

# Highland Perthshire Communities Land Trust

**Minutes of Meeting of Trustees held on Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> May 2005, at Pitully, Dull at 7.15 p.m.**

**Present:** Phillip Campbell, Gordon Evans, Tim Fison, Julie Gardiner, Bill Hoare, Marjorie Keddie, Paul Jarvis (Chairman), Hamish Nicholson, Andrew Pointer, Innes Smith, Clare Thomas, Margaret Jarvis (Minutes Secretary).

1. **Apologies:** Lynnette Borradaile
2. **Welcome to new Trustees:** PJ welcomed the three new Trustees and hoped that they would enjoy their role.
3. **Minutes of previous meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2005**  
Approved.  
**Matters arising:**
  - a. BH will tell the Rector of Breadalbane Academy that the G8 tree planting on Dun Coillich will not now take place. **ACTION BH.** IS has already told the Rector of Pitlochry High School. PJ made the point that we should try to build on the goodwill generated in these schools by the possibility of this project.
  - b. JG pointed out that the time has come for another Newsletter. **ACTION JG**
  - c. IS said that information about the deer numbers in the areas surrounding Dun Coillich is necessary and that a Deer Management Plan should be formulated. He suggested that the Deer Commission might be asked to help with this. The Deer Commission count has just finished. In answer to a question, IS estimated that about 60 to 70 deer per year had been killed on Dun Coillich. PJ will approach the Deer Commission formally by writing to Andrew Raven, pointing out the financial losses which would result from deer incursions preventing successful tree establishment.  
**ACTION PJ**
4. **Election of chairman:** it became apparent that there was no-one prepared to take over this role and there were suggestions that it might be devolved. The outcome was that PJ would continue until September and that IS, as Vice-Chairman, would lead an attempt to find a solution by then. PJ was thanked for all the effort that he had put in during his three years in office.
5. **Election of Minutes Secretary:** MJ was very willing to stand down but was re-elected. Proposed by GE, seconded by JG.
6. **Report on AGM:** It was agreed that PJ should write to thank the Trustees who had retired, RA, MF and RH. PJ has already sent an enthusiastic thank-you letter to Sir John Lister-Kaye. Sir John had declined the offer of a fee and travel expenses.  
The attendance had been disappointingly small. IS thought that Saturday afternoon was not a good time and JG thought that Aberfeldy would be a better venue. TF asked if other community organisations had received an invitation. They had not, but BH pointed out that publicity had been very thorough. The format was generally approved. PJ liked the arrangement by which individual Trustees had spoken about what they had done but IS thought that this might not have worked so well if there had been a lot of public criticism. It was considered important to provide a forum for airing views, especially since there has been some 'sniping' by email to individual Trustees. JG felt strongly that any criticisms should come to the Board of Trustees as a whole. GE pointed out that concerns could have been raised at the AGM. IS felt that it is important that all views are *seen* to be taken into account.  
JG pointed out that Dun Coillich was never intended to be the only project of the H P Communities Land Trust; we should remain aware of other possibilities. AP thought it imperative to set aside some land for possible housing, even though the conservationist view might be against this. IS suggested that a housing sub-group could take this forward. **To be on the next agenda.**  
PC asked about filling the gaps left by the Trustees who had now retired. RH's role in managing publicity was especially appreciated. IS suggested sharing the responsibility for publicity among several people, resulting in a broader approach in future. BH clarified the aim of publicity: both to provide information

and to seek feed-back. GE asked how we could reach the people in holiday homes and over Scotland as a whole; by a flyer inserted in the NTS magazine, for example? It was pointed out that RH's article in the Scots magazine will have had a geographically wide audience. PJ suggested a sub-committee to take this forward: PC offered to be involved with this. IS and JG will produce something for the June issue of 'Comment' (dead line is end of May) **ACTION IS and JG. The broader issue to be an item on the next agenda.**

## 7. Woodland Grant Scheme.

**Plants:** JG reported that she had ordered trees for the 80 hectares now mounded, at a rate of 1500 per hectare, from three companies, two of which have already confirmed the order. She listed the species. She has a reliable contact interested in tendering for the planting. Some of the companies had asked if we wanted to collect some of the seed to be grown-on for future supplies of tree seedlings. BH will take up with the rector CT's suggestion that Land-Based Studies at Breadalbane Academy might have a long-term interest in this as a project. **ACTION BH**

**Fences:** BH enquired whether anyone had seen where deer might get under the boundary fence: no-one had. IS added that the stalkers had told him that deer disappeared under the fence on the Allt Mor side and had also warned that they could jump in from the east. In answer to a question by TF, BH said that no fencing contractor, to check and maintain the fence, had yet been contacted. It was agreed that this should be done soon. IS warned that very strong guidance to the contractor would be necessary. The areas where there would be pressure from deer and sheep must be targeted; deer incursion will have a major effect on cash flow. IS estimated that 75% of the fence is not under threat because it is not on a deer route. BH described the vulnerable places. Gates must not be left open and dog-walkers are guilty of doing this JG added that the contractors digging out the scrapes had caused some damage to the fence close to the sawmill. BH emphasised that such problems must be reported so that they can be dealt with immediately. CT mentioned weaknesses along the road side fences. BH noted that Sandy McAdam had offered to repair the fence along his boundary, if HPCLT supply the materials. BH will contact him and possible contractors for longer term inspection and maintenance. JG will check the amount of WGS money that we could allocate for fencing. **ACTION BH, JG.**

PJ reported that the deer gate in the north fence has been delivered to the site and will shortly be erected, together with the three planned kissing gates. Hamish Murray is very apologetic about the delay.

