



Cormonachan Woodlands Association
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Minutes

A Committee Meeting was held on Tuesday 14th January 2020
at 4.30 pm at Cruach House, Carrick Castle

1) Welcome & Apologies.

The Chair (DK) welcomed everyone to the meeting. The committee members in attendance were Don Kamsley (DK), Douglas Locke (DL), Jimmy Sim (JS) and Dennis Bolt (DB). Apologies were received from Frances Walker (FW) and Cecilia Ferguson (CF) who has decided to retire. The committee members wished to thank Cecilia for her contributions over the years and noted that she was also retiring as a Team Leader where she had made a significant difference within Cormonachan Woodlands.

2) Approval of the Minutes of the last Committee Meeting held on 12th November 2019.

The Minutes of the last meeting on 12th November 2019 were approved - proposed by JS & seconded by DK and signed by DK.

3) Chairman's Report including a meeting with Craig Wilson of Argyll & Bute Council regarding Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund.

DK said that he had undertaken a full site visit on 20th December 2019 of the Upper Cormonachan Paths Project area with Craig Wilson (CW), Economic Growth Officer at Argyll & Bute Council who was acting on behalf of Visit Scotland's (VS) Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (RTIF) as this fund can only be accessed

though a Council or National Park. After the site visit they met up with DL and spent a three hours overall discussing the possibilities of funding the project jointly with the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF). CW agreed to put in an application on our behalf by 22nd January 2020 to find out if VS would be interested in funding the project as a joint venture. DL had prepared a draft completion of the Expression of Interest form that would be discussed after the committee meeting in more detail. The application would then be submitted prior to the closing date. DL advised that copies of all the main Letters of Support for the project had been given to CW which he found very impressive.

DK, DL and David Thorpe (DT) had a meeting at Ardroy on 17th December 2019 to agree a three year, month by month, plan from the spring of 2021 regarding the outcomes that would be required by the NLHF as that fund was most interested in achieving 'A wider range of people will be involved in heritage' as a result of funding the project. DK agreed to prepare this plan so that it could be submitted to the NLHF prior to the closing date for applications by 2nd March 2020.

DK said that his own businesses workload had increased significantly and that whilst he wished to remain on the committee and help where he could, he would be looking to give up the work of 'Chair' at the next AGM likely to be in May 2020. The committee agreed to find a replacement Chair and to find another committee member to replace CF following her retirement.

4) Treasurer's Report.

JS advised the bank balance was currently £13,776.20 with an outstanding liability of £22.96 and a cheque to clear of £100.00 leaving £13,853.64 as a credit balance. The total will increase by another £4,000 promised by the Lochgoil Community Trust once we have the main funding arranged and is included in the 'Upper Cormonachan Paths Project Fund' (UCPP) currently £13,011.16.

5) Secretary's Report including an update on a Forestry and Land Scotland Lease for the Cormonachan Woodlands Association. Donations received to date for the "Upper Cormonachan Paths Project Fund" including 'Adopt a Tree' donations; donations received in the Red Squirrel Hide and update on the Coop Local Community Fund.

Secretary's Report - Forestry & Land Scotland (FLS) Lease update - agreed in principle on 30th August 2019 - since then FLS advised, discussed with FLS solicitors and then passed to FLS

Board for approval - chasing FLS regularly as this is required for the funding - lease must be in excess of 20 years, have proposed 25 year lease with renewal options.

UCPP Fund £13,011.16; Adopt-a-Tree - 45 trees adopted (£185 to fund); Squirrel Feed £95.18 in hand, purchases to date - £186.79 (137.5 kg Peanuts), total donations in box since 1st March 2018 - £281.97; Coop Local Community Fund - £146.56 to date after 2 months of 12 months (target £256) & GoRaise £173.36 to date from 9 supporters with 135 purchases all credited to UCPP Fund. LL&T National Park are to commission a survey of *Rhododendron ponticum* in the Loch Goil area from the Rest & Be Thankful to the end of Loch Goil including Lochgoilhead and Carrick Castle. The surveyors have been appointed and Gordon Gray-Stevens of Native Woods Cooperative Scotland Ltd will be having a meeting with CWA mid February 2020. Angus Bevan of Woodland Trust Scotland will also be involved updating his last CW report in 2019. Proposal to ask for funding for a people counter entering the CW at the present car park from A & P Chalmers Ltd, Nairnside costing £1,464 was agreed when the next funding opportunity opened. Last Members Update No 38 was sent out on 17th November 2019 - not planning on another until we have more news to report as quiet over the holiday period. Awaiting news from Fiona Baker, Firat Archaeological Services as to when she will be continuing with the survey and main report. DL said he had spent 627 hours so far working for CWA excluding e-mails time to date since 1st April 2019.

