



Cormonachan Woodlands Association  
The Secretary, Douglas Locke,  
Cruach House, Carrick Castle, Argyll, PA24 8AF  
T: 01301 703098 F: 01301 703098 (on request)  
E: [Secretary@cormonachan-woodlands.co.uk](mailto:Secretary@cormonachan-woodlands.co.uk)  
W: [www.cormonachan-woodlands.co.uk](http://www.cormonachan-woodlands.co.uk)

## Minutes

A Committee Meeting was held on Tuesday 29th August 2017 at 4.30 pm at Cruach House, Carrick Castle, Argyll, PA24 8AF

- 1) Liz Evans (LE) welcomed the committee members, Douglas Locke (DL), Donald Kamsley (DK) Jimmy Sim (JS) & Frances Walker (FW). David Thorpe (DT) sent his apologies. In attendance was Sue Morris (SM), FES Argyll Forest Park Manager.
- 2) Approval of the Minutes of the last Committee Meeting held on 4th July 2017 were approved and proposed by FW & seconded by DK and signed by the Chair. One matter arising from DL who hadn't added in the last minutes that approval had been given to buy a white board for red squirrel & wildlife recordings.
- 3) Chair's Report - LE thanked DK, FW & DL for their help on Gala Day that raised £77.49 for the Project Fund, currently for red squirrel feeders and a hide - two feeders were purchased (£31.90) as a result. The weather on the day was very wet and extremely windy and the marquee did suffer some damage as did a banner that has been repaired. Seven new members were enrolled. FW was thanked for keeping the squirrel feeders topped up with nuts. Ardroy is to be asked to supply more feed as the tubs are now empty. Phil Thompson at Ardroy has volunteered to erect the mooring rope into the trees by Jan's Hideaway for squirrels to use and a site needs to be agreed for a hide where visitors can see the squirrels there. Hide costs now need to be explored. A suggestion was made to make a donations box through the wall of Jan's Hideaway. SRDP possible funding was slowly coming together mainly for Rhododendron ponticum eradication plus path maintenance from The Scottish Government. The map area supplied by SRDP was

incorrect so it is to be amended. DL & LE are attending a SRUC workshop on 5th September to find out more about these funding applications based on funding per hectare. LE advised that Simon Franks (SF), Tree & Woodland Adviser from the National Park (NP) gave a free training day to 3 CWA members & 9 Ardroy instructors on a strategic plan for Rhododendron ponticum removal on 15th August 2017. Now that we have received the FES Forest Management Plans for the Loch Goil area, available to be viewed on CWA website under History/Reports, CWA plans will have to be agreed with FES. The start of which was a 3 1/2 hour walk around a large area of the woodlands from north to south with SM, Rebecca Smith (RS) and Steve Murphy from FES.

- 4) Treasurer's Report - JS advised that the current bank balance was £997.12 that was basically a balance of an accumulation of membership fees (£916.24) and 'Project Fund' (£80.88). JS said that after looking into changing banks from the Cooperative Bank to the Royal Bank of Scotland, it was not straight forward and could be more trouble than it was worth so recommended staying with the same bank for the time being. This was approved.
- 5) The Secretary reported that there were now 71 members for the year to 31st March 2018 of which 3 were Life Members, 52 were Full Members, 11 were Associates, 3 were Child Members (free) and there were 2 Corporate Members. The website is kept up to date and Facebook as well, with regular news. The last Members Update No 20 was sent out on 10th July 2017 and the next No 21 will go out after the Minutes are published.
- 6) The CWA Management Plan for the next ten years was passed to FES and FCS. The walk around CW prior to the meeting with FES, LE & DL had been a very useful exercise for FES personnel to understand the management of the woodlands that is required and the plans for the future. SM had a number of questions to do with the woodlands management, recording of information, risk assessments for all work done including tree felling and for the sculptures and the Ardroy tepee. DL & LE have a site visit planned regarding the proposed path to Upper Cormonachan and the waterfalls with Guy Keating (GK) of the NP to assess the work involved and likely cost of the project. As planning permission would also be required, it takes a long time to plan a big project like this. SM said that outwith the agreed felling licence for Sitka spruce, we would need to give at least a month's notice for any other felling of trees within CW. She also said that she would need to see all the risk assessments that CWA & Ardroy have whilst working in CW and have a copy of the members names and certificated activities that training had been achieved for. She also

said that CWA should have formal regular inspections recorded for the sculptures, tepee and paths inspections. DL advised that we already kept a maintenance book for work done in CW and that signed record sheets would now be kept. SM inspected the pesticides and storage cabinet in which they are kept and this was approved earlier in the day.

