



Cormonachan Woodlands Association  
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## Minutes

A Committee Meeting was held on Tuesday 24th January 2017 at 4.30 pm at Cruach House, Carrick Castle, Argyll, PA24 8AF

- 1) Liz Evans (LE) welcomed the committee members, Douglas Locke (DL), Simon Garnett (SG), Jimmy Sim (JS) & Sharon Hambly (SH). Donald Kamsley (DK) sent his apologies.
- 2) Approval of the Minutes of the last Committee Meeting held on 20th September 2016 were approved and proposed by JS & seconded by SG and signed by the Chair. Matters arising from the last meeting had either been dealt with or are mentioned in the points that follow.
- 3) Chair's Report - LE advised that over the last four months lots of meetings had been held and lots of progress made and all is covered under various headings. Following an appeal to FCS higher authorities for an enlarged area of Cormonachan Woodlands (CW) to allow Cormonachan Woodlands Association's (CWA) to access wider funding and manage the wider area, the agreement now covers 50 ha from Cormonachan Burn to Lochwood in the north. The Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) Memorandum of Understand (MoU) has finally been agreed and it was signed by CWA at the end of December 2016 and AOEC Trust Ltd. signed it on 10th January 2017. As a result of the CW area being expanded from 20 ha to 50 ha, 1.5 miles on the west side of the main road, the nine houses to the east of the road have been written to advising them of this situation and inviting them to become members of the Association of which one was already a member. LE advised that the following would be covered in agenda - volunteers policy, risk assessments, annual management plan, long term management plan with help from Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park (LL&TNP), survey of paths for overhanging trees,

training for first aid, trimmers, chainsaws and spraying, car park, grants from FCS Community Fund and LL&TNP Natural Heritage Fund Scheme, sculpture trail, volunteers days and more. 'A Wood of Our Own' (AWOO) event organised by the Community Woodlands Association and funded by FCS will be held on 22nd February 2017 at Ardroy in the morning and a site visit to CW in the afternoon. Bookings, on-line, have to be made direct to the 'other' CWA. LE & DL attended the previous AWOO meeting in Mull and gave a presentation to their members on CW; LE & DL also attended the 'other' CWA's Conference on 2nd/3rd October 2016 in Forres that was very useful to the association.

- 4) Treasurer's Report - JS advised the current bank balance was £1,566.14. The 'Car Park Fund' totalled £1,685.35 however £364.59 had been paid out in refundable grant money so the actual balance would be £1,930.73 when the grant was paid back in February. This left £245.38 from subscriptions however after a payment of £72.27 for running costs (fuel/chainsaw oils, legal notices, etc.) this balance reduced to £173.11. We are therefore in need of more members to help run the Association. DL has been supporting the Association by paying the training costs and equipment that will be refunded to him when all the grants are paid to the CWA.
- 5) The Secretary reported that there were now 57 members of which 44 were Full Members, 8 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 next Members' Update will be sent out after this meeting. The CW Maintenance Book is up to date. Insurance cover for the new equipment has been increased from £2,000 to £3,350 at no increase of cost during the period to renewal after 31st March 2017. The insurance company has been advised of the forthcoming chainsaw course that has been acknowledged. A lot of work has taken place with getting the MoU and management plans updated (item 6). It has been suggested that CWA have a public/members notice board in the car park at CW. Cost would be £99.14 plus to oak posts. This will be put into the next 2017/2018 plan as money needs to be raised first. CWA joined Argyll Small Woods Cooperative (ASWC) for training support. LE & DL donated a large slate CW sign for erection on completion of the extended car park. Time sheets are kept to ascertain the amount of time donated to CWA with its value used for in-kind support to funding. DL's Secretary's time sheet dealt with 952 incoming e-mails and 855 outgoing e-mails since 1st April 2016 and voluntary time given to CWA has amounted to 60 days of time at 8 hours p.d. in the last 10 months, a value to the association of approximately £3,400. With so much work now completed, once

the funding for the car park has been achieved, we hope the work load should reduce considerably for the future.

- 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 FCS. 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 that the 'Car Park Fund' stands at £1,685.35 to date towards our target of £4,000 for work to commence. CWA applied to the Land Trust in August 2016 for a full grant from the Scottish Landfill Community Fund and has been told this comes up in early 2017 so we await the outcome. Aqiva were unable to offer the association any funding. SH advised that the Lease with Drimsynie and Loch Goil Community Trust for the car park area has been signed and we are awaiting a copy of the lease and advice that the trust does not owe the solicitors any further money. (*Action SH & DL*)
- 8) The CWA Annual Maintenance Plan for the year ahead to 31st March 2017 was on target for work to be completed. A new management plan will be put to FCS by March 2017 for the year commencing 1st April 2017 to 2018. In order to complete the plan this year, volunteers help at CW is needed. (*Action LE, DL & SG*)
- 9) 21 members will have completed training by February 2017. The training includes First Aid (8 members), Trimmer (6 members), Chainsaw (4 members) and Spraying (3 members). The funding has been provided by FCS Community Fund for first aid (£560.00) and LL&TNP Natural Heritage Fund Scheme for all the other funding including equipment (chainsaw, strimmer, spraying drills and personal protective equipment (PPE)(£4,212.10). Lochgoil Community Council are providing the spraying course to members through the same scheme (valued approximately at around a further £1,000).
- 10) Tasks to be undertaken on next Volunteer's Day include burning brash in the new car park area, cutting up and removal of felled trees for firewood. Clearing the brash from under the totem pole area and setting up this as a sculpture area. The dates for the next three volunteers days have yet to be confirmed but at present they will be one of two weekend days on 4th/5th March, 1st/2nd April & 6th/7th May. The committee would like to know from members who volunteer whether a Saturday or Sunday is preferable and whether volunteers would be prepared to offer a morning and/or afternoon of 3 hours each? (*Action LE & DL*).
- 11) Future plans will now have to be prepared for 2017/8 for training, equipment needed and volunteers work through grants.

Members are asked to make suggestions such as quod bike and woodworking training and woodworking tools. We will also apply for interpretation signs (habitat and history) and for some new path work.

- 12) CWA Risk Assessments (RA) for volunteers days have been drafted and are awaiting completion after industry advice. Chainsaw Risk Assessments have been completed and other RAs are to be prepared. (*Action LE*)
- 13) Sculptures Update - We hope to have the totem pole area completed first using rigging and canvas. LE has a rough plan as she suggests that most of the sculptures should be interactive. The next two will be interactive with tree discs from this tree that have been cut to turn into revolving wheels on metal poles and another will be a large pile of flat stones for people to try and pile on top of each other and photograph to go on a new Instagram site. The committee would also like members' suggestions for further sculpture ideas. (*Action LE, SG & DL*)
- 14) The next Committee Meeting will be held on 28th March 2017 at 4.30 pm at Cruach House, Carrick Castle.
- 15) Other business  
Training & networking opportunities:-
  - 1) Forest Management on 8th February 2017 at Kilmelford.
  - 2) A Wood of Our Own on 22nd February 2017 at Ardroy & CW.
  - 3) Plant Life on 7th March 2017 at Luss from 10 - 1pm.

LE suggested that the Constitution should be assessed for any changes that might be needed at the next AGM. For example, should it say before committee, 'volunteer' as 'volunteer committee' as all are volunteers and unpaid. This will be discussed at the next committee meeting.

The meeting closed at 18.18 hrs.