



Sent: 24th February 2019

To: All Members of the Cormonachan Woodlands Association

### **Cormonachan Woodlands Association Members Update No 39**

The Latest News - <http://www.cormonachan-woodlands.co.uk/news.html> and Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/cormonachan> are updated regularly so in between Members Updates please look at these for news.

### **IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT - Special General Meeting (SGM) on Monday 9th March 2020 at 4.30 pm at the Lochgoilhead Village Hall for the Cormonachan Woodlands Association.**

On 17th February 2020, Don Kamsley, Chair; Douglas Locke, Secretary & Dennis Bolt, Membership Secretary had a meeting with Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS) to agree a Lease for Cormonachan Woodlands to replace the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that has been in place since 2016. This MoU has been very restrictive since FLS would not allow the use of our fully trained and certificated chainsaw operators to cut up or fell any damaged or invasive and non-native trees to be felled by these member operators. Further, we have not been able to use an ATV with trailer to take down any logs from cut up trees; also to be able to use our fully trained and certificated pesticide sprayers to control the re-growth of cut down invasive *Rhododendron ponticum* without special permission documentation that takes months to obtain permission for each time.

The main reason for the CWA not being allowed to use our trained operator members under our MoU was that the FLS do not have insurance themselves even though the CWA has such insurance. Ultimately the FLS said they had the responsibility for any mishaps but if the CWA had a lease, the responsibilities would lay with the CWA and we would be able to manage the woodlands freely and use our certificated operator members subject to an annual management review by FLS.

The CWA first agreed with FLS an agreement in principle for a lease on 30th August 2019. Since then the FLS put the matter to their solicitors

and finally to the FLS Board that was approved the week before our meeting with FLS on 17th February 2020. FLS Land Management team say that it will now take about three months to prepare the lease legally for signing and it will be for 20 years. In order for the CWA to have a lease however, it has been stated that the CWA would have to convert its current status from being an unincorporated not-for-profit organisation to being either a limited company by guarantee or a SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation). The CWA committee agreed that a limited company would be more appropriate for the CWA and that would not only be acceptable to the FLS but it would also be acceptable to any major funders who are now requiring the CWA to be an incorporated organisation with a 20 year lease.

The not-for-profit status still remains and whereas the CWA has had a Constitution, that would have to be turned into a Memorandum of Association under The Companies Act 2006. Each member would have a liability of £1 and the membership options would remain with similar objects as before. In order to register a name for the organisation, the word Association has to be dropped from Cormonachan Woodlands Association and it has been agreed that the name be changed to 'Cormonachan Community Woodlands' (Ltd.) which also solves a further problem in so much as our umbrella community organisation, Community Woodlands Association is also shortened to CWA as well as our CWA - the change will alleviate this. Our CWA committee members have therefore agreed to put these changes to a vote at a Special General Meeting (SGM) where all six committee members have signed agreement for the SGM to take place on 9th March 2020 where voting will take place to move the incorporation and lease forward.

Providing the points raised in the SGM are passed, a new organisation the Cormonachan Community Woodlands Ltd. will be formed and commenced on 1st April 2020 replacing the Cormonachan Woodlands Association. All 142 current members will be invited to join under the same membership options. All current members will have to sign a new membership form as this will be a new organisation even though the assets and agreements will be passed over from the outgoing CWA. Life Members will still have to fill in the form for membership but will not be due to pay further subscriptions having already done so for life. Members will receive a membership application form from the Membership Secretary after the voting as taken place.

The above will be explained at the SGM and questions may be asked before the voting takes place. We hope as many members as possible will be able to attend the meeting and vote for these important changes for the future of the Cormonachan Woodlands.

## "Upper Cormonachan Paths Project" Update

The "Upper Cormonachan Paths Project Fund" has now reached **£13,029** as at 24th February 2020. We are now having to find 5% of the full funding required for the construction costs of £323,484, that is £16,175 so we now need to find an extra **£3,146** to meet the Lottery Heritage Fund's requirements from local donations for the project. We have three months to find this additional funding or we'll have to put the project back a further three months until we have raised locally the **£16,175** required. I'm sure we can do it with a bit of effort... I (Douglas Locke) will offer another £1,000 if others can make up the difference?

This total has increased by the '**Adopt a Tree**' suggestion by one of our members who suggested we offer the replanting programme of the 105 trees as another way of raising funds for the new paths construction. 45 trees have already been adopted and were planted on Friday 22nd November Volunteers Day. If anyone else would like to adopt a tree or a grove, they are £5 per tree or £40 for a grove of 10 trees. Plaques or tags will be available a cost later on. We have requested a further 105 trees to plant in the woodlands for November 2020 from the Woodland Trust fund for communities.