**Bracken:** a wide-ranging discussion about bracken control concluded that there would be no chemical control of bracken this year, but that it is urgent now to look at the situation on the ground. GE pointed out that about £17,000 is at stake for the areas mapped for natural regeneration. IS and JG will assess the action needed on the RSS area: a strimmer or a 'topper', using a vehicle, might be needed. **ACTION JG and IS.** CT would want to check with Historic Scotland about the use of a vehicle on an area with cultivation rigs. BH suggested that electric fencing might give added protection to small areas of natural regeneration. **VISITS for all to look at regeneration in the bracken areas were arranged for Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> May and Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> May; meet at 7.00 p.m. at Glengoulandie.** After this, together with information available on websites, an informed decision can be made about future action. **ACTION ALL**

8. **Rural Stewardship Scheme:** An appropriate area has now been ploughed and harrowed, by Kenny Dewar, and may now have been sown with a mixture of 75% oats, quinoa, Jacobs ladder, mustard, linseed, peas and beans. This must not be grazed: the electric fence may therefore need to be moved and IS asked all to look out for stags attracted to the area, especially in the evening. **ACTION ALL**
9. **Car Park Funding: report re PKCT:** Robbie Gordon, Perth and Kinross Countryside Trust had been very helpful; he had emphasised the need to make multiple applications, each for a proportion of the total cost. PJ was cautiously optimistic that the Trust would give 25% of the cost; their next meeting is on 3<sup>rd</sup> June. Robbie Gordon had suggested other sources, such as 'quarry' funding or 'Leader plus' and PJ is following these up. **ACTION PJ**

## 10. Any other business:

**Keltneyburn Hydro Scheme;** PJ summarised the present situation, particularly for the benefit of the new Trustees. After preliminary direct discussions with the two principal directors of KBH Ltd (Jimmy Stewart and Alisdair Henderson), and their consultant hydrologist, a sub-group comprising PJ, AP and BH has over the past 18 months met five times, when available, with the other potential landlords in the offices of

J&H Mitchell under the chairmanship of Colin Liddell to discuss the terms of ‘offer’ and ‘contract’ documents. Based on their reports over this period of negotiations, and discussions in the present forum, the Board of Trustees, through the Chair, has twice given conditional written support to the Directors of the Scheme to enable KBH to continue with a ‘Scoping Study’ and ‘Environmental Statement’, etc. Throughout this process, the sub-group has consistently emphasised to the other four potential landlords, individual or family property owners, that we were, in contrast to themselves, ‘representatives’ for the Trust, and that the approval of the Trust would be required for an agreement. It is now clear that our Articles require the approval of 75% of the Members to lease any part of the property.

When first considered prior to the AGM, we had suggested a coupled EGM and postal ballot of Members. PJ had recently discussed this in some detail with Colin Liddell, and circulated a draft letter to members and a draft ballot form prepared by CL for discussion. Such documents would be mailed to Members with a stamped addressed envelope, at least 21 clear days before the proposed EGM.

These drafts led to substantial discussion regarding procedure, timing and formulation of the documents. This led to a number of well-defined questions that PJ would take up with CL. IS queried whether ‘leasing’ was a legal requirement. GE wondered if we would have any financial liability if we withdrew at this stage. What form should the documents take? Should there be more than one resolution? Did we need an EGM as well as a postal ballot, because with summer coming, a meeting could not be held for some time, and KBH is wishing to press ahead? PJ will discuss all these points with Colin Liddell at 9.30 a.m. on 18<sup>th</sup> May, as already arranged, and will report back to Trustees immediately. **ACTION PJ. (Done – report sent by e-mail; comments awaited!)**

**Foxes:** BH had been asked by the stockman and the keeper on Alec Murray’s land, bordering Dun Coillich, for permission to shoot foxes, on one occasion, on Dun Coillich. The foxes were said to be attacking lambs, two or three per day, across the road. IS said that these figures are not significant (10 to 12 might be) nor is it possible to assign the deaths to foxes. The decision to refuse permission was unanimous.

**Botanical surveys:** further surveys are now desirable. JG will email dates. **ACTION JG**

**Website:** BH asked that The Membership Form on the website be updated. AP agreed to do this. **ACTION AP.** (The updated Membership form available at the AGM is also attached with these Minutes.)

**Date and place of next meeting:** Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> July, provisionally at Cluain, Tomnacroich, Fortingall.