



Cormonachan Woodlands Association  
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## Minutes

A Committee Meeting was held on Tuesday, 29<sup>th</sup> September 2015 at 4.30 pm at Cruach House, Carrick Castle, Argyll, PA24 8AF

- 1) Liz Evans (LE) welcomed the committee members, Marion McCune (MM), Douglas Locke (DL), Rowan Fraser (RF) Jimmy Sim (JS) and Simon Garnett (SG). Cecilia Ferguson, member, was present as a visitor.
- 2) Approval of the Minutes of the last Committee Meeting held on 28th July 2015 were approved and proposed by RF & seconded by MM and signed. The follow ups are dealt within the minutes.
- 3) Report by the Chair on the current position of the Cormonachan Woodlands Association (CW). On 14th September LE & DL had a site meeting with David Robertson (DR) of FCS in the woodlands regarding the new lease. The boundaries of the woodlands were discussed. We were asked if we wanted to keep the same area or extend it in any way. It was decided that since we don't have an accurate plan, the FCS would do a GPS plan of the woodlands and paths. This was done on 21st September by Steve Gillen of FCS and we will be sent a copy of the new plan when it is completed. Additional points discussed were the linking of a track from the FCS road above the woodlands and linking the path at the north end of the woodlands to the Carrick Castle / Lochgoilhead road to just south of Lochwood where there is an old track. These would be approved by FCS. The boundaries would be marked out by CW once agreed on the final area to be included in the lease. FCS would also check on the ownership of the land that leads down to the main road. Further the SSSI status concerning Lichens in the woodlands would be looked into and advised to us. The felling of certain Sitka spruce trees was discussed and it was agreed that the

ones mentioned could be felled by Dallas Seawright and his Fife Countryside Rangers Volunteers subject to the documentation required by FCS being fulfilled. A maximum of 5 CM (about 5 tonnes) a quarter can be felled of under planted Sitka and this would commence at the Volunteers Weekend on 24/25th October 2015. FCS had no issue with natural sculptures being placed in the woodlands. We told DR that we had purchased marker posts for the walks and this was approved. Once we had a lease we would be able to put in interpretation signs too. The final discussion was the preparation of a five-year management plan and we were asked to keep it simple and concise and also provide a work programme for each year. LE & DL attended the Community Woodlands Association's (CWA) Annual Conference in Dunoon on 22<sup>nd</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup> August at their own expense (£30 each) which was a very useful networking event making a lot of contacts and gaining new information on grants, green woodworking courses, etc. There are a few funds available for CW to apply to for funding and these will be looked into once we have a FCS lease.

- 4) Report on the bank account and accounts for CW. RF advised that the bank balance was £386.34. The expenditure since the last committee meeting included the purchase of six fold up tables (1 m x 60 cm each) at a cost of £69.96 (£11.66 each) and annual hosting of the CW website at £100.00.
- 5) Secretary's report including an update on the website. DL reported that he was keeping the website up to date and that the Latest News was updated regularly. The membership currently has 34 members, 26 are Full Members; 4 are Associates; 1 is a Corporate and 3 are free Child Members providing an income of £330.00 to date. The latest fourth Members' Update had been sent out to members by e-mail on 2nd September 2015 and a further one will be sent out prior to the Volunteers Weekend. The Minutes and Members Updates are viewable on the CW History page. MM reported that the CW Facebook has been kept up to date. DL attended the Harvest Festival in Lochgoilhead village hall on 5th September with support from member, Sheron Hambly to make more local people aware of CW. DL attended a Wood of Our Own event in Helensburgh on 1st September and apart from being a good networking event, managed to get agreement in principle for volunteer tools up to £1,000 from the Community Fund managed by FCS with 100% grant. DL was asked to list the assets that CW had accumulated to date - these are:- 2 Roller Banner Displays (£87.69); 6 Fold Up Tables (£69.96); 10 Marker Posts (£59.51); 12 Display Boards (Donated) & 2 Display Squirrels (Donated). Total cost to CW was £217.16.
- 6) Review of the Loch Goil Gala Day on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2015. DL prepared a review that was sent out to the committee on 26th August. LE said the event was very successful gaining new

members and increasing CW's income by £222.80 less £10.00 for the cost of the stand site. Running two competitions was one too many for the size of the 3m x 3m marquee loaned to us by the Carrick Castle Boat Club. It was fairly obvious that we need to have a bigger marquee at future outdoor events and it was agreed that we should obtain quotes for larger marquees and ascertain what grants would pay for this purchase. It was also mentioned that CW will need a long banner for the front of a marquee - "Cormonachan Woodlands Association" and white wipe boards for prices of items for sale so that prices can be altered appropriate to the day's selling. *Action DL - quotes for marquees, banner and white wipe boards.*