Please read the Minutes of the last committee meeting held on 14th January 2020 so you can be updated fully on the paths project and all other matters now before reading further on. Click on this link - <http://www.cormonachan-woodlands.co.uk/admin/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/CWA-Committee-Minutes-14012020.pdf>

As you have been made aware previously, we have been trying to get permission to use our 'Competent Chainsaw Operators', certificated and assessed, to be allowed to fell the approved non-native trees along the new paths route but without success. In the last Members Update we advised that Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS) had agreed to our request but literally the day before the November volunteers days, FLS decided at Board level not to allow this work to happen. In consolation, FLS agreed to have the 92 trees felled by their own contractors at their cost. They also informed us that we would only be allowed to use our CWA chainsaw operators if we converted our Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with FLS valid to 2026 to a Lease with FLS for Cormonachan Woodlands. They explained this as the FLS does not have insurance and they would be liable under a MoU whereas not under a lease. The CWA has always had such insurance and the policy specifies the use of chainsaws.

Three members of the committee and managers from the FLS had a meeting on 17th February 2020 in order to try and conclude agreement for the new lease that will leave the FLS still responsible for any trees that fall across the public road that covers 1 & 1/2 miles of road frontage below Cormonachan Woodlands between Cormonachan Burn and by the

Clach Bhadach entrance to the woodlands just south of the Lochwood House drive. The lease will also give us freedom to fully manage the woodlands being able to use chainsaws once again.

We have just heard that Visit Scotland's Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund for £75,000 that has been supported by the Argyll & Bute Council has been declined for the following reason 'Unfortunately, in this case, there is insufficient evidence of an existing visitor and community pressure point arising as a result of increased visitor numbers' - we tried for this funding and have to take the setbacks and find another funding source to replace this one. We were just about to put an application into the National Lottery Heritage Fund for up to £250,000 by 2nd March but are delaying this by three months due to having to be incorporated and having a lease now. We were not successful with our funding applications with the Scottish Landfill Communities Fund for £25,000 or the Weir Charitable Fund for £25,000. There is so much competition for funding that even when you have a good cause, there may be others with better ones? You have to take the knocks and be positive with future funding applications.

All other funding details and other matters are contained in the Minutes.

### **Next Volunteers Days**

Friday 28th February 10 am to 4 pm

Saturday 29th February 10 am to 4 pm

Sunday 1st March 10 am to 4 pm

Work to do includes cutting invasive Rhododendron ponticum and bracken, strimming the paths (certificated volunteer members only), scything, felling Sitka spruce trees (certificated volunteer members only), pruning branches alongside the paths, painting the Red Squirrel Hide & storage shed and the Contemplation Shelter, maintaining the ditches, cleaning the picnic tables & benches, helping to make sculptures, topping up the squirrel feeders, cleaning the information signs and anything else that may be needed to maintain the woodlands in good order.

Please email the Volunteers Leader in advance of the Volunteers Day you wish to attend:- [Volunteers@cormonachan-woodlands.co.uk](mailto:Volunteers@cormonachan-woodlands.co.uk)

Those that volunteer enjoy the experience and we hope more members will give volunteering a '**GO**'... You will be very welcome! Members will be welcome to help mornings, afternoons or all day, 10 am to 4 pm with an social half hour's break for lunch between 12.45 and 1.15 pm. It is fun!

