

Portmoak Community Woodland Steering Group

Meeting: 28th October 2004
Present KMcDonnell, J.Shepherd, R.McDonnell, S.Garvie, R.Barlow,
L.Batchelor,B.Drysdale, H.Rolton, E.Carruthers

Apologies M.Brown, D.Batchelor, J.Aitken

No comments on previous minutes

Woodland Trust Update:

Volunteer Group of the Year PCW has won the Woodland Trust Scotland Award, presented with certificate and a copy of 'The Man who planted Trees'.

Harvesting Works harvesting works completed, path reinstatement disappointing, WT speaking to contractors as regards upgrade. Silver Birch left for community use, D.Batchelor, M.Hogg both require firewood. Noble Fir off-cuts in place good habitat for insects especially sawflies. High stumps in felling area cut.

Damming Work: completed, last dam near bridge not being put in this year so extraction route dry for future felling.

Rhododendron: Contractor recommends this is removed as invasive, however those present agreed it would be preferable to tidy existing and monitor and control future growth.

Paths : New path at Wellburn may be on adjoining land, JA believes that the WT boundary is the ditch, R.Barlow to verify.

Eric's Bridge to be upgraded, agreed to complete by Feb 05.

Planks have been placed by 'unknown' person along secret walk, these are potentially hazardous and should be removed, M.Hogg to undertake.

Plank over ditch at middle set of steps not up to standard, RMcD and JS to discuss reinstatement

New woodland paths, considered alternative routes, would prefer these remain 'informal' although WT believe there would be access to funding to improve standard to reflect existing circular walk.

All abilities access to raised bog, those present felt that this was desirable and should be considered in parallel with other developments.

Jaitken had raised the issue of water in ditches as a potential hazard, it was agreed that information relating to depth of water in ditches could be incorporated into signage.

R.Barlow to reword WT information poster along the lines of 'be aware that depth of water in ditches has increased as a consequence of damming'

New leaflet to be produced for the Moss, as part of the grant scheme, WT drafting, Group will have opportunity to comment.

Grahamstone entrance: Consider widening kissing gate, as members of public walking around, should be a case of moving strainer. JS/RMcD have undertaken.

Paths Group L.Batchelor attended, good turnout, principal topic being the core paths network, nothing contentious regarding community woodland.

Kilmagadwood: insufficient regeneration may have to plant out to meet grant conditions. R.Barlow is planning this exercise, planting species, and groupings, work to be undertaken 21st November. WT to provide trees, KMcD to advise school.

Bats: Boxes removed awaiting relocation to new site following discussions with WT. Unable to access woodland, but 9 boxes will be relocated at earliest opportunity. BD to pursue with Al Borland.

MSc Study: Hilary provided copy of literature review, copies to be made available to group, also reported successful translocation of sphagnum. The study will be useful in explaining significance of site. HR is to provide an electronic copy of study for circulation, ideal info for inclusion in WT leaflet. HR advised we should be considering the introduction of species into the Moss, which will encourage sphagnum development.

Woodland Update: Red Squirrels seen in Scots pine by several members of the public. Jay(s) heard. Discussed having a 'diary' or log maintained by member of group, S.Garvie volunteered to undertake

Treasurers Report: £1445.19 in account.

AoCB

Ceilidh: JShepherd congratulated for making necessary arrangements. Raised additional funds for group, also raising awareness of PCW and bog restoration.

WT Tree for All: Group to organise an event to coincide with this initiative 18-23rd November, date proposed as 21st November. Planting to be undertaken in lower enclosure Kilmagadwood. Note to school, children must be accompanied by an adult, take place 1200hrs onwards meet at church car park. R.Barlow to get 300 trees cell grown, also tubes and stakes. Will also liaise with JS regards delivery of same.

Wellburn: Path day set for 3rd October, to reinstate path between curling pond and well burn, also extend to tie in existing paths providing alternative 'woodland' walks.

Community Woodland Association. Woodland Officer wishes to attend meeting/site visit to woodlands, extend invitation to Nov/Dec meeting.

Woodland Visit Bobby Stewart of Arndean has extended an invitation to visit his award winning woodland. This will be arranged for Spring 2005.

HND Countryside Management Students: B.Drysdale has arranged for a number of students to undertake a module of their course relating to Countryside Visitor

Provision within the Moss. The outcome of the study will hopefully come up with valuable management ideas, which the group can then consider. BD distributed questionnaire to those present responses will be analysed by students as one component of study.

Reforestation Scotland: Group to rejoin KMcD to complete paperwork.

Rustic Information Board discussed, Bdrysdale, M.Hogg to consider designs.

Burns Supper: DB has started pulling 'player' together, D.Munro, R.Scott,S.Braid, Ecarruthers volunteered to participate. Will run raffle, M.Hogg creating rustic chair from scots pine as main prize.

Any other suggestions for next meeting.

Cost of music from Scottish Music Information Centre as last year.

Next meeting : 18th November The Well Country Inn