

Highland Perthshire Communities Land Trust

Minutes of Meeting of Trustees held on Wednesday, 22nd February 2006, at Duireaskin, Aberfeldy, at 7.15 p.m.

Present: Lynnette Borradaile, Philip Campbell (Minutes Secretary), Tim Fison, Julie Gardiner, Paul Jarvis (Chairman), Hamish Nicholson, Andrew Pointer, Clare Thomas,

1) Apologies: Gordon Evans, Bill Hoare, Marjorie Keddie, Innes Smith.

1. The first agenda item was a short talk by Alan Ross, for 3 months the planting contractor, about progress on the tree planting, its problems and status.
(For full details see Appendix 1: 2 Key points ff:)
 - That despite traditional winter weather, the planting is progressing well.
 - That, the main problem, however, is the deer and three or four determined goats ; this needs to be addressed immediately as goats in particular pull trees out and when saplings burgeon in spring they will provide a most satisfying deer / goat meal!

Action: JG, Information immediately for Innes / stalkers: and later for discussion with the woodland and access /fencing subcommittee.

2. Minutes of previous meeting on 7th Dec. 2005: approved.

3. Matters arising from more detailed discussion of Dec 7th minutes :

Nothing further to report on:

- Girders for the bridge: bracken: car park. PJ.

But:

- The Community Woodlands Association newsletter had been e-mailed, PJ
- The photo shoot of tree-planting had been successful and in Comment. PC
- The new subcommittee to report back, individually (*see below*).
- The new "Welcome Signs" had finally been made; were displayed at the meeting; are to be erected on Saturday 25th Feb ; the meeting formally thanked PC.
- The website still needs all suitable photographs (as requested often before) to AP a.s.a.p.
- And the question of deer already discussed above and in Appendix 1.

Under "Any Other Business": PJ mentioned insurance: saying that we are covered already but will be taking out additional cover for fire now we have planted significant numbers of new trees.

4. Arrangements for the AGM

To be held on the 30th March at 7:30 p.m. in the Faragon Hall, Taybridge Road, Aberfeldy (the new church centre there is said to be "comfortable, reasonably priced at £5 per hour, with parking on site and down the street").

The principal speaker is to be Colin Liddell, legal adviser, talking on "The Community Right to Buy". Discussion then followed about:

- Timing of the agenda (to be redrafted and circulated); **Action PJ**
- Attendance, contacting those who might attend/be interested (The Griffin Wind-farm Group especially) : **Action / JG**. For contact with Griffin and **All trustees**.
- Material for programme (Trustees' Report and Financial Statement) to be submitted a.s.a.p. for distribution to members by 6th March: **Action (PJ, Tim Ambrose)**
- PJ requested all Subcommittees to submit five to ten lines on their work for Trustees Report a.s.a.p. **Action: all subcommittee chairs**.
- **Publicity: Action, PJ** to send his final Agenda a.s.a.p. to **PC** who will produce poster for e-mail distribution to all Trustees to circulate in their own locality.

AGM fundraising /organisation:

Thanks were expressed again to Malcolm Appleby for kindly donating special silver brooches for the membership raffles in previous years. It was hoped we could ask him for a repeat prize for a similar raffle to be run as last year's. **Action: PJ to speak to MA**.

The membership list also has to be clarified and stickers from it made. **Action: AP? JG to speak to GE** who kindly did this in previous years and still has the membership spreadsheet. Other Publicity: such as stuffing envelopes, organising reports etc: **Action: PJ kindly volunteered himself and MJ, receiving any other additional help from Trustees** with gratitude.

Trustees, resignations and rotations:

The chairman reported that due to having completed their three year duty, two Trustees had now to stand down (BH and HN), and three others were likely to resign as from the AGM, for personal reasons, (LB,GE and MK). **PJ to confirm**. It was reported that the Treasurer, Beryl Coope, will also stand down and it was noted that MJ has previously offered to take over and the offer been accepted.

A short discussion ensued in which those present: first expressed their thanks for work done by the retiring/resigning Trustees; secondly, asked those resigning to take more time to consider as we are reluctant to lose such a number of experienced people; thirdly, all Trustees were exhorted to seek out other suitable new Trustees, who should be firmly identified as soon as possible; and fourthly, the Trustees were happy to hear that BH had agreed to stand again. He will be proposed by PJ and seconded by AP. This would leave five Trustee vacancies, to maintain our complement of 12. There was also agreement that the new Treasurer should also be a Trustee.

Nomination forms for Trustees must be lodged with CL at J & H. Mitchell (the Company Secretary) seven clear days before the AGM. Forms are available from PJ.

Subcommittees' Reports:

(Being the start of this new system, if suitable, subcommittees submitted a paper which has been attached as an appendix to these minutes -- consequently the following only highlights major points.)

Strategic Planning Subcommittee:

In the chairman's absence (BH). PJ reported their work was "ongoing" and would be reported back at a later date.

Administration and Finance Subcommittee:

In the chairman's absence (GE) -- as well as the resignation of the Treasurer (BC) -- it was agreed this group needed new personnel urgently (see Trustees above).

