

Highland Perthshire Communities Land Trust

Minutes of Meeting of Trustees held on Thursday 27 March 2008 at 7:15 p.m.
At Duireaskin

Present: Rob Coope, Tim Fison, Julie Gardiner, Robin Hull, Paul Jarvis (Chairman), Margaret Jarvis, Ann Partridge, Richard Paul.

1. Apologies: Gordon Evans, Bill Hoare, Clare Thomas.

2. Minutes of previous meeting of 11 February 2008: Approved. Proposed by TF, seconded by MJ.

3. Matters Arising: None.

4. Welcome to new trustee Richard Paul.

5. AGM: All agreed Aubrey Manning gave a brilliant talk, but disappointment was expressed about only 30 people attending. General view was that next year the AGM should be in the evening, but at the same time of year.

6. Reports from Groups:

a) Woodlands and WGS: Five hectares at the northern end of mounded area is not yet planted, but it will be done shortly. Also some beating-up will be done. The plants have been ordered from the Woodbury nursery (John Watkinson), including Scots pine, birch, willow, and rowan. Willie Shorthouse will be asked to do the planting.

JG reported that her work on the Woodland Survey of Scotland, which includes part of DC, will produce an accurate survey of the area, including aerial photos. Although we have photos already, these would probably be a better quality. Some copies might be available to us, but the ones linked directly to the map are more difficult to obtain. JG reported that in her survey so far there appears to be a 75 per cent survival rate of trees. Pines are the ones that have suffered the most loss. In one area where the bracken has come back, it will be sprayed again and replanted. Eventually, all the information about tree planting will be put on a spreadsheet so that we can see what is going on. Most suitable areas are now planted except about 20 hectares. No decision has yet been made as to whether to plant in this area. Regeneration is doing well, especially near the plantation where the Scots pine regeneration is impressive.

b) Visitor Access: PJ reported that two stiles are ready to be erected. After discussion, it was decided that one should be placed in the northern corner of DC, where some fence reconstruction would also be done. A decision about the location of the second stile will be taken at a later date, when a need becomes apparent. JG asked that a dog gate be included in the existing stile in the fence with Schiehallion and by any other additional stiles.

RH suggested that a notice to the public about DC should be placed by the car park. Visitors need to know what we are doing at DC and where they can find more information. Since some visitors appear to get no further than the car park, a simple sign with information might encourage them to explore DC. **RH will draft wording for a sign.**

BH (in writing) reported that the three power poles recently delivered by SSE will be used as a base for the footbridge. He will talk to an engineer shortly. An offer to help construct the bridge has been received. A discussion then ensued as to the exact location of the bridge.

Just upstream from the crab apple tree, where it will be high enough to avoid being washed away, seemed the best location. All agreed with this decision except TF who feels it will spoil a beautiful spot on DC.

The line of a path from the north corner of the car park down to the crab apple tree has been delineated by the recent planting of 41 blackthorn bushes. There are more to come (70 all told) but planting had to stop temporarily because of poor weather. It is hoped that this line of trees will eventually form a corridor to attract birds from the spinney on Wotherspoon land to the Goulandie burn. The blackthorn will also provide nesting cover for long-tailed tits, chaffinches and bullfinches, and produce winter feeding for thrushes. These trees have been given by the Farm and Wildlife Advisory Group, through Carol Littlewood, who has met with RH about this project. Other species of trees will be added to this hedge, including hazel not used last year. Eventually, a fence will be built along the line of trees to stop livestock from getting through. A fence around the car park had, in any case, been part of the original plan.

c) Observation and Education Facility (OEF): RH reported that work is suspended for the moment. RH, BH and Roger Wilson (architect) have met to discuss the windows and door and RW has now produced drawings. The west-facing window will be a traditional hide type of window, but the other window will be left as it is with the inclusion of a lower shelf for children to stand on. Now Burnside joiners will shortly complete the work on the windows and door. Another coat of paint, brown this time, to cover up the green, will soon be applied to the outside of the OEF.