6) **Membership Secretary's Report. Update on membership.**

DB said the CWA now had 142 members: 97 Full; 30 Associates; 4 Corporate; 2 Associate Corporate; 6 Life & 3 Child (free). DB also advised that the CWA would still be using the Doodle system to ask volunteers to let us know if members could volunteer on specific Volunteers Days or not. He also said that renewal of membership will be coming up on 1st April 2020 and that he will put a notice in *The Wee Goil* - March edition to remind members to renew their membership on time. DL said that the support from the membership was extremely important now and members may not realise for example it takes fourteen full members subscriptions to pay for the annual services of two strimmers and the Association has many commitments now to cover.

7) **Ardroy Report on use of Cormonachan Woodlands for the year ahead and tasks for 2020.**

DT was not in attendance so this item will be carried forward to

the next committee meeting.

- 8) Update on the 'Upper Cormonachan Paths Project' including Chainsaw operations work to be carried out by FLS at their cost for the 92 trees to be felled along the new paths route by 31st August 2020 and on grant applications.

DL gave an UCPP Update - FLS to fell 92 trees and 2 trees on current paths at their cost. Currently completing funding applications to RTIF (22/01/20) & NLHF (02/03/20). LandTrust (£20k) and Weir Charitable Trust (£25k) turned down our requests for funding for UCPP. EB Scotland application (£25k) still in for decision in February. Keeping option for crowd funding open pending outcome of these grants. Received a letter of support from ACT, Argyll and the Isles Coast & Countryside Trust with regard to their willingness for Branching Out Events to take place in Cormonachan Woodlands. This will be included in the 2021-2023 plan of outcomes.

- 9) Volunteers Leader's Update on Volunteers Days in November 2019 (22nd-24th), including Fife Conservation Group, Police Youth & National Park volunteers.

DL advised that 43 volunteers had worked over the three volunteers days in November (CWA 9; National Park 7; Police Youth 11 & Fife Conservation Group 16). A huge amount of work was achieved, including the planting of 105 deciduous trees.

- 10) Update on Volunteers Leader position still to be filled. A job share?

DL said he is prepared to continue with Volunteers Leader position providing there is a member formally prepared to survey the CW and provide regular reports of maintenance required. DL is not able to do any more physical volunteering except very light work but will organise events. FW is currently surveying the paths and topping up the squirrel feeders which is most helpful and Richard Hall has offered to be a back up to her. Suggest the position is still advertised for the longer term. The change of arranging to have volunteers days on the last Friday/Saturday of a month has gone down well with the National Park and they now advertise for CW volunteers for the year ahead and some have booked currently to May. Hopefully, local members will note the regularity of when volunteers days will be and respond to the call. We are urgently in need of more Team Leaders to volunteer in advance of a volunteers day to ensure the volunteers days can go ahead. We currently only have 4 Team Leaders. To be a Team Leader, the

member is just in charge of a group having a first aid certificate.

- 11) An update on Pesticide Spraying - work completed with visible results and work to be done.

DK and DB agreed to look into when another spraying of Rhododendron ponticum re-growth could be undertaken and hopefully the other certificated sprayers could be involved.

- 12) Volunteers Dates for 2020 - the last Friday/Saturday of a month - 31/1 & 1/2; 28/2, 29/2 & 01.3; 27/3 & 28/3; 24/4 & 25/4; 29/5 & 30/5; 25/9 & 26/9; 30/10 & 31/10 and 27/11 & 28/11.

Dates published in The Wee Goil, January 2020, on the website - Volunteering page and to National Park Cervis system. DB sent out Doodle for 31st Jan & 1st Feb and these dates shown as event on Facebook. Fife Conservation Group attending on 29th February and 1st March.

- 13) Priority tasks for Volunteers Days for spring 2020, including Rhododendron removal, painting structures, etc.

Tasks for volunteers days shown for winter/spring on Doodle preamble and on website - Volunteering page.

- 14) First Aid Training - An update on two courses, 16th & 20th September and 6th December 2019. Next first aid course for renewals will be in September 2022.

5 First Aid certificates were achieved on 6th December 2019 - we now have 12 members with first aid certificates. We know there are other members with certificates not included and will ask any member who has a certificate to send us a copy to hold on file.

- 15) Any other Business?

Renewal of CWA memberships come up on 1st April 2020.

- 16) Date of next committee meeting?

The next committee meeting will be on Tuesday 24th March 2020.

The meeting closed at 17.35.