



Cormonachan Woodlands Association
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Minutes

A Committee Meeting was held on Tuesday, 10th September 2019
at 4.30 pm at Cruach House, Carrick Castle

1) Welcome & Apologies.

The Chair (DK) welcomed everyone to the meeting. The committee members in attendance were Don Kamsley (DK), Douglas Locke (DL), Jimmy Sim (JS), Cecilia Ferguson (CF) and Dennis Bolt (DB). Apologies were received from Frances Walker (FW) and David Thorpe (DT).

2) Approval of the Minutes of the last Committee Meeting held on 30th July 2019.

The Minutes of the last meeting on 29th May 2019 were approved - proposed by DB & seconded by JS and signed by DK.

3) Chairman's Report, including the 'Upper Cormonachan Paths Project' (UCPP) meeting with Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS).

DK said that on 30th August DK & DB walked the proposed paths with Stuart Chalmers (SC), Regional Visitors Services Manager, Sue Morris (SM), Area Visitors Services Manager & Gordon Archibald (GA), Regional Land Manager of the FLS together with Ross McGowan (RMcG), Managing Director & Chris Cairns (CC), Project Manager of McGowans of Aviemore, the hill contractors. Following this, a table meeting was held together with DL & JS. At the meeting, FLS were in agreement that the paths project could proceed initially with the archaeology survey and the felling of the

84 Sitka spruce and 8 Larch on the proposed paths. The paths line was considered by the FLS to become 'a valuable visitors experience once completed and for the future'. The new car park was not now considered to be as big as it looked on the plans and they would come back with any suggestion the FLS architect may have regarding the layout within the approved planning decision. CC was asked to come back with some information requested by the FLS regarding the method statement and work plan. Permission is now to be granted for pesticide spraying of the Rhododendron ponticum re-growth as already applied for. The legal mechanism for the paths and car park agreements was suggested by GA to become a lease that would bring together all aspects of current agreements (MoU, car park, structures) and the new agreements for the second car park and paths. The CWA had stressed that whilst the current MoU satisfied the committee, it recognised a lease would give the CWA more freedom of operations within the CW providing the FLS accepted the liability of any trees falling on to the public road remained the liability of the FLS as at present. SC said the FLS now had more flexibility with creating a new lease and it would be able to accept that liability which meant a lease with FLS between them and CWA and AOEC Trust Ltd. would be acceptable subject to sight of the proposed agreement. Jan Foster (solicitor, CWA member and Ardroy Board Member) has agreed to view such a lease and recommend any alterations or acceptance. GA said he would set up a meeting with the FLS solicitors to discuss changing the MoU to a lease as soon as possible. The committee agreed that this should be pursued providing the liability of the road side trees falling on to the road remained that of the FLS and that private water supplies to Cormonachan residents as such remain under private agreements with the FLS. The MoU between AOEC Trust Ltd and the CWA would remain in force until a renewal date on 31st March 2027. DL was thanked for arranging the lunch for nine after the walk. DL advised that the LL&TNPA Heritage Fund had approved a grant of £5,425.20 for the archaeology survey and subsequent signage and that tree felling permission had already been requested for the period, 27th September 2019 to the end of May 2020 and that now FLS had agreed that Dallas Seawright (DS) and his Fife Conservation Group will be included in this permission for a weekend in November and next February.

4) Treasurer's Report.

JS advised the bank balance was currently £3,841.03 with £15.00 to be banked = £3,856.03 with an outstanding liability of £50.00 leaving £3,806.03. At the meeting DL advised that a further £582.39 was being donated to the 'Upper Cormonachan Paths Project Fund' that would bring the fund total up to £4,500.00. £500.00 of this amount had been promised by the Ardroy Board and the committee

thanked them for this donation. DL explained that the Lottery Heritage Fund have said that the CWA can apply for up to £250,000 providing it contributed 5% of this amount from local donations which would be £12,500. As the UCPP fund has now reached £4,500 the CWA needs £8,000 to be able to apply for this funding prior to application. The latest date for submission of the application is 12 noon on 19th November 2019 for a decision by March 2020. The CWA is therefore appealing for donations and is about to submit an application to the Lochgoil Development Trust for a grant up to £8,000 to meet the criteria for reaching the £12,500 required.

