



Cormonachan Woodlands

Cormonachan Woodlands Association
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Minutes

A Committee Meeting was held on Tuesday, 19th March 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) & Cecilia Ferguson (CF) with guest member Dennis Bolt (DB). Apologies were received from Jimmy Sim (JS), David Thorpe (DT), Frances Walker (FW) & Sue Morris (SM) - Forest Enterprise Scotland ex officio member.

2) Approval of the Minutes of the last Committee Meeting held on 8th January 2019 & any follow up reports (see italic notations in the last Minutes).

The Minutes of the last meeting on 8th January 2019 were approved - proposed by CF & seconded by DK and signed by DK.

3) Chairman's Report.

DK said that we had a successful three Volunteers Days on 22nd to 24th February with 28 person days volunteering. Another large area of Rhododendron had been cut and burnt by Cormonachan Burn with help from CWA and National Park volunteers, CWA members had painted the Contemplation Shelter, cut down the last remaining Sitka spruce trees in the area between the Squirrel Trail that had been missed, did some ditching and the Fife Conservation group felled and burnt the brush of about ten Sitka Spruce by the

Contemplation Shelter now opening out the view of Loch Goil and of a lot more oak trees to the south. DK thanked all the volunteers for their considerable help.

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

JS was unable to attend the meeting so DL advised what he could of the finances. The Red Squirrel Hide donation box total had received £113.82 towards squirrel feed and was currently in credit of £9.04 after the purchase of peanuts through the year. Ardroy supplemented this by purchasing 2 x 25 kg bags in June 2018 and February 2019 for which the CWA are grateful. The "Upper Cormonachan Woodlands Paths Project Fund" had reached a total of £3,112.70 from eighteen donors to date that included a very grateful donation of £500 from Friends of Loch Lomond & the Trossachs. The insurance premium for 2019/2020 was paid in advance for the new financial year commencing on 1st April. The sums insured were £4,927.94 for equipment & tools and £4,394.00 for three basic structures. Public liability is also covered.

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 in 2018 to 31st March 2019 including two free children. Facebook was kept up to date with 180 liking the pages. The Argyll Holidays video of the Squirrel Trail walk that was filmed in October 2017 is now live on the CWA website's About Us page and also on our Facebook pages. We are gratefully to Argyll Holidays for their sponsorship. GoRaise has raised £148.80 in donations via eight members who have purchased 110 items online since 2017. DL attended the AWO (Argyll Wood of Our Own) meeting at the Walled Garden in Ardentinn on 8th March 2019 and gave a presentation update on the work of our CWA over the last year. The Conservator and Development Manager of Forest Enterprise Scotland (FES) were in attendance and advised the 20 attendees that the CWA had received two of their four grants given this year from the Communities Fund. One for equipment & volunteers tools (£498.68) and the other for pesticide spraying training (£3,712.00). The FES grants had been cut from £60k to £22k and is likely to remain at the reduced rate for 2019/2020. DL asked to be considered by the FES for two First Aid training grants for May and December 2019. The Woodlands Trust returned last week to update the CWA woodlands free survey. The CWA launched a 'Legacy' link on the CWA website so that anyone writing a Will could think about leave a legacy to the CWA.

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

DT apologised for not being able to attend the meeting. DL had spoken to Phil Thompson (PT), Ardroy's Development Manager during the previous week as he had advised that the children had completed cutting down the Rhododendron in the east area of Area 6 in the woodlands and asked which area to tackle next. PT was advised to continue up the hill to the north west of Area 6.

- 7) Update on FES MoU Programme of Works. Work plan for 2019 to 2020 to be agreed.

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 was well under way in the CWA's 5 year plan. The FES contractors finally felled and lopped trees alongside the road at Cormonachan Woodlands in March. A new work plan would be prepared for 2019 to 2020 which would be similar to the present plan and would be put to FES or Forestry & Land Scotland (FLS) as it will be known after 1st April 2019.

- 8) Report on Volunteers Days of 22nd to 24th February 2019.