Information sheets written by various Trustees for the OEF are now almost complete. They will be taken for formatting and lamination.

CSV Action Earth has donated £250 to the OEF project after RH submitted a proposal to them entitled "Enhance avian ecology of DC". The money will be used for more trees, nesting boxes, etc.

d) Maintenance and Fencing: There is still a problem with roe deer browsing, especially where trees were planted last year. TF and Hamish Murray have walked the boundary fence between the FC and DC, which was designed to keep out red deer and is not effective for roe. TF reported that there appear to be three options: replace the whole fence; make the fence roe proof; or carry on shooting. It was agreed that shooting should continue regardless of the state of the fence. PJ has asked Willie Shorthouse to examine the fence, which is 2.4 kilometres long, and to suggest whether additional wire and posts would solve the problem, and if so, how much the cost would be.

The sacrificial crop area of the RSS needs harrowing before seeding can take place. **JG and RC.**

e) Natural and Cultural Heritage: CT reported (in writing) that she is drawing up a catalogue of archival material, reports etc. pertaining to DC that she is aware of. (Copy tabled.) She requests that trustees supply her with information about other reports that exist. She needs to know author, title, date, and format. She will then add this information to the catalogue. She also needs copies of trustees' annual reports before 2004, and copies of the newsletter before the current one. **PJ and All.**

f) Keltneyburn Hydroscheme: Nothing new, but there may be a report next meeting.

g) Education Activities: TF reported that Jim Lynie, teacher at Kenmore Primary School, is very interested in visiting DC again this summer. Also, the Beavers of Aberfeldy want to come again, and a date of 24 June 2008 has been set for their visit. RP suggested that the John Muir Trust Award group at Pitlochry School might be interested in visiting DC. They could also help with some planting. They are a group of mainly 13-year olds. Also, the Rural Studies group at Pitlochry School, under the leadership of Linda Watson, who have been involved with the Breadalbane garden, might be interested in also visiting DC. In addition, students working in the Duke of Edinburgh award program at the Pitlochry School, who are already involved at Schiehallion, might be interested in coming over to DC. Bob Burrell is in charge of this group of 13 – 15-year olds. And, finally, there is a group of young bird watchers at Vane Farm (RSPB) who might be interested in bird watching at DC. JG mentioned that Scottish Native Woods has a new education officer who might be helpful in getting youngsters to DC. And RC suggested Mike Flynn (FC) who works with the Forest Schools, might also be useful to talk to. **TF, RP, and CT will pursue these contacts.**

h) Public Relations and Website: TF suggested that Alice Jarvis be given a formal vote of thanks for making the website so attractive and informative. All concurred that the website was now very good. A question was raised as to whether we could find out how many hits the site was getting. MJ said that a detailed analysis by Calinet, who host the web site, would be expensive. It was agreed that we would not pursue this route.

7. Membership: We have received £155 in cash and £160 in standing orders for membership renewals. A family membership category of £25 was suggested and will be considered at the next AGM.

8. Treasurer's Report:

Reserve account	£ 62,931.58
OEF account	7,805.91
Current account	5,848.24
AGM costs to date	178.20 (excl. hire of hall)
Subs received	165 (cash)
	160 (standing orders)

9. Any Other Business: PJ has received a letter from OSCAR informing us that everything sent out to the public by anyone connected to HPCLT must include **the full name of the charity** (i.e. Highland Perthshire Communities Land Trust), and the **Scottish Charity Number** (i.e. SC032801) on the document, as of **1 April 2008**. Thus, all articles to *Comment* and other newspapers and magazines, letters written on behalf of HPCLT, minutes sent to the website, etc. must contain our charity name and number.

10. Future Meetings: Monday 30 June 2008 7:15 p.m. at the OEF.

Monday 29 September 2008.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.