

## MINUTES OF HPCLT COMMITTEE MEETING ON NOV 24th 2011 AT 1915 HRS AT WEEM HOTEL

Present: Richard Paul, Margaret Jarvis, Andy Pointer, Richard Legate, Ian Wilkinson, Linda Cracknell, Clare Thomas, Ben Henderson, with Paul Jarvis as observer and Tim and Sandra Winter pending their cooption as trustees.

Apologies: Trish Waite and June Riddell.

Minutes of last meeting: these were approved unanimously.

Matters arising: all covered in the agenda below.

Annual Subscription: numerous comments were made on this subject, ranging from the idea of opening membership free to everybody, via insisting only that application forms are filled, to reducing the fee to £5 and finally to the conclusion that the existing £10 should remain but be extended to whole households, and only £1 for individuals under 18 years.

Co-options: Tim and Sandra Winter were welcomed by all as co-optees with immediate effect. RP drew our attention to Tim's practical skills (see below) and Sandra's experience with local primary schools.

Ruth Atkinson has expressed her wish to become involved again with HPCLT and it was decided to effect her election at the AGM.

Robin Hull is unable to attend meetings but would like to receive the minutes.

AGM: suggestions as to possible speakers included Russell Coope, Dr Calum Macleod of the Centre for Mountain Studies, Perth College, Jamie Grant from Glen Lyon, Andy Wightman, Paul Ramsay. TF will approach Jamie Grant and Dr Macleod first.

The two possible dates will be March 17<sup>th</sup> or 24<sup>th</sup> and the venue Kinloch Rannoch Village Hall at 1400 hrs.

### Reports of Groups

Woodlands and WGS: RP informed the meeting that the Forestry Commission carried out an inspection of the plantings on Dun Coillich (it is not clear if this was done only on the first phase area or on all of them) during the summer. The independent surveyor found that the success rate is not up to the standard required for eligibility for claiming the next tranche of the grant. Chris Stark, Woodland Officer with the FC has summoned RP, TF and JG to a meeting on Dec 6<sup>th</sup> at ALGO, Perth. JG wondered whether the survey had been conducted on the basis of a 50 cm height criterion or on a live/dead basis: her point being that even if the saplings are deer nibbled, they can still be viable. She suggested that we do our own survey prior to the meeting. She pointed out that 25% of the grant value is outstanding and we have to weigh up the costs of buying and planting more trees against this loss. It is possible that FC will demand some pay-back. PJ wondered whether the survey had been done simply on a general impression or on a proper count. RP put the ball in JG's court as far as organising our own assessment prior to Dec 6<sup>th</sup>.

MJ presented the WGS accounts.

Membership Recruitment and Publicity: CT congratulated LC on her excellent articles about DC and wished our thanks and appreciation to be recorded. She suggested that LC should ask Rob Horn to put them in the Scotsman. LC hoped that more people might become involved in writing articles and asked for more ideas. She noted that the Editor of Comment had placed a limit of 500 words on her articles. RP reminded us of his My Scotland website.

Education: SW explained that she has worked with several primary schools and still has connection with them and would like to encourage visits to DC. She suggested that we produce a flyer or booklet to promote this. Moira Menzies, ex head teacher at Glen Lyon school, is skilled in IT and is prepared to help. It was noted that the Curriculum for Excellence links in well with outdoor sessions at DC. LC was keen that children should contribute to any flyer with their impressions of visits to DC.

RP described the successful recent double visit by Pitlochry High School (PHS) students to plant trees under the Jubilee Woods scheme. It had been an enjoyable occasion and their enthusiasm had not diminished by the diabolical weather. He will maintain the links with Garry Leck, Head of biology at PHS and Linda Watson, Head of Rural Skills.

SW felt that there should be a large book placed in the hut for visitors, especially children, to leave their impressions in word or pictures. MJ suggested a book with separate leaves would make this easier. SW offered to donate such a book.

RP reminded us that he has made contact with the Archaeology Dept at Stirling University. SW said that an ex-Rannoch School pupil is at Stirling and could help with fostering such a link. PJ was asked to follow up his links with Dundee and Edinburgh Universities.

The question of toilets was raised again. The most appropriate would seem to be a composting design but AP pointed (!) out the drawbacks in terms of cost and council hurdles. RL will enquire from Rob Coope how the FC construct and manage theirs. Meanwhile, TF will ask Sandy McAdam about using the Glengoulandie Caravan Park's facilities on permanent basis.

Maintenance and Fencing: RP called upon TW to present his ideas and design for a bridge over the Allt Glengoulandie. TW showed his excellent images of his proposed plans. He suggests we build a temporary structure of two A frames and cross slatting to convey materials across the burn for the main bridge. The latter will involve placing two of the telegraph poles currently lying on the carpark across the burn with their ends seated on gabions. He suggests using a tripod and pulley for manoeuvring the poles, precut to length, down to the site and over the burn. BH felt it would be simply to use manpower alone or with a borrowed landrover. RP had the temerity to raise the possibility of getting planning permission but this was unanimously voted down. AP found the perfect solution: this permanent bridge will remain permanently temporary!

Fencing: RP told the meeting that the whole length of fence from the Braes of Foss corner to the hydro intake has been satisfactorily upgraded by Sandy McAdam and his team. PJ felt that it is important we plan the next stage of the fencing programme and in his opinion the next priority is the existing fence along the march with the FC. RP felt that the line along the Glengoulandie road should be next. Discussion followed with the upshot that PJ and TF will seek the opinion of Rob Coope and the decision based on this, and the state of our finances, will be taken at the next

meeting. BH noted that there had been earlier worries about enabling badgers to cross this line but he felt that they could take care of themselves if necessary.

Visitor Access: AP said he has simply been unable to fulfil his promise at the last meeting to mark out the path to Whitebridge and along the peat track. PJ will take this on. CT would like her path to be extended over and round to the Bridal track and over to the JMT route too. TF made a plea for RP's discreet stakes to be deployed to replace the canes and plastic.

Natural and Cultural heritage: CT had nothing to report. RP had asked Ron Youngman about the possible rough legged buzzard sighting but this was considered more likely to have been a hovering common buzzard. He said that the slime objects seen by LC and others was most probably amphibian eggs discarded by predators. Nothing of particular interest had been reported over the summer.

Treasurer's report: MJ passed round the summary of accounts up to date. She confirmed that all payments had been made to Tom Smeaton and Sandy McAdam for their respective fencing contracts.

AOB: TF suggested that we mark the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of HPCLT founding by some suitably happy event.

Date of next meeting: Feb 2<sup>nd</sup> 2012 either at Weem Hotel or TW's home.

Meeting adjourned promptly at 2100hrs