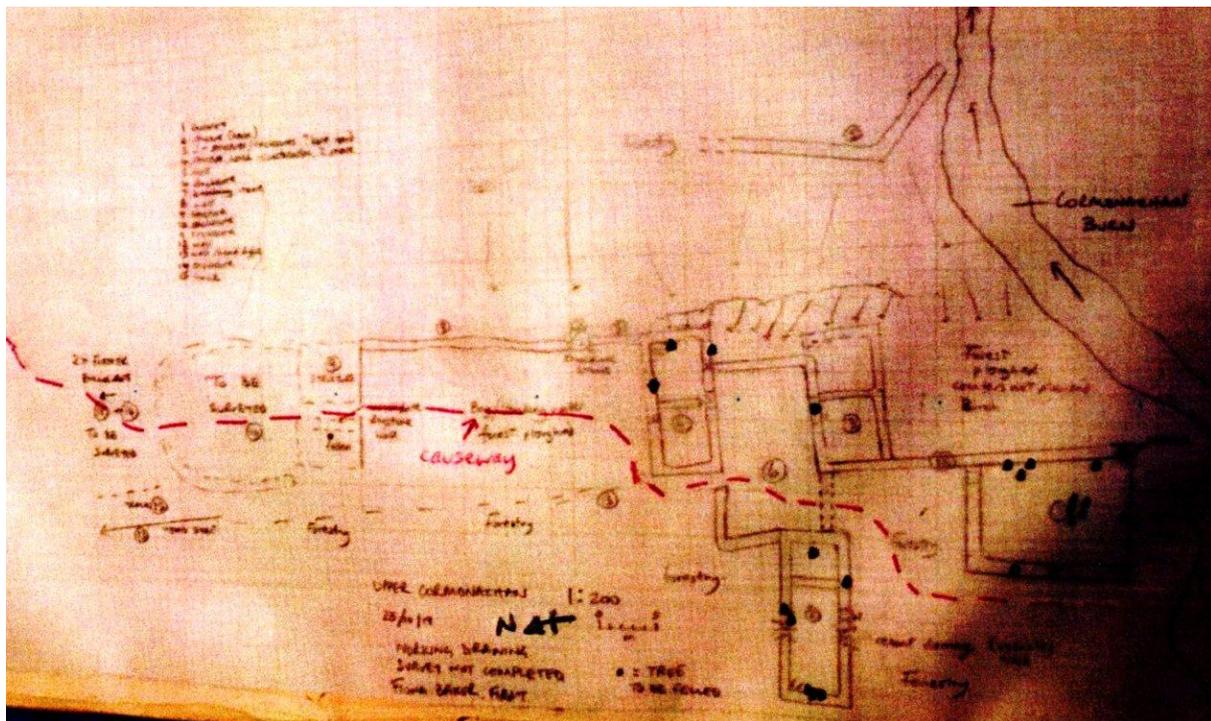
Check out our 'Volunteering' page on our website:-

<http://www.cormonachan-woodlands.co.uk/cormonachan-history/volunteering/> for more information.

## Upper Cormanachan Paths Project - Archaeological Survey

The further archaeological investigation work at the Upper Cormanachan settlement was carried out by Firat Archaeological Services on 14th February 2020. The West of Scotland Archaeology Service (WoSAS) has approved the work done to date and the National Park and FLS have been fully updated with the archaeologists interim reports. The final report cannot be finalised until the trees to be felled or lopped at the settlement has taken place and for that we are still awaiting the FLS to advise when the contractors will be on site. FLS and Firat are meeting on site on Tuesday 25th February 2020 to try and set a date for this work to commence. WoSAS have approved the pathway route through the settlement as shown on the below working plan.

<http://www.cormanachan-woodlands.co.uk/admin/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Upper-Cormanachan-Settlement-update-26-Oct-2019.pdf>



Once the felling & lopping has been completed and the interim report updated, Firat will advise on the text and layout of the lectern display panel that is to be sited in the settlement to cover its archaeology and history. The funding is already in place for this sign to be produced and erected supported by the Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park's Heritage Fund. The cost of this work and sign was £5,425.20 paid for with a 100% grant.

## **Private Water Supplies**

Private water supplies from Cormonachan Woodlands to the houses to the east and below the woodlands were surveyed for Forestry and Land Scotland by the CWA and the findings were passed to FLS and the National Park's planning authority and Environmental Health Officer. Condition 5 of the planning approval has now been satisfied meeting all requirements.

<http://www.cormonachan-woodlands.co.uk/admin/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/CW-Water-Extraction-Points-Survey-08102019.pdf>

Private water supply agreements will remain the responsibility of Forestry and Land Scotland and any related matters should be addressed to them. They will in the near future be contacting all owners of water supply equipment and pipe work to ask the owners to remove old or new pipe work that is not being used and also to remove old unused tanks or coverings too. When the path is constructed up the hill from the new car park to the waterfalls and settlement, existing pipe work, where these cross the proposed paths, will be put in conduits under the paths. Where the path passes close to Header Tank 2, a wooden fence will be put in front of it by the path, not to hide it but to give it more security.

All Construction Method Statements are available to be viewed on the National Park's planning website. The paths construction will not start before 1st September 2020.

## **Coop Local Community Fund**

The Association has been benefiting from this fund since the end of October 2019 and will do so until 24th October 2020. The Coop donate 1% of purchases made from any Coop products UK wide, providing the Cormonachan Woodlands Association has been chosen by a Coop member. If you are not a member, it costs £1 to join and you can join here - <https://membership.coop.co.uk/new-registration>.