- 7) Car park development - JS said he chased up Elizabeth Bain (EB) for the plans and copy lease for the Cormonachan Woodlands car park as Argyll Holidays said to him that they had definitely given copies of the plans and lease to her but she had not responded again. *JS will before the next meeting attempt again to get copies of the proposed car park plans and lease from Elizabeth Bain and/or Argyll Holidays, the current parties that are signature to the agreements made in the past. FCS wish to see the lease and plans as soon as possible. We can't apply for any major funding until we have a FCS lease. JS advised that he had previously requested £3K from enTrust over the next two years through the Loch Goil Community Council as grants for community projects but has not heard anything more able this. JS to follow both these items up.*
- 8) Plans for the Volunteers Weekend (24/25th October 2015). It was decided that the times would be 09.30 to 16.30 on each day but subject to weather. Dallas Seawright (DS) of Fife Countryside Rangers Volunteers will bring his volunteers to CW and will concentrate their work on felling, clearing and burning under planted Sitka spruce from the top area of the Squirrel Trail where they have been previously working over the years they have come to CW. LE & DL will mark the trees to be felled with tape as discussed with DR of FCS. DS is providing the necessary paperwork to DR as required by FCS. Ardroy is covering insurance for the weekend for DS group and CW group. Medical Forms will be required to be completed by all volunteers, even for children with parents consent. These forms will be issued to all volunteers on arriving at CW. The tasks for the CW volunteers will be as follows:-
- a) Map culverts & clean out.
  - b) Map tables & benches and clean up.
  - c) Clear out Rhoddies & bracken from the tree nursery and other non-native species such as Sitka spruce leaving Scots Pine, Oak, Rowan, Hazel & Birch.
  - d) Clear overgrown vegetation from paths and ditches.
- A team leader will be appointed to each task.

Car parking will have to be in the large lay by just down the road from CW on the left as Fife volunteers will have a minibus parked in front of the TV aerial and there will be two CW committee cars to the side of the aerial for emergency use. The Wee Goil will have a notice about the volunteers weekend in the October issue.

9) A 100% grant application for volunteers tools has been applied for from the Community Fund administered by FCS amounting to £917.22 inc. VAT. this includes:- Scythes, Sickles, Pruners, Secateurs, Pruning Saws, Bow Saws, Spades, Pointed Shovels, Mattocks, Wheelbarrows, Buckets, Gloves, Hard Hats, Face Shields, Safety Spectacles, Hand Sanders and Sandpaper. The application according to FCS is looking good so we hope to have approval soon to purchase everything before the weekend. Tools will be kept in Jan's Hideaway, locked away and wheelbarrows in the locked shed.

10) CW Management Plan - Based on previous plans when Ardroy Outdoor Education Centre has a lease for CW, we have adapted the last plan for the next five years and this is called Cormonachan Woodlands Management Agreement that will be between FCS and CW & Ardroy as partners. This draft Agreement as attached. It has been amended to take into account the suggestions and comments made at the committee meeting. The CW Management Plan dated 2008 is not required by FCS but in the interests of CW it will be reviewed and updated in time by LE & RF and then put back to the committee for approval in 2015/16. FCS hope to have a lease based on the above agreement approved by the end of 2015.

11) CW Annual Maintenance Plan will be prepared for the next committee meeting. This will include the work to be completed in 2016. *Action LE.*

12) A request has been made to CW for a memorial Rowan tree to be planted in the woodlands with ashes scattered over the roots. This was approved by the committee and future applications would be considered.

13) Natural sculptures in the woodlands. DL explained that in quite a number of woodlands that he has visited, natural sculptures have been placed to make woodlands walks interesting. He showed a number of photographs of examples that are made of wood, stone and from living plants. Woodlands in Oban, Helensburgh and Colintrave have very good ones and talking to local visitors to our woodlands, there was definitely interest in having some alongside our paths. Funds can be obtained and we have good contacts for sources of information.

14) Other business – LE & DL will be attending a workshop on Lichens on 15th October 2015. *(All items in italics for following up).* The meeting closed at 17.40 hrs.