- 7) Car park development - DL advised that the NP planning authority confirmed approval of the car park with one item to be monitored which is the water seeping out from the Arqiva aerial compound and across the car park entrance to the ditch. Water has to be diverted into the ditch and must not access the road. HF Comms Ltd., working at the compound, have been advised about this and the damage to the car park surface has been repaired with the exception of the damage to the ramp. The white lining of the car park bays will be done prior to the opening day as soon as the surface is dry. There will be a formal opening of the car park on 14th September 2017 and James Fraser (FOLLAT) will open the car park with members, funders and press present.
- 8) The Gala Day report was covered in the Chair's Report.
- 9) The four members who attended the Trimmer course on 21st August 2017 all passed and are now certificated to strim the paths in Cormonachan Woodlands. On the course day they strimmed the Squirrel Trail and are willing to volunteer again in the future. This now gives the CWA 8 certificated members and Ardroy 2 certificated members. 100% funding amounting to £425.00 for this course was obtained from the FCS Community Fund.
- 10) Update on Annual Maintenance Plan - CWA is not yet half way through its year plan yet but is on course to achieve the aims for the year. Trained member operators maintenance situation; CWA has 27 certificated courses that members have taken (First Aid, Trimmer, Chainsaw, Pesticides & Food Hygiene (FH)); Ardroy has 9 certificated courses that their staff have taken (First Aid, Trimmer, Chainsaw, Pesticides). These two were members of CWA during training but have not renewed their memberships. The availability of trained personnel is as follows:-  
First Aiders: 11; Trimmer Operators: 8 + 2 (A); Chainsaw Operators (200 mm): 3 + 2 (A); Chainsaw Operators (380 mm): 3 + 2 (A); Pesticides handling: 2 + 1 (A); Pesticide Spraying: 1 + 1 (A) & Food Hygiene 1. 2 committee members advised they also had FH certificates at the meeting to add. Rhododendron ponticum eradication plan. Simon Franks & Craig Walker (LL&TNPA) led a training day for 9 Ardroy instructors and 3 CWA committee members in Cormonachan Woodlands to show the theory and

practical aspects of how to eradicate *Rhododendron ponticum* (RP). This was mainly to show the instructors when they bring primary school children to the woodlands on how to help tackle this problem. The practical demonstration undertaken by all was to cut the RP off around 100 - 150mm from the root base and pile the branches in organised piles in marked areas in section 6. CWA would follow and spray the cut off roots with pesticide. This strategy would produce better results than the haphazard approach that had been adopted in the past. LL&TNP Volunteers will be asked to assist in the RP eradication on volunteers days in the future. Bracken control information. DL attended a bracken control training day on 25th July 2017 at Kilmartin, Argyll with various demonstrations given using mechanical spraying/bashing and horse drawn methods. DL advised CWA currently use slashers (4).

- 11) Excavator hire - Suggestion that subject to sufficient funds available, we hire an excavator to clear out the worst ditches around the paths - Quoted cost £28.00 ph + VAT (£33.60). No minimum but prefer a day's hire from Drimsynie Construction (7 hours x 33.60 = £235.20). There are quite a few ditches around the paths now in need of cleaning. This is a heavy job to do by hand and takes a long time. The last ditch to be cleared that was done by three members at the south west corner of the Squirrel Trail and took about four hours between them. All the problem areas to the paths ditches could be cleared in a day by mechanical means. It was agreed that the path ditches should be surveyed to establish where this work should be undertaken and then the work should go ahead later in the autumn. DK & FW volunteered to do the survey.
- 12) Work Plan for the next Volunteers Day (Sunday 17th September 2017 from 1 - 4 pm). Team leaders DL, DK & FW. Apologies from LE as will be unable to attend. A plan will be prepared and advised to members.
- 13) LL&TNP Partner Organisation Volunteer Support Scheme Agreement has been reached for CWA to request Volunteer Support. CWA to prepare plan for using this volunteer's support with first support requested for Volunteers Weekend of 14th/15th October 2017 and onwards. Volunteers Weekend; this is usually accompanied by a group of volunteers from Fife. We do not yet know if they will be coming again this year however we can apply for LL&TNP volunteers for the weekend. This needs to be planned asap as we have to apply formally with what work we require to be done.

- 14) CWA Risk Assessments for Volunteers Days and other work in the woodlands. DK had identified a suitable template which was approved. SM to send DK FES Risk Assessments. Now the RAs need to be transferred on to the templates asap and a new one made for sculptures and Ardroy to provide one for the tepee.
- 15) General Project funding. A) Squirrel Hide and Feeders.  
B) Grant availability for new path to Upper Cormonachan & Waterfalls. GoRaise funding has produced £35.29 of funding from only 4 of our members who use it regularly (2 full & 2 associate). However, to date, only another ten have even looked at it which is very disappointing as it costs members nothing to use and CW gets a commission on every purchase made online. Other funding sources are being followed up. Balance after purchase of 2 new squirrel feeders = £80.88 (Gala Day £77.49 - £31.90 feeders + £35.29).
- 16) An Update on Sculptures progress. The totem pole now had colourful bunting and logs are being moved to form a semi-circular seating area which is still in progress.
- 17) Any other business; DL suggested we should have printed 1,000 A4 tri-folded leaflets as shown to the committee to publicise Cormonachan community woodlands and this was approved at a cost of around £60.00. The date for the next committee meeting will be on Tuesday 31st October 2017 at 4.30 pm at Cruach House, Carrick Castle. Everyone was thanked for attending the meeting.

The meeting closed at 18.30 hrs