

Portmoak Community Woodland Steering Group

Meeting: April 2007 The Well Country Inn

Present: K.McDonnell, L.Batchelor, J.Shepherd, S.Garvie, JGunnell,
D.Carruthers,M.McGinnes,L.Botton

Apols: R.Barlow E.Carruthers,R.McDonnell, H.Rolton, D Batchelor, A.Bradley,
MBrown,

No matters arising from March minutes

Woodland Trust Update

R.McDonnell and D.Batchelor to provide copies of nptc and first aid certificates to R.Barlow for WT records.D.Batchelor undertaking First Aid training over next few months. Contact details required for red squirrel picture, digital version for WT photo library with permissions to use.S.Garvie looking at how to present weather data most effectively.

Contractor has been working on Kilmagadwood, check that access gate to lower enclosure has been repaired

Tetley Trail/Michael Bruce Way

In order to register an interest in land linked to community woodlands would require to have a local community trust, the existing woodland group would not be in a position to pursue in isolation. This type of trust is currently under consideration see next item. Copy minutes to Wendy McPhedran, possibility that could pursue thorough this avenue.

Interpretation

R Barlow is taking forward the 'life cycle' with in-house WT team. JG suggestion to include further visual images of land use viewed as a useful addition. R. Barlow to advise of next steps. Discussed pursuing at a local level via local artist.

Viewpoint Indicator

KMcD to contact Osprey and id when they may be in this area, invite to attend meeting.

Weather Data

Portmoak Gliding Union weather data linked to PCW website.

Treasurers Report

£1859.28 in account, cheque from CWA £100 to be paid in.

Website

Continuing to develop, JG reimbursed £33.04 for software and domain name registration. Reviewed images for postcards, JS to request a sample in order we may

review quality, also to id minimum print order. Ideally would have 6 or 8 postcards for Portmoak Festival.

Timber Community Use

No update.

Squirrel Monitor

Ranald Strachan Squirrel Specialist from Fife Ranger Service provided an insight into the range of issues around potential red squirrel population in Portmoak. There are significant numbers of red's in Falkland and on Benarty Hill. Forestry Commission are to undertake an analysis of numbers in Lochore Meadows, with a view to controlling grey's. There are significant numbers of grey's on the west side of Kircaldy which are migrating towards Lochore via existing wildlife corridors.

Considered opinion that there are 3/4 red's (remnant population) within the Moss, however grey's can upset balance very quickly. The key to conserving red squirrel numbers is to bring together remnant populations whilst controlling greys. Red's will travel 6km per day if required. The two biggest strongholds of red squirrels in the area are at Tensmuir and Ladybank, where there an estimated 4/5 per hectare, can produce 2 litters per annum, 2-3 young.

Public consultation conducted in Dunfermline Glen where there are large grey squirrel numbers, this identified that 82% of those consulted would support the eradication of grey's to support red's, and that there was a lack of understanding of the significance of red squirrels as a species.

Key issues we need to understand are;

1. What is the existing population of red's
2. How many grey's
3. How to control grey squirrels, typically trap, but must clear daily. Such populations are currently being controlled locally, Falkland, Lochore, Benarty.
4. Achieve via monitoring numbers, may be the case that the Moss with current balance of tree species may not be optimum area for grey squirrels.
5. Influence tree planting within the local area, Norway Spruce and Scots Pine are the preferred species. When encouraging development of sites ensure balance of trees/fruit bearing plants appropriate to red squirrels.
6. Establish weblink to appropriate red squirrel info sites.

KMcD to speak to TRACKS regards biodiversity when planning round the loch route, hazel, scots pine, brambles etc.

Community Woodland Association, further training day

There is further funding available to support training days, the possibility of PCW running another event was discussed, perhaps focussing on Fauna present within the Moss, including survey techniques, trapping mammals, red squirrel survey results, and microbiology of the bog through a 'bog laboratory'. KMcD update with Diana Campbell.

CWA awaiting notification of funding bis application sufficient for 4 staff.

The Man who planted Trees

S.Garvie to co-ordinate via Film Club, perhaps have live theatre linked to food followed by movie suitable for children/families.

Tetley Trail/Michael Bruce

JS mentioned that there are funds available albeit limited via the Community Council. Discussed path deterioration at all abilities loop, drainage pipe and whinstone is available on -site. Deterioration also at Grahamstone Road end, this had not been part of the original works however users are now creating diversions so creating path appears logical. Arrange time to walk round in association with WT to assess condition of path and identify remedial measures, local contractor preferred. Will require to quantify costs and then identify funding sources, discuss with WT at May meeting.

Next Meeting: Thursday 17th May The Well Country Inn