up in the VH.

Observational and Educational Facility: TF proposed that this name was no longer necessary and would more easily and less pretentiously be known as the Visitor Hut or Shed. This was unanimously agreed and the rather puzzling sign OEF may be removed. It was noted that recurring leaks appear around the windows on the south and west sides of the viewing part. BH and AP will investigate. JG has replaced the rotten strip on the verandah and the Butinox preservative will be touched up as necessary (see above), perhaps by PHS students. BH will collect two concrete paving slabs from Duireaskin to place in front of the step.

Keltneyburn Hydro Scheme: PJ will continue as the point of contact. There was nothing to report except that periods of low flow in the summer and prolonged freezing more recently have reduced the output of electricity. The annual rental fee of £3000 has been paid to HPCLT.

Pylon Line: Bill Hoare has requested that someone else takes over as the point of contact for SSE and that he hands over the documentation. TF will ask John Taylor, who lives at Tomphubil and has taken an interest in HPCLT, if he would like to do this and the papers can be kept in the VH.

Treasurer's Report: this will be attached separately to the minutes.

AOB: BH noted that foxes are present on DC and wanted to know whether he was expected to be taking any action to control of them. It was unanimously agreed that we do not wish to do this, unless a very good reason arises. MJ will seek advice from Wendy Mattingley vis a vis ground nesting birds. Bill Hoare has advised that the Coshieville to Glengoulandie road will be closed during long working hours each day from late July to September for repair to the landslip section. RL requested that new trustees be shown round the land: such a guided walk should be arranged by the 'old' trustees asap (action TF, AP, RP, BH). AP requested information on the peat track above Whitebridge. CT thinks it goes back to peat cutting in the 18th century whereas the Bridle (or Bridal!) path along the Allt Mor was used to access shielings in Glen Mor: there is a record of this happening in 1769 when folk from Drummond Hill were going up there. Retrospectively, the minuter thanks CT for her hospitality and Tony for his forbearance!

Date of next meeting: 13/5/11 in the VH at 1915 hrs.