



Cormonachan Woodlands Association
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Minutes

A Committee Meeting was held on Wednesday, 5th September 2018 at 4.30 pm at Cruach House, Carrick Castle, Argyll, PA24 8AF

1) Welcome & Apologies.

In attendance: Don Kamsley (DK); Douglas Locke (DL); Jimmy Sim (JS) & Cecilia Ferguson (CF). Apologies were received from Frances Walker (FW); David Thorpe (DT) & Sue Morris (SM) Forest Enterprise Scotland (FES).

2) Approval of the Minutes of the last Committee Meeting held on 18th July 2018 & any follow up reports (see italic notations in the last Minutes).

The minutes were approved, proposed by CF, seconded by JS and signed by DK.

3) Chairman's Report including Gala Day 2018.

DK advised that the Gala Day weather had been a wash out however the stand still took £179.50 in takings including three new members being enrolled on the day and £29.50 in cash being added to the Association's donation boxes. It was felt that the field would be a better location than the car park that got flooded and had cars passing through it whilst it was open. DK said that strimming the paths was still an issue that needed to be addressed and although some members had suggested that a strimmer operator member should perhaps look after a section through the year, DK said that it

would be better if the strimming was done as a group affair on one day, two or preferably three times a year. DL said that there are six sections that each take two hours to do from past experience. DK said that he would like to see all the strimmer operator members turn up on the next Volunteers Day on Thursday 20th September 2018 to do a final trim of the year around all the paths at 10 am to 12 noon to complete this work. DL said he would contact these members in the hope that they could do this and if not at 10 am then at 2 pm as first aiders would be in attendance all day.

4) **Report on bank account position.**

JS advised that the current bank balance was £432.75 with liabilities of £119.84 leaving a credit balance of £312.91.

5) **Secretary's report including update on current membership, an update on the website, Facebook update, latest 'Members Update'. Update on Argyll Holidays video of Squirrel Trail Walk.**

DL advised that the Cormonachan Woodlands Association (CWA) now had 93 members (70 full members, 13 associates, 4 life members, 4 corporate members and 2 child members [free]). DK & DL said that they knew that there were a few people interested in supporting the Association and may well become members shortly. Our target is to reach 100 members this year. The website now has a lot more photos in the website's Gallery and Facebook is updated regularly as well. Facebook have just given the Association a £30 free promotion and over the last 10 days 2,716 people saw this promotion with 105 clicks to look at the website with currently 167 followers regularly looking at the page. The Red Squirrel Hide donation box has received £67.27 in donations to date which is helping to fund the squirrel feed costing about £135.00 pa. The Association has only nine Cormonachan Woodlands Mugs left for sale now at £7.50 each. Eleven copies of the 36 page A3 Photo Book of 20 years of Cormonachan Woodlands from 1998 to 2018 have been ordered to date. GoRaise for Cormonachan has now reached £121.77 from 88 purchases by 6 members. The Cormonachan Woodlands article that appeared in The Wee Goil in August was sent by JS to the Wee Dunoon and Helensburgh Advertiser but to date these have not appeared in those papers. The Cormonachan Woodlands Squirrel Trail video made in October 2017 is still not available and DL has been told by the Argyll Holidays Marketing Manager that it is low priority to them. JS is to take this up with Irene Campbell to see if it can be brought forward for use. Members Update No30 will follow publication to these minutes being available.

- 6) Ardroy Report on use of Cormonachan Woodlands over the summer months and plans for their autumn usage. Review of squirrel feed quality supplied to Cormonachan Woodlands.

In the absence of DT, DL read DT's comments on this item. Primary school children are again doing woodcraft programmes in the woodlands that include Rhododendron ponticum eradication in area 6 on the compartment map carrying on from where they left off in the spring of 2018. Ardroy agreed to purchase peanuts again instead of the very poor squirrel feed that was last provided when next asked. The squirrel feed donations have recently been paying for nuts. As wild hazel nuts are currently available in the woodlands, the feed in the boxes has reduced but will soon return. Ardroy have received a copy of the Cormonachan Woodlands Photo Book.

- 7) Volunteers Days tasks for the autumn period.

The main tasks for this autumn will be the eradication of Rhododendron ponticum, final strimming of all the paths for the winter ahead and protection coatings for the Contemplation Shelter, Red Squirrel Hide and Shed subject to suitable weather. These structures have had anti-fungal and waterproof protection however we need to keep the surfaces well protected for the future. Ardroy is responsible for the painting of Jan's Hideaway, the compost toilet and log shed.

- 8) Volunteers Days - Report on path strimming over the summer months. Next scheduled Volunteers Days are 20th, 21st & 22nd September and 26th, 27th & 28th October 2018 - each from 10 am to 4 pm. Dates to be agreed for November 2018. Leaders & First Aiders required for all dates as very good response to these dates from LL&T NPA volunteers and Fife Volunteers. CWA member volunteers needed.

