



Cormonachan Woodlands Association
The Secretary, Douglas Locke,
Cruach House, Carrick Castle, Argyll, PA24 8AF
T: 01301 703098 M: 07748 130976 F: 01301 703098
E: Secretary@cormonachan-woodlands.co.uk
W: www.cormonachan-woodlands.co.uk

Minutes

A Committee Meeting was held on Tuesday, 8th January 2019 at 4.30 pm at Cruach House, Carrick Castle, Argyll, PA24 8AF

1) Welcome & Apologies.

The Chair (DK) welcomed everyone to the meeting. The committee members in attendance were Don Kamsley (DK), Douglas Locke (DL), Frances Walker (FW) & Cecilia Ferguson (CF). Apologies were received from Jimmy Sim (JS), David Thorpe (DT) & Sue Morris (SM) - Forest Enterprise Scotland ex officio member.

2) Approval of the Minutes of the last Committee Meeting held on 20th November 2018 & any follow up reports (see italic notations in the last Minutes).

The Minutes of the last meeting on 20th November 2018 were approved - proposed by CF & seconded by FW and signed by DK.

3) Chairman's Report.

DK said that he and Chris Cairns of McGowans of Aviemore (hill contractors) had spent 2 1/2 hours marking out the Upper Cormonachan Paths route with red ground marker flags and orange tags in the trees that would either have to be felled or pruned. There were no oak trees to be felled, only Sitka spruce, Birch and some Alder. Another hour was spent with a GPS tracker and measurement wheel returning on the same route to record the final planned route of the paths. The GPS track of the paths route was then overlaid on to an OS map by Phil Thompson, Ardroy's Development Manager

and submitted to the Secretary. This map and plan of the proposed Upper Cormonachan car park are displayed in the present car park on the CWA notice board. DK suggested that at the next AGM a proposal should be put forward to the members to increase the committee members up by two from 6 to 8. This was agreed by the committee in attendance. The CWA Constitution would have to be amended to accommodate this change at the next AGM.

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

JS was unable to attend the meeting but advised that the bank balance was £716.79 however the planning fees of £352.00 had not been debited from the account yet. He also advised that he had received a cheque for £1,000 from a member to go towards the "Upper Cormonachan Woodlands Paths Project Fund" and another donation of £100 from another member for the same fund. Commission from the GoRaise funding scheme was also being put to the same fund and the total raised to date was £1,248.54. A cheque for £20 had also just been received for two previous members renewing their membership for the current year.

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 membership had now reached 104 members including two free children. Facebook was kept up to date with 177 liking the page. There was still no permission to use the Argyll Holidays video of the Squirrel Trail walk that was filmed in October 2017 which was very disappointing. The Red Squirrel Hide donation box has now received £97.20 since March 2018 and has purchased 87.5 kg of peanuts at a cost of £104.85 leaving a current debit of £7.58. The CWA was very pleased to receive a grant of £352.00 from the Lochgoil Community Trust on 14th December 2018 for the cost of the planning permission for the proposed new paths to Upper Cormonachan. GoRaise has raised £143.54 in donations via eight members who have purchased 104 items online since 2017. It is good to see more people joining this scheme that costs members nothing but the CWA benefits as a result. The next AWOO (Argyll Wood of Our Own) meeting will be at the Walled Garden in Ardentenny on 8th March 2019 from 10 am - 4 pm. This is run by the Community Woodlands Association and financed by Forestry Commission Scotland. DL has been asked to give an update on the work of our CWA over the last year. Other committee members have been invited to attend with DL. A letter would be written to the two householders who are not members of the CWA at the southern end

of Cormonachan Woodlands about the Upper Cormonachan Paths Project. The other three householders are already members of the CWA and receive Members Updates with all this information on a regular basis. All this information is in the public domain via the CWA website and through Facebook for anyone to view. DL said that the CWA had been approved for a Pesticide Training Grant of £3,944.80 for six of its volunteer members and the training would take place on 22nd & 23rd January 2019 with Assessments on 4th & 5th February 2019 by Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) through its Community Grant Fund. Further, it has received another Tools Grant from FCS of £498.68 for 8 pruning saws, 4 HD loppers and a 90kg capacity light weight folding truck to more bags of feed and gravel. As there is a Supporting Communities Fund currently available in Argyll & Bute, it was decided to see if the CWA could apply for some more picnic tables and benches. The fund can offer up to £2,500 for certain non-capital projects. DL suggested that the CWA launch a 'Legacy' link on the CWA website so that anyone writing a Will could think about leave a legacy to the CWA. DL attended on behalf of the CWA, the reopening of the Lauder Monument by Glenbranter with a new car park on 30th December 2018 supporting Friends of Loch Lomond & the Trossachs who have been so supportive of the CWA. *It was also suggested that "Buy A Tree" could also help fund the project fund and this would be looked into.*

6) **Ardroy Report on use of Cormonachan Woodlands over the last months of 2018 including an update on maintenance achieved around Jan's Hideaway and programme of tasks for 2019.**

DT apologised for not being able to attend the meeting. He sent a message with the following update:-

Work on Jan's Hideaway is progressing well. One coat of wood treatment has been applied and weather permitting a further coat will go on next week. Some new internal lights have been ordered and should also be fitted next week. A general tidy up around the area is ongoing; Rhododendron clearance continues by the children.

