

Highland Perthshire Communities Land Trust

Minutes of Meeting of Trustees held on Monday 29 September 2008 at 7:15 p.m. at Cluain, Tomnacroich

Present: Bill Hoare (Chairman), Rob Coope, Gordon Evans, Tim Fison, Robin Hull, Margaret Jarvis, Paul Jarvis, Richard Paul.

Victor Clements, Scottish Native Woods, described their current project, which includes surveys of water voles on burns in the catchments of the upper Tay.

1. Apologies: Julie Gardiner, Ann Partridge, Clare Thomas

2. Minutes of previous meeting of 30 June 2008: Approved after some small corrections.

3. Matters Arising:

The Planning application for chalets at Glengoulandie is still pending . We need take no further action. The application will probably go to Planning Committee since there are several objections (HPCLT, Glen Lyon estate, GE etc). PJ had attended a meeting of Dull and Weem Community Council to explain the scheme and our objections to it. There was some discussion for about 20 minutes, but the Community Council members present showed only moderate interest and concern.

Carbon Offset: There has been a delay because of reorganisation of the structure of the Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Management.

BH will investigate possible book purchases with the money donated from the Perth Walking Group **ACTION BH**

4. Reports from Groups:

a. Woodlands and WGS: A claim has been put in for a further part of the WGS grant. PJ will follow up with Mike Strachan. **ACTION PJ**

PJ and JG will order trees for beating up next spring. Only a small number of species will be planted. **ACTION PJ, JG**

The necessary bracken spraying has been done by Willy Shorthouse.

PJ pointed out that the weeds around the smaller trees near the OEF needed clearing. RP suggested that this could be a suitable task for the Rural Studies pupils. **ACTION RP and PJ**

b) Visitor Access: There has been little further progress with the *footbridge*. BH has discussed the ends with Jimmy Stewart, who has offered help.

Stiles: PJ has looked at the northern end of the Schiehallion fence; the posts are sound internally. TF would like the untidy wooden structure removed. The stile has been prefabricated by PJ; it is heavy and RC offered to move the materials to the site. RP and PJ will coordinate and organise help from the Rural Studies pupils. **ACTION RP, PJ, RC**

c) Observation and Educational Facility (OEF): A sign prohibiting overnight camping will be deferred until spring, as will a handout to hotels about the OEF.

The larger trees to be planted by RH and family will be planted in October.

RH emphasised that the OEF needs to be more openly available. There have been some complaints about lack of access. BH will approach the residents of the cottages nearby to ask help in opening the building and filling the bird feeders when necessary. **ACTION BH.**

BH will organise a strong automatic closer for the door. **ACTION BH**

BH has investigated solar panels to charge a battery to operate a microscope light, for example. £150 would be approximate cost. Shutters for the windows may be needed. The need will be assessed this winter. BH reported that the roof had been repaired with a strip of grey roofing felt along the ridge which will benefit from a touch of paint to make it less visible. He has used tile adhesive to strengthen the tiles not properly sealed by the sun and will put in more tacks where needed. **ACTION BH.**

- d) Maintenance, Fencing, RSS:** TF had noticed a lot of deer activity on our side of the Schiehallion fence. Strainers were down in two places; one on the Schiehallion march, in the NW corner. The water-gate by White Bridge also needs some repair. PJ noted that there is a space under the fence in the Schiehallion path section. TF noted that some rylock is needed in the NE corner. (It was thought that the hydro-scheme activity will reduce the deer pressure in that area. This area must be deer-proof and there will be a new length of fence with a gate in a year or so, as the hydro-scheme develops). The McAdams will try to eliminate the 6 red deer seen on DC and will liaise with Ben Henderson regarding the roe deer.

MJ has applied for this year's RSS grant, for the same hectareage as before. She will send the RSS information to RC. **ACTION MJ**

BH had tried to get a cut of silage taken but without success this year. Sandy McAdam will put his Highland cattle in again to graze the area. BH will put up the electric fence. **ACTION BH**

- e) Natural and Cultural Heritage:** In CT's absence, this topic was left until the next meeting

- f) Keltneyburn Hydroscheme:** The scheme was approved last week. The intake will be on the far side of the burn from DC. Timing of the work is constrained by the bird breeding season. RC asked about payment. Colin Liddell has gone back to Galbraiths, Inverness, for revision of their previous rates 3 years ago. John McDiarmid will act as an intermediary between KBH and the six landowners. GE will join with BH and PJ to act for HPCLT.

- g) Education Activities** A group from Kinloch Rannoch primary school will be visiting. Date tbc.

RP would like the Rural Studies group of pupils to do some dyking, possibly around the gate seen from the OEF (this gate will need to be wider to allow access for machinery). This will be organised in the spring. **ACTION RP, BH.** There was some discussion about these pupils using mink 'traps' to detect presence of mink, and other animals and birds, by recording footprints in a layer of clay. These might be floated on the ponds. **ACTION RP**

- h) Public Relations and Website:** VC congratulated HPCLT on being up-to-date with the website. RP will have some video clips to add. **ACTION RP.**

5. Treasurer's Report:

Reserve account £62,500.45 (with about £400 interest to come on 30 Sept)

OEF account 5364.33

Current account 608.63

Spread sheets showing income and expenditure items since the beginning of the financial year had been circulated by email in advance of the meeting.

6. Any Other Business:

AGM. Alan Stewart, Police Wildlife Crime Officer, was suggested as the speaker and this was approved by all. RP will approach him. **ACTION RP**

BH will find out if the Molteno hall, Fortingall, would be available on Saturday 7th March 2008 (now provisionally booked)

Scottish and Southern Electricity had asked BH for permission to access and to take peat depth samples in connection with the possible new pylon line. BH had acquiesced and asked for the obtained data.. BH said that signing the wayleave would not now affect our position, since the enquiry was complete, and we would get more payment now than if the access was compulsory in the future. It was agreed to sign. **ACTION BH**

BH showed a map of the draft Core Path Network, including the DC path. This was now out for consultation and can be seen in the library. The path will need to be way-marked. When PJ and Andy Pointer had walked the route with the Perth and Kinross Countryside Trust, the Trust had said they would like the route to be of a standard such that it could be mown occasionally. It was generally agreed that this would not be practicable. The path will not function until the bridge is in place and for this we need a design and costing. There will be subsequent necessary changes to fences and walls. RP will be attending the next National Parks meeting and will report back. **ACTION RP**

7. Future Meetings: The next meeting will be held on **Monday 24 November 2008** at the home of PJ and MJ at 7:15 p.m.