5) **Secretary's Report including donations received to date for the "Upper Cormonachan Paths Project Fund" and donations received in the Red Squirrel Hide.**

DL said the UCPP Fund had reached £4,500.00, the Red Squirrel Hide's donation box now totalled £211.57 since March 2018 and that £160.81 had been spent on 112.5 kg of peanuts to date leaving a balance in hand of £50.76.

DL advised that the first Emergency First Aid at Work (EFAW+F) course had seven attendees and that the course goes ahead on 16th and 20th September at Ardroy. Seven members take the first certificated course on 16th and five complete the extension for the two day course on 20th. The next course is to be held on 2nd and 6th December 2019 for refreshers after three years. The courses have been funded (£950) by Forestry Scotland (FS). DL is to see if FLS will accept a 1-day course in future, the next being in 2022.

DL said he would update on progress of the grant applications made and to be made as follows:-

a) DL then explained that the National Park Heritage Grant Scheme for £5,425.20 had been successful, for the cost of the Archaeology Survey (£4,165.20) and Interpretation panel & lectern (£1,260.00) for the old village required by West of Scotland Archaeological Services (WoSAS) and LL&TNPA. Fiona Baker of Firat Archaeological Services, Rhu had accepted the survey work and that after she has contacted WoSAS so work would commence at the beginning of October and the LGH Primary School P4-7 would be able to have a follow up visit to see an archaeology survey being conducted.

b) Following up on the Lottery Heritage Fund in 4) above, we have been advised by them that an important aspect of this fund is that 'a wider range of people will be involved in heritage'. The CWA has always been free and open to all, 24/7 all year round. Apart from all the letters of support the CWA has for the paths project from our area politicians, organisations, tourism businesses, the CWA members, Ardroy is a cooperation partner to the CWA and now The Scout Centre and the Lochgoilhead Primary School are also supporting this important project. DL asked the committee if there were any other supporters that the CWA could contact to be involved and it was suggested that Lorna Alexander with her Surgery Health Walk would be a useful addition for support. The same fund suggested that perhaps a part-time forester could be employed in the future and there were ways of funding, such a part time job. DL said that the Argyll Small Woods Cooperative (ASWC) had been looking into such a scheme and this would be followed up as the CWA is in need of a Volunteers Leader and a part time Forester would be a suitable solution. DL will be attending the next 'A Wood of Our Own' (AWOO) meeting run by the Community Woodlands Association at Colintrave on 29th October where FS and ASWC also attend.

c) EB Scotland Ltd - Funding request up to £323,484 - Grant application submitted and decision expected by end of September.

d) Lottery Heritage Fund (large) - £323,484 - Expression of Interest rejected due to size of monetary request. However, we are invited to apply for medium fund up to £250,000 - details already covered (4).

e) LandTrust - £20,000 - Expression of Interest completed - awaiting response.

f) Visit Scotland - Funding up to £323,484 - Application to be made via LL&TNPA when next open.

g) SRDP now the Agri Environment Climate Scheme run by the Scottish Government - Funding up to £323,484 - not yet open for 2019/2020 but will be applied for when next open. This scheme is normally open to registered woodland operators and the CWA is registered (BRN 250873).

h) Tesco Bags of Help - Eligible to apply for funding up to £25,000 but not yet open.

i) An application had been made to the Coop for £250 worth of signage - voting on that will commence after September 2019.

j) Tree of the Year 2019 - The Loving Trees in Cormonachan Woodlands on the path up to the Contemplation Shelter was not chosen, we do not know yet which tree or trees have been chosen to vote on through the Woodland Trust.

k) MyPark Scotland is a fall back crowd funding scheme open to community woodlands to try to top up funding. This will be considered in due course.

DL advised that there are many funds available and the CWA will pursue all that are available or try to group a number together to reach the required total funding required.

