

Highland Perthshire Communities Land Trust
Scottish Charity Number: SC032801

**Minutes of Trustees' Meeting held at Laurenbank, Aberfeldy
on Monday 19th September, 2016 at 7.30 pm.**

Present: Richard Paul (chairman), Margaret Jarvis (minutes), Jim Anderson, Tim Fison, Heather Hamilton, Bill Hoare, Andy Pointer, Trish Waite, Andy Walker.

Apologies: Willie McGhee, Richard Rees, Gordon Stronach, Ian Wilkinson

Minutes 25th July: approved after two minor additions (proposed BH, seconded JA)

Matters arising: none

Financial update by IW: copies of up-to-date accounts were provided by IW, who was absent. The current account balance is £4183; reserve account £2712. Recent expenses were £528 for repairs to the hut. The comment was made that this should be deducted from the reserve (OEF) account. The project account stands at £38664 of which £5000 was received from the Robertson Trust and £937 paid to the Project Officer.

Capitalisation of SSE wayleave is not yet forthcoming and BH will seek Colin Liddell's legal assistance. About £6000 will come from this and about £11,000 from Green Highland. This is for 18 months as a result of change of owner with a different financial year.

Project officer's report: Volunteer days have taken place every Tuesday, with 4 to 6 persons coming. Bracken around newly-planted trees has been targeted; most of the fenceline has been walked and strengthened where needed. It is mostly in good order. BH suggested a sheep-exit funnel because of occasional sheep ingress. Tree tubes, mainly in the in-bye area, have been removed and stacks and ties checked.

HH reported that S1 pupils from Pitlochry High School will be tree-planting on 17th March.

On 25th October a film will be made of tree-planting by young people. As many Trustees as possible were asked to come. ACTION ALL

A youth training programme for three participants for 20 weeks is up and running. The next one will begin in February.

The problem of the hut-to-Whitebridge track was raised. There are holes resulting from mounding which are a hazard.

HH was formally thanked for her achievements.

Forestry Inspection: WMcG would like to encourage an inspection to begin via the forestry track. He thinks we should request the second tranche of funding; BH considers that we should be prepared to accept a lesser amount. The Trustees present did not object to going for a second tranche.

Heart of Scotland Forestry Project: A meeting was organised by Liz Auty, of John Muir Trust. The first meeting was attended by Mike Daniels (JMT), Stuart Brooks (JMT), Peter Fullerton (FC), Helen Taylor, SNH surveyor of SSSIs, Robert de Sales La Terriere, son of the owner of Dunalastair estate, Jez Robinson, owner of the Kynachan estate, Finlay Macintyre (factor of the Dunalastair estate), and RP. This first meeting suggested the joint use of a drone.

A second meeting was attended by Liz Auty, Mike Daniels, Jez Robinson, Peter Fullerton, Andrew Campbell (Woodland Trust) and three representatives of HPCLT, namely Willie McGhee, Heather Hamilton and Trish Waite. The aim was to plant trees on the land. The joint planting will require ca £500,000 to be raised. DC would aim at 10 ha of fenced planting. A draft costing for the funds needed was mapped out. It was agreed that WMcG, HH and TW would represent HPCLT at future meetings of 'The Heart of Scotland Project'.

Aberfeldy Land Acquisition Update: Legalities should be completed by early/mid November. Application for £500 towards HPCLT legal costs has been submitted to Aberfeldy Community Council committee dealing with SSE Micro Grants, decision due early October. The donors have asked if a sign reflecting the gift could be erected. Trustees agreed, and tasked BH, and RP in his absence, to agree the wording and style with the

donors' representative. BH asked that Trustees should consider the next moves with residents, especially those in Burns Brae, and collate any potential costs so that a single bid for funding could be made for a larger SSE Grant; this might include seats, notice board(s) etc.

Bracken Harvesting: BH attended a very popular demonstration of bracken harvesting kit at Atholl Estates. Neat equipment, not good in its present state on rocky land, and not appropriate for DC unless a contractor locally sets up to harvest bracken as a service to then turn it into bio-ethanol or multi-fuel boiler pellets.

DC Hydro Scheme: Green Highland Renewables(GHR) have submitted a proposed 'Variation to HPCLT Lease' to J&H Mitchell. Within the lease, most proposals reflect the different structure of GHR. Clarification is needed on their claim that their survey suggests that Registered plans do not match what is on the ground. Also, GHR seem to have misunderstood what our lease refers to as an Access Route as GHR seem to believe that is a vehicular route. Points have been put to Colin Liddell. Within the GHR proposal there is no reference to any suggestion of relocation of weir upstream and therefore out of HPCLT land. This has been referred to elsewhere. Despite claims to the contrary, Trustees felt such a move would disadvantage HPCLT now and/or in future. Close monitoring and analysis is essential if that is to be avoided.

Input from Trustees:

TW had experienced a trail bike event at Camserney. Despite initial reservations she suggested that such an event, which was concerned with skill, not speed, did very little damage and left no litter, could be a way of making the signed paths on DC more obvious. Trustees agreed that she should explore this idea with Rob Patterson of the Perth district Motorcycle Club. The nesting season, March to July, would be avoided. ACTION TW

TW, assisted by GS, had begun construction of a lean-to storage unit in the car park. MJ will donate £100, given to her to pass to a local charity, to enable necessary materials to be purchased.

JA reported that the Kenmore Primary school head is keen to be involved in DC. He emphasised that a school's letter to pupils is an excellent way to spread information.

BH had received a copy of the project of a sixth-year pupil. Heather McDade, on the effect of fences on tree regeneration along the Allt Mor on DC and Schiehallion.

BH circulated a map of the track of a hen harrier fledged on DC.

BH will investigate the free on-line fundraising mentioned in an email he received. ACTION BH

MJ suggested that DC might take part in the ICONIC project to grow endangered conifers in areas with public access. However, Trustees were not in favour of having non-native species on DC.

RP will contact Liz Auty about sourcing oak signs for posts from Alec Finlay ACTION RP

TF suggested a barbecue at the end of October. ACTION HH and TF

TF reported that two expert mycologists, fungal recorders in Kent and Hereford, had visited DC.

They had disapproved of the presence of a non-native willow and recommended its removal and replacement with native goat willow, eared willow or grey willow.

The meeting closed at 9.30 pm with thanks to BH for his hospitality

Date of next meeting:

Thursday 24th November at 7.30 pm at Duireaskin, Aberfeldy