Maintenance, Fencing and RSS Subcommittee:

In the chairman's absence (BH), JG reported that: they had decided to continue RSS work next year in the same manner as this: that RSS money should be "ring fenced": that they would be sowing the same crop next year as last year -- and because it has been very successful, PJ reported seeing hosts of birds there even this morning! The subcommittee will report back with ideas for improving the scrapes shortly. The exact costing for this subcommittee is still uncertain with such variables as, for instance, fencing and the scrapes. The chairman thanked the group for their work and requested a formal document, with whatever costings are possible.

Woodlands and W. G. S. Subcommittee:

JG reported that PJ had applied for WGS preliminary payments: that otherwise the ongoing work had been covered well by the earlier talk with Alan Ross -- see Appendix 1: she confirmed that planting was proceeding almost as planned, given the frozen weather: but re-emphasised the importance of the deer and goats problem: (see report, Appendix 2.)

Natural and Cultural Heritage and Archive Subcommittee:

HN reported that the subcommittee was establishing the exact nature of materials to be archived, how and where to store them. He also said they would be proposing a new survey of pollen studied through peat cores: (see report, appendix 3.)

Access Subcommittee

As chairman, AP reported: the car park project was still awaiting funding (Action PJ still chasing): the group proposed creating a map of "existing tracks" on the hill. The idea was welcomed and CT offered her archaeological survey mapping as useful base material; JG added that a tracks map would be helpful as a guide for the mounding plans next year. (AP also regretted having to resign as chairman -- pressure of business -- **Action: volunteers requested.**)

Publicity Subcommittee

PC submitted a short paper (appendix 4). Trustees pointed out available publicity sources such as "Heartland FM." radio, the Land Reform web site, and Perth Museum. It was further agreed that it is desirable that all subcommittees have more than just one member and that PC should ask one of the new Trustees, when appointed, to join him.

Website Subcommittee

AP said the web site would be updated for the AGM, with the reports and audit: he appealed again for all suitable new photographs, of birds, crops, events, planting, in fact all good works

Education Subcommittee

TF. asked CT to present their Action document (Appendix 5): CT also highlighted the need for a the "child protection policy", as much for the protection from the law of Trustees as for children: she further reported successful contact with Breadalbane Academy, and with Alec Towns who had attended a subcommittee meeting and walked the hill with a view to using it as a resource for the schools "Land-Based Studies Group". PC reported that AT is to take the first such group onto the hill this Monday (27th February). **Action: TF to meet and greet the school group and arrange** access for their vehicle across F.C. land: they will bring their own protective clothing, tools / spades etc and be accompanied by Alec Towns. TF also reported contact with Philip Russell of the Geography Department at Breadalbane Academy. CT further reported back on the planting visit by Kenmore Primary School three weeks ago; the day had been fair and the visit very successful: LB had planned a fun ..

Education subcommittee continued.....

..... educational game about tree growth and all left enthusiastic to continue the contact! Trustees expressed a thanks to all concerned.

TF explained that his bid for Finance to cover some initial costs including first aid, some kind of hill shelter for workers (a Kissoo), plus transport and secretarial costs total is around £300. LB was also thanked for volunteering to continue her "Curriculum Audit" to ensure the best match between the activities available at Dun Coillich and the school curricula in as many relevant subjects as possible.

Keltneyburn Hydro Scheme:

PJ reported that there was some delay, because of concerns by SNH about the impact of the outflow on salmon spawning.

Wildlife Observation Facility Group:

In the absence of WH, PJ reported that funds for the wildlife hide etc had now exceeded £5,000 including gift aid.

6.) Any Other Business.

PC said that the two "Dun Coillich Welcome" signs are to be erected on Saturday the 25th February: TF, HN and PJ kindly offered to assist.

JG also mentioned the prospect of a "Carbon Audit" and will be making contacts.

7.) Arrangements for future meetings.

As the new subcommittees have now started, it was agreed all Trustees' meetings should be held quarterly as planned. So the chairman, PJ, said he would scan the diary and e-mail all Trustees suggesting a date around 3 months hence -- but do not forget all the preparations needed for the AGM on March the 30th meanwhile!

Philip Campbell. (HPCLT Minutes Secretary)

Appendix 1: Talk by Alan Ross, Forester/Planter on Dun Coillich.

Alan gave a useful 15 minute talk about the work he has been doing over the past three months of which the main points were that:

"the ground had been frozen for more days than not": nevertheless "a fair number of trees have been planted": "..... and the days are getting longer!": ". We do have up to five roe deer and four goats as serious problems -- the goats are mainly in the small area halfway along the south western fence bordering Schiehallion (the wet flush areas close to a small mound)": "-- the planted pines especially being eaten/pulled out": "also the fence with the Forestry Commission was the worst area for deer entry/small holes which roebuck especially squeeze under and through (one bit of the fence seems to have been cut and pulled back)". Goats are very determined entrants and can squeeze through the smallest of holes in the stock fence. Alan suggested that holes could be dug by the side of any fence which would in effect act as a trap. **He added that we do need to take urgent action as goats can be the most destructive of young trees.**

Action: JG, information immediately for Innes / stalkers and later for discussion with the Woodland and Access/fencing subcommittee.

(Appendices 2, 3, and 4 to follow)