7) **Update on FES MoU Programme of Works.**

DL said that the year's programme was well on track to be completed in the year to 31st March 2019 and Rhododendron ponticum clearance well under way in the CWA's 5 year plan with the first of the pesticide spraying of re-growth having taken place by National Park (NP) volunteer sprayers on 24th November 2018.

No date has yet been advised by FES for their contractors to fell and lop trees alongside the road at Cormonachan Woodlands.

8) Report on Volunteers Days of 23rd & 24th November 2018..

On 23rd November 2018, DK led the Volunteers Day cutting down and burning Rhododendron ponticum by the roadside at Cormonachan Burn end of CW in areas 12a & 13 with 9 volunteers (4 CWA & 5 NP) whilst another 2 CWA volunteers, DL & CF prepared the signage and cordoned off areas for the pesticide spraying to take place the next day. On 24th November 2018, CF led her team cutting down Rhododendron and Sitka spruce in areas 3a & 4 in CW with 5 volunteers (4 CWA & 1 NP) and DL led the 2 NP pesticide sprayers in areas 3a, 5, 6, 12a & 13.

9) Next Volunteers Days are 22nd, 23rd & 24th February 2019. Leaders & First Aiders required in advance for all future Volunteers Days. CWA member volunteers needed.

DL advised that 3 CWA and 2 NP volunteers have already signed up for 22nd February; 4 CWA, 2 NP and 10 Fife volunteers for 23rd February and 1 CWA and 10 Fife volunteers for 24th February. He said we are in need of volunteers who would be prepared to lead teams. First aid certificates are required for leaders unless there are other first aiders in a team. More cutting down of Rhododendron alongside the road will be required south of the car park which should complete that roadside area. The Fife volunteers will be felling some Sitka spruce trees in area 9 near the Contemplation Shelter and cutting up already felled Sitka in area 1.

10) Future Training - Pesticide Training on 22nd & 23rd January 2019 and Emergency First Aid Training for 2019.

DL advised that the six volunteer members attending the pesticide spraying were fully advised regarding the forthcoming course. The CWA would be arranging 2-day First Aid courses after April 2019 for those who require training and those for renewing their 3-year certificates expiring at the end of 2019 or early 2020. Funding will be applied for.

11) Update on the 'Upper Cormonachan' Paths Project (design of & new path to Upper Cormonachan, Forest Road, old village, waterfalls and new car park from the Contemplation Shelter in four stages). Letters of Support, Planning Application & Funding Sources.

DL advised that the committee members had been circulated with the revised Design & Build Quotation Report for the proposed Upper Cormonachan 2 km of Paths from McGowan Ltd. of Aviemore. This 18 page detailed report has split the project up into six sections plus another car park. The quotation has therefore now reduced from £309,408.00 + signage £1,700.00 to £269,570.00 including signage plus VAT in both cases - a net reduction of £41,538.00. We will have to register for VAT refunds to avoid having to fund the VAT. Five companies were contacted for quotations but only one specialist hill contractor was prepared to offer a design and build quotation. In the case of the proposed paths 2,700 tonnes of material would have to be imported via the forest road to the west of Upper Cormonachan and there would now be 5 bridges and 4 view points with spur paths to the old village and another to the waterfalls. With the design now to hand, we have received FES permission for the project. We also have Letters of Support from the Argyll & Bute's MP and MSP, Lochgoil Community Council, Cowal Ward Councillor, Alan Reid, LL&TNP Communities Partnership, Community Woodlands Association, AOEC Trust (Ardroy), Loch Goil Kayak Hire and Lochgoil Community Trust (proposal support). The CWA planning permission application was lodged with the LL&TNPA on 4th January 2019. Once we have planning permission, we can then apply for the funding for the project that will have to come either from a number of funders together in one stage or stages over three or four years. The project however is now well under way and members will be kept up to date with progress through future Members Updates, website News and Facebook posts. The CWA will almost certainly have to fund a proportion of the costs of the project to satisfy the potential funders so we have launched the "Upper Cormonachan Paths Project Fund" to try and raise 5% of the net cost that would be £13,500. We have so far raised this week £1,248.54 and hope that members and their friends will try to help fund this big project with donations by sending cheques or bank transfers to the fund for the Cormonachan Woodlands Association.

12) Any other business & date for next committee meeting?

The next Committee Meeting will be on Tuesday 19th March 2019 at 4.30 pm at Cruach House, Carrick Castle.

(The meeting closed at 6.40 pm.)