



Cormonachan Woodlands Association
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Minutes

A Committee Meeting was held on Tuesday 28th March 2017 at 4.30 pm at Cruach House, Carrick Castle, Argyll, PA24 8AF

- 1) Liz Evans (LE) welcomed the committee members, Douglas Locke (DL) & Sheron Hambly (SH). Jimmy Sim (JS), Donald Kamsley (DK) & Simon Garnett (SG) sent their apologies. David Thorpe (DT) General Manager of AOEC Trust Ltd. stood in for Simon Garnett. David Robertson (FES) sent his apologies.
- 2) Approval of the Minutes of the last Committee Meeting held on 24th January 2017 were approved and proposed by SH & seconded by LE and signed by the Chair. Matters arising from the last meeting were as follows:- 7) Car park lease with Lochgoil Community Trust - Drimsynie advise it was not true that the lease had been signed or paid by them. 10) No member has replied with a preference for AM or PM Volunteers Days. 13) No ideas from members received for sculptures suggestions to date.
- 3) Chair's Report - Liz said that all our hard work was now coming to fruition with the car park fundraising and the Management Plan. Many hours had be spent completing forms with success. The agreement with FES now covers 50 ha from Cormonachan Burn to Lochwood in the north and includes an additional 'PAWS' area of 8.9 ha that has been replanted by Forest Enterprise Scotland (FES). 'A Wood of Our Own' (AWOO) event in Cormonachan Woodlands organised by the Community Woodlands Association was held on 22nd February 2017 when 27 people attended. Simon Franks (SF), Tree & Woodland Adviser from the National Park was assisting the Association in preparing a Management Plan that would be acceptable to FES for future funding. The draft plan would be updated at the next meeting with SF on 30th March. Angus Bevan (AB), an Associate of the Native

Woods Coop is providing some advice on managing the Plantation on Ancient Woodlands (PAWS) that is within Cormonachan. This is a project supported by the Woodland Trust and following our meeting with him, he will be spending two days surveying Cormonachan Woodlands and sending us a free report.

- 4) Treasurer's Report - JS advised by e-mail that the current bank balance was £1,922.26. The 'Car Park Fund' totalled £1,694.81 so the other income from subscriptions has left a balance of £227.45 from membership fees of £560.00 in 2016/17, to date. DL has been supporting the Association by paying the training costs and equipment that have now been refunded to him as all the grants have now been paid to the CWA.
- 5) The Secretary reported that there were now 61 members of which 45 were Full Members, 11 were Associates, 1 was a Young Person Member, 3 were Child Members (free) and there was 1 Corporate Member. The website is kept up to date and Facebook as well, with regular news. The last Members' Update No 17 was sent out on 16th March 2017. CWA have a public/members notice board in the car park at CW that was paid for by members' donations. Two letters have been written to FCS & LL&TNP thanking them for their financial support. DL advised, he had spent 371 hours to date working for CWA so far this year since 1st April 2016.
- 6) Now that the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been agreed and signed by FCS, AOEC Trust and CWA, we have formal agreement to carry out our annual management plans agreed with FES. The current 2016/17 plan should be achieved by 31st March 2017 with the exception of the ongoing annual items and the car park extension that is awaiting funding for work to commence. A draft management plan has been prepared for 2017/18 and will be put to the FCS for agreement for commencement on 1st April 2017.
- 7) Car park development - DL advised funds now offered as follows:- Car Park Fund = £1,694.81 including £500.00 grant from Friends of LL&T; EB Scotland Ltd (Scottish Landfill Communities Fund - Argyll & Bute Council) Formal Offer accepted of £2,192.00; LandTrust (SLCF - East Ayrshire Council) - offer agreed of £2,367.00 but awaiting Formal Offer of Funding. Total available for the car park extension is £6,253.81. Costs will be for the car park work (Drimsynie) £3,600.00; Interpretation sign (Shelley Signs) approx. £945.00; 2 Gates (Woodford Timber) £325.43 and a short length of wire fencing and posts at little cost, total cost about £4,870.43. Allan Campbell (AC), Drimsynie Estates, advised that until the lease was signed and Lochgoil Community Trust paid their solicitor's outstanding invoice for about £690.00 + 20% VAT the car park work could not proceed. DL, LE & JS took the decision to suggest to Drimsynie that the CWA would be willing to take on the lease direct and pay the Trust's debt to Drimsynie's solicitors as the Association was not prepared to lose the funding with not being

able to proceed with the project. AC said that the Trust would have to agree to this in writing immediately and this was agreed in writing the same day. The Drimsynie's solicitor's charges will come out of the Car Park Fund balance left of £1,383.38 and any money left will be for contingencies. A revised Car Park Plan has been sent to LL&TNP planning for approval as car park signs and an additional gate require planning permission. Thanks to Anna Wynne for the revision of the plan.