The Woodland Trust are delivering 105 oaks and other deciduous trees in November 2019 for our volunteers to plant away from the new paths. These are a requirement to satisfy one of the conditions in the planning approval as we have to fell 84 Sitka spruce and 8 Larch trees along the planned new paths.

6) Membership Secretary's Report. Update on membership.

DB said the CWA now had 135 members: 91 Full; 29 Associates; 4 Corporate; 2 Associate Corporate; 6 Life & 3 Child (free). 22 members joined at the Loch Goil Gala Day. DB said that he had updated the membership data base and that all members interlink with those that can physically volunteer and those that have certificated qualifications.

7) Ardroy Report on use of Cormonachan Woodlands for the year ahead and tasks for 2019/2020.

DT was not in attendance so this will be carried forward to the next committee meeting. DT e-mailed to say that Ardroy will be donating £500 to the UCPP Fund that was welcomed by the committee and that the children visiting Ardroy over the winter period would continue to cut down Rhododendron ponticum. DK asked that Ardroy instructors be reminded to pile the cuttings in windrow piles away from the paths and ditches so that the branches can eventually be burnt.

8) Volunteers Leader position to be filled - A job share?

DK said the position of Volunteers Leader is still vacant, however DL said that he would continue with the admin side as long as a member or members would come forward to be prepared to survey the paths for condition and overhanging branches to report at least monthly any work that needs to be done. The job description can be viewed on the 'Volunteering' page on the Association's website. DL said he would help anyone take over this position or job share initially.

9) Strimming the paths update.

The southern end of the Squirrel Trail paths were the last to be strimmed. The state of the paths at the northern end of the paths is unknown until someone can come forward to survey the area.

10) Next Volunteers Days for Pesticide Spraying have been booked with FLS to be between 16th to 29th September and will be on one day with suitable weather conditions.

DL advised that verbal permission had been given for Pesticide Spraying of the Rhododendron in CW for the period between 16th and 29th September but the written permission had not yet been received although promised before the require dates. The FLS had agreed with the CWA that it needed 2 week's notice for such spraying but the timing is well overdue. DK is the Pesticide Spraying Leader and will contact the other five certificated sprayer volunteers as soon as a suitable day has been assessed. The pesticide has now to be supplied by FLS and this has been requested.

11) Update on future Volunteers Days for September (27th-28th), October (25th-26th) & November (22nd-24th), including Fife Conservation Group commencing the felling of trees on the planned UCPP paths on 23rd & 24th November 2019.

Volunteers Days:-

Friday 27th September 10 am to 4 pm
Saturday 28th September 10 am to 4 pm

Friday 25th October 10 am to 4 pm
Saturday 26th October 10 am to 4 pm

Friday 22nd November 10 am to 4 pm
Saturday 23rd November 10 am to 4 pm
Sunday 24th November 10 am to 4 pm

and then start again in February 2020 to June 2020.

- 12) Priority tasks for Volunteers Days for the autumn, including painting, Rhododendron removal and CWA chainsaw operators felling trees along the planned UCPP paths.

The priority tasks for the Volunteers Days ahead will be Rhododendron ponticum (cutting & burning); the maintenance tasks on the linked lists shown on the Volunteering website page; painting the floor of the Contemplation Shelter and painting the Red Squirrel Hide and shed before winter under suitable conditions.

Planting of the replacement trees will take place on 22nd November following a survey of 105 planting positions to go ahead on 27th September by DK, DB & CF.

Tree felling will commence on 27th September and through the autumn/winter period by our chainsaw volunteers hopefully assisted by other CWA volunteers to help move the logs and burn the brash.

- 13) First Aid Training - An update on two courses, the first 16th & 20th September and the second 2nd & 6th December 2019.

DK said this had already be covered in item 5).

- 14) Review of Loch Goil Gala Day event on 3rd August 2019.

DK said this had already been covered in item 3).

- 15) Any other business?

No other business at this time.

- 16) Date for next committee meeting?

The date for the next CWA Committee Meeting will be on Tuesday 12th November at 4.30 pm at Cruach House, Carrick Castle.

(The meeting closed at 18.20 hrs)