This was covered by DK in his Chair's report.

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

DL advised that more cutting down of Rhododendron ponticum in the Cormonachan Burn area would take place on 22nd March by CWA & National Park volunteers. CWA members will be cutting up, by chainsaw, some of the felled Sitka spruce trees by the Contemplation Shelter and preparing wood for sculptures to be made by the Lochgoilhead Primary School in their summer term. On 23rd March, the path leading to the Contemplation Shelter will have a larger pipe put under the path as the present one has not been able to cope with the volume of water in heavy rain. A further ditch will be cut in to clear water crossing the path nearby.

- 10) Future Training - 2-Day Emergency First Aid Training for 2019. Two courses required one as soon as possible after April and

another for renewals of certificate at the end of the year. Number of applicants on list for first course. Number of renewals for end of year (7 CWA members and 2 Ardroy staff who attended a previous CWA course). Grants required.

DL advised that the CWA would be arranging 2-day First Aid courses from May 2019 for those who require training (six places booked with six places remaining to date) and those for renewing their three year certificates expiring at the end of 2019 or early 2020 in December. Funding will be applied for.

- 11) Update on the 'Upper Cormonachan' Paths Project (design of & new paths 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 a copy of a request from the planning officer for further information dated 18th March which had been actioned by DL on 19th March with e-mails sent to McGowans, Woodlands Trust and FES regarding the points raised. These are expected to be dealt with quickly in order that the planning permission can be obtained in April. Once we have planning permission for the Upper Cormonachan Paths Project, we can then apply to various major funders for the project to go ahead in 2020. Four responses to the planning application had been made by three people in Carrick Castle and by the Carrick Castle Community Trust who support the paths but have reservations with regard to the proposed car park. The responses were read out to the committee which had been dealt with by e-mail to the planning officer. DL said that the West of Scotland Archaeology Service had put in a standard condition that would have to be abided by regarding the old village at Upper Cormonachan. This will form part of the planning permission.

Planning permission for the project was applied for on 4th January 2019 from the Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park and is due in April 2019 and is supported by the Argyll & Bute's MP, Brendan O'Hara and MSP, Michael Russell, Cowal Ward Councillor, Alan Reid, Lochgoil Community Council, Forest Enterprise Scotland, Lochgoil Community Trust, Loch Lomond Community Partnership. Friends of Loch Lomond & Trossachs, Community Woodlands Association, Argyll Holidays, Rhumhor Holiday Lodge, Carrick Castle Estate & Lodge, Lodge on Loch Goil, Ardroy Outdoor Education Centre, Loch Goil Kayak Hire, Carrick Farm, Lochgoilhead Holidays, Loch Goil Trails, Lochwood House Guest House, The Shore House, Rowan House Bed & Breakfast & Loch Goil Cruisers & the Boat Shed Cafe.

- 12) Proposal to be discussed to be able to amend the Constitution at the next AGM increasing the committee membership up from six to eight. (DK)

The current Constitution would need change, highlighted in green below with the text for Membership to be agreed:-

Membership

Full membership of the Association is open to anyone who lives or works in the Loch Goil area and subscribes to the above objectives.

Organisation

Association shall be managed by a Committee with a minimum of 4 members and a maximum of 8 who shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting. At each annual general meeting, the members may elect any member (providing he/she is willing to act) to be a committee member. The committee members may at any time appoint any member (providing he/she is willing to act). At each annual general meeting, all of the committee members shall retire from office - but shall then be eligible for re-election. Associate members or children under the age of 16 are not entitled to vote or serve on the committee. A representative of the Forestry Commission may attend as an ex officio member.

The changes to be made to the current Constitution were approved by the committee for approval at the AGM.

- 13) Any other business & date for next committee meeting and AGM after the end of the CWA's financial year on 31st March 2019 - in May?

The next committee meeting will be held on Tuesday 23rd April 2019 at 4.30 PM at Cruach House, Carrick Castle.

The date of the AGM will be set at the next committee meeting for late May 2019.

(The meeting closed at 18.45 hrs)