DK has already covered the strimming of the paths in item 3 above. Volunteers Days, **a)** On Thursday 20/9, we have 7 National Park (NP) volunteers with CWA leader/first aider and 1 other member so far and hopes of our 7 trained strimmer members attending that day. **b)** On Friday 21/9, we have 3 NP volunteers with CWA leader/first aider and 1 other member so far. **c)** On Saturday 22/9, we have just a leader/first aider and no volunteers yet. **d)** On Friday 26/10, we have 3 NP volunteers with CWA leader/first aider so far. **e)** On Saturday 27/10, we have 1 NP volunteer, 12 Fife volunteers with CWA leader/first aider and 2 other members so far. **f)** On Sunday 28/10, we have 12 Fife volunteers with CWA leader/first aider and 2 other members so far. We need more CWA volunteers to help with the tasks (Rhododendron cutting and possibly painting).

The date of the Volunteers Days in November 2018 are as follows - Friday 23rd November and Saturday 24th November from 10.00 to 16.00 hrs. Members are invited to help with a morning, afternoon, all day or both days.

- 9) Risk Assessments - Ratify and arrange for signatures to complete the outstanding Quad Bike & Trailer RA.

The risk assessment for quad bike use is still in need of a change to the following paragraph - "Must be a minimum of two people operating on separate ATV/Quad bikes in an area with communication processes in place." This needs to be changed to the use of one quad bike with another person who is a First Aider on site. The fire extinguisher was another point raised as to whether there should be one on a quad bike or not? Once this has been reviewed it can then be signed by our trained quad bike users.

- 10) Update on future funding projects (design of & new path to Upper Cormonachan & the waterfalls from the Contemplation Shelter in four stages).

To date, the Association has requested quotations for the proposed path from five organisations after only asking three to survey and quote. Two responded but never followed up when they understood that it was competitive, they took no further action. One said it was beyond their capabilities after surveying the path with not having the right equipment for the work. Another surveyed the path and was interested in doing the work but wanted an independent surveyor to survey and design the path coming from Aberdeen. The cost of which would have been £2,690.64 for the survey and then quote afterwards. Another was very interested and suggested a design and build quote following a survey. This seemed the most sensible way to get a price for the work involved. This has been followed up and the survey should go ahead on 19th September with DK, DL and Phil Thompson, Development Manager at Ardroy who will be involved. Once the Association has a quote for the work, we can apply for funding from SRDP, SLCF and local sources so that planning permission can also proceed.

- 11) Any other business & date for next committee meeting?

DK said that we need to apply for training funding for the following from 1st April 2019:-

- a) Pesticide Spraying - Minimum number required for training is six members - Currently we have four members who have said they are willing - DK, FW and Karen & Gary Proctor. We need two more. Cost of

training course and assessments with a backpack sprayer & PPE is as follows:-

A) Training (by Ringlink Services in Lochgoilhead)

PA1 Training £950 + VAT up to 6 candidates

PA6 Training £950 + VAT up to 6 candidates

PA1 Assessments £95 per person

PA6 Assessments £95 per person

Total cost of A) = £3,648.00 inc VAT

Note - PA1 is one day; PA6 is one day and Assessments would be over two days (3 per day).

B) Equipment & PPE

Matabi 20 ltr Super Agro 20 back pack sprayer with brass lance £84.16

6 Faceshields with visors £52.56; Pack of 10 Nitrile gloves £18.60; Pack

of 10 Disposable Coveralls £ 24.30

Total cost of B) = £179.62 inc. VAT

Total cost of A) + B) = £3,827.62 inc VAT (£637.94 per person). We have already applied to the Forestry Commission Scotland's (FCS) Community Fund for this training for April 2019 onwards.

b) Strimming 'Trimmer Course' - Minimum number required for training is four members - We need volunteers to come forward willing to be trained for this one day course. Cost of training course with assessments at current rates in Cormonachan Woodlands is £425.00 (£106.25 per person). Funding is generally available for this training from FCS but not again until 2019.

c) First Aid (REC Emergency First Aid at Work Course - 2 days) - current cost of training is about £400 for six (£66.67 per person). This course can be carried out for a maximum of 12 members at a cheaper pro-rata rate to be established. Minimum number required for training or reassessment is six members - We have one member requesting the course at present - FW, so we need another five members to apply for training or reassessment. Members who were trained on 9th December 2016 will need to be reassessed before 9th December 2019 when their three year certificate expires. We may therefore have to delay this course to the autumn of 2019 to ensure we have enough members to train or retrain. Funding is generally available for this type of training from FCS.

DL advised that he had written to the archivist at Inveraray Castle with regard to any information they may have on Upper Cormonachan as the Clan Campbell's were the land owners in the 17th century and earlier.

The date for the next committee meeting will be on Tuesday 20th November 2018 at 4.30 pm at Cruach House, Carrick Castle.

The meeting closed at 18.20 hrs.