Visit our Coop cause page at <https://membership.coop.co.uk/causes/36994>

As at 24th February 2020, this fund has reached £263.25 in four months. Our target was £256 and there are eight months still to go. We should be able to purchase more signs for the new paths as a result.

## **Membership of the Cormonachan Woodlands Association**

The current membership for the year to date for 2019/2020 stands at 142 members of which 97 are Full Individual Members, 30 are Associate

Members, 6 are Life Members, 4 are Corporate Members, 2 are Associate Corporate Members and 3 are Child Members (free).

Membership enquiries should to addressed to Dennis Bolt, Membership Secretary - Membership@cormonachan-woodlands.co.uk.

### **Red Squirrel Hide Update**

Since the Red Squirrel Hide was erected in March 2018, the donation box has received **£291.14** which is very helpful as that money goes towards feeding the red squirrels and pine martens that have currently got though 137.5 kilos of nuts that has cost £186.79. With these donations, their feeding is self-supporting and we now have £104.35 in hand for more nuts.

### **Position Vacant on the Committee**

As mentioned in the latest committee meeting minutes, the Committee are still looking for a member to become the Association's **Volunteers Leader** - see <http://www.cormonachan-woodlands.co.uk/admin/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/CWA-Volunteers-Leader-Job-Description.pdf> - Full training would be given and for the first year, we can offer job share to ease you into this volunteer's position. This is mainly to organise two volunteers days a month from February to May and September to November and walking around the paths once a month.

### **Emergency First Aid at Work + F Courses**

Following two first aid courses in September and December 2019, we now have 12 trained first aider members.

### **Appeal for more Team Leaders**

The CWA is looking for more Team Leaders. Would you like to help?

The responsibilities of a team leader are as follows:-

<http://www.cormonachan-woodlands.co.uk/admin/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/CWA-Team-Leader-Check-List-1.pdf>

### **Free Funds for Cormonachan Woodlands Association**

GoRaise has now raised **£173.40** to Cormonachan Woodlands Association from just ten of supporters that regularly purchase on line and at no cost to themselves! One hundred & thirty six purchases have been made to date donating £173.40 to the 'Upper Cormonachan Paths Project Fund'.

All members could help raise free donations for the Cormonachan Woodlands Association too, just from shopping online. Join here today... <https://www.goraise.co.uk/cormonachan-woodlands-association/?refid=3950> and then when registered add the 'Donation Reminder' <https://www.goraise.co.uk/donation-reminder/> - this is essential as it automatically tells you if the seller is a contributor or not.

There are over 3,000 online retailers that take part in the scheme to give commission donations to charities and not-for-profit organisations. There is absolutely **NO** cost to you; we have **no** idea what you buy; you do **not** get any spam e-mails as a result; so why not help raise funds for the Cormonachan Woodlands Association's Projects?

### **Latest News**

Please keep up to date by regularly looking at our Latest News page:- <http://www.cormonachan-woodlands.co.uk/news/> and by following our Facebook page too at <https://www.facebook.com/cormonachan>.

### **Damage to the Cormonachan Woodlands paths and car park**



Members may have seen the photos of the damage that was done by a quad bike(s) on 12th February 2020 between 3.45 pm and before 7.25 am the next morning. This was reported by a regular dog walker at 7.25 am 13th February and then added to ours and the local Loch Gail

Facebook pages that received a lot of support. Unfortunately no one has come forward to apologise for the damage that was done. The paths used to be grass but were churned up with mud as can be seen and the car park had been used to go round and round in breaking up the surface.



**Tail Piece...**

### **Your own Carbon Footprint**

Here's an interesting questionnaire from WWF that gives people an idea of their impact on the planet and tips on the small changes they can make. Click on this link <https://footprint.wwf.org.uk/> to find out your own carbon footprint.

### **Cormonachan Woodlands Mugs**

Cormonachan Woodlands Mugs are still for sale at £7.50 each. The profit from the sale of these goes towards the 'Upper Cormonachan Paths Project Fund'. These can be ordered from the Secretary. A few B & Bs in the area have purchased them for their guests to use.



### **Other Information**

The last Committee Minutes of 14th January 2020 and all previous ones can be viewed on this link:-

<http://www.cormonachan-woodlands.co.uk/cormonachan-history/minutes-of-meetings/>

The next Cormonachan Woodlands Association Committee Meeting is on 24th March 2020.

Cormonachan Woodlands Association -  
Douglas Locke, Secretary (Voluntary)

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