- 8) The CWA Annual Maintenance Plan for the year to 31st March 2017 had virtually been completed. A new management plan was sent to FCS commencing 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018. A site meeting was held on 22nd March 2017 with DR and Stephen Gillen (FES) when the plan was agreed with minor amendments.
- 9) Funding for Training, Equipment & Tools Report - We have received 100% funding as follows for the following:-
 - a) £560.00 from FCS Seedcorn Fund for 8 First Aid Courses.
 - b) £671.91 from FCS Seedcorn Fund for Equipment & Tools.
 - c) £4,212.10 from LL&TNP (Natural Heritage Fund Scheme (NHFS)) for Chainsaw/Trimmer training and equipment & tools.
 - d) £1,080.00 from LL&TNP (NHFS) for 4 chainsaw assessments.Funding total £6,524.01 in 2016/2017.
- 10) Training Updates - 8 First Aid Certificates; 6 Trimmer Certificates; 4 Chainsaw 200mm Certificates; 4 Chainsaw 380mm Certificates; 3 Pesticide Certificates & 2 Pesticide Spraying Certificates. Total 27 new certificates obtained by members.
- 11) Volunteers Day on 26th March - We had 16 volunteers working in four groups and achieved an enormous amount of work in the woodlands between 13.00 & 16.00 hrs. All the volunteers were thanked by e-mail. Team 1: 3 volunteers cleared and burned all the brash in the car park extension area so that work can soon commence there. Team 2: 6 volunteers cleared all the tree seedlings and bigger shrubs off all the paths. Team 3: 3 chainsaw volunteers tidied up the felled trees from the chainsaw training days. Team 4: 4 volunteers repaired a big culvert, levelled up a picnic table and carried two new benches to a) the far north west corner of the woodlands and b) to the car park area ready to be erected in the near future.
- 12) The next Volunteers Day dates are Saturday 22nd April 2017 from 10.00 to 16.00 hrs (Social lunch break 12.30 - 13.30) and Sunday 21st May 2017 from 13.00 to 16.00 hrs.
- 13) Funding required for the following in 2017/2018:-
New shed to replace present one by Jan's Hideaway; Disinfectant matted footbaths (3) in case of woodland virus threats; Adjutant and colouring for Rhododendron spraying; Signs along the paths to point out woodlands features; Stump pesticide (155) application training certificate; Rhododendron eradication by alternative to spraying training; Woodlands skills training & Quad bike training.

- 14) CWA Risk Assessments (RA) for volunteers days - Prepared so far for Land based (generic); Woodland studies; Scything; Woodlands Event; Chainsaws & Open Fires. We still require more RAs for Hand tools, Trimming, etc. and are looking for someone with RA knowledge to take on RA work for the Association and review our current RAs.
- 15) Sculptures Update - The totem pole has had three stays of rigging donated to it by Scotia Rigging of Linwood to turn it into a teepee. The tree discs from this tree have been cut to turn into revolving wheels on metal poles and one has been made by LE and is up and is interactive with two more to follow. There's another of flat stones for people to try and pile on top of each other in the pine woods. There's a further tree hanging purple sculpture (LE) below Jan's Hideaway and another interactive 'Noughts & Crosses' game (DL) by the oak tree near the fire pit by Jan's Hideaway. Lewis MacKay (LM) has made a wood mobile sculpture that is just about to be hung too. Liz explained that visitors should soon be able to take photographs to add to a new CWA Instagram site. The committee would also like members' suggestions for further sculpture ideas and ask any members if they would like to help paint some of the tree discs.
- 16) Future Plans - Short term will be to complete the car park extension. Ask for advice from LL&TNP (NP) & FES on the content and layout of the A1 interpretation information sign for the car park. Volunteers to help put up a fence from the new gates to the south end border of the car park extension. Medium term will be to Contact the NP regarding the Footpath Apprentice Scheme to get the path from the Lochwood end upgraded; apply for planning permission from NP for a loop for a less steep path up the hill from the car park; apply to 'PathsforAll' for funding and add more sculptures. Long term will be to get a path from the car park to Upper Cormonachan old township and the waterfalls.
- 17) Life Membership to CWA - It has been noted that other organisations offer this as it helps with early stage finance for the Association. A rate of £250.00 was agreed for Life Membership.
- 18) The next Committee Meeting will be held on Tuesday 16th May 2017 at 4.30 pm at Cruach House, Carrick Castle.
- 19) Other business:-
 - 1) Gala Day on 29th July 2017 will be attended by CWA with its 6 m x 3 m marquee.
 - 2) Once the car park has been completed, James Fraser (Friends of Loch Lomond & an Ardroy Director & Trustee) and Allan Campbell, (Drimsynie) will be asked jointly to Open the new Car Park.
 - 3) Jean Murray, CCC Trust asked the CWA for a Letter of Support for a Defibrillator to be sited in the telephone box at Carrick Castle. This support was given immediately. The meeting closed: 18.05 hrs.