



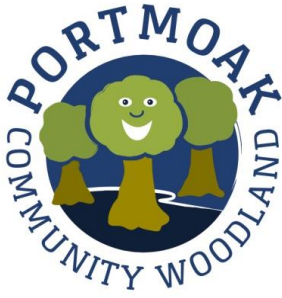
PCWG Meeting 15 August 23 7:30pm (at The Well Inn)

MinutesDraft

1. Present: Jeff, Louise & Dave, Izzy, Elaine, Dave C, Tanji,, Sheena, Charlotte, Mike, Lesley
2. Apologies: Marge, Graeme, Simon, Nic and Stu, Stuart
3. Minutes approved by Louise, seconded by Elaine
4. WT Update:
Contractor has removed redundant steps beside new ramp on North side
New Events officer will come along to WT apple day
5. PCWG Update: nothing new since meeting on moss – see Appendix A Jeff's notes
6. Treasurers report:
Need to arrange thankyou to Alison Russell for checking accounts – Jeff to sort?
7. Website refresher: Michael B will run training refresher Sunday 19th - volunteers to maintain specific areas, provisionally;
News – Louise
Events – Mike
Info Management – Jeff
Minutes – Tanji
Accounts(Steering Group access only) – Charlotte
Section for AGM/Treasurers AGM report
8. Plan for the year:
 - i. 4th September SEPA birchpull – jeff co-ordinating. Will buy new gloves and silky saws (and brand clearly as ours with tape)
 - ii. Another birchpull with Lothian volunteers and Bog Squad in Nov.
 - iii. Mike running PCWG stall at Kinross summer market to sell calendars and PR.
 - iv. Woodland Trust Apple Days: September 23, 25, 26 Louise will confirm rota of PCWG volunteers to help with apple scratting and pressing. WT will need to provide most of apples so don't clear orchard out for our apple day.
 - v. Apple Day: 1st October. Louise co-ordinating. Andrew Lear confirmed for that date. Cost TBD. Catering – Elaine and Charlotte, everyone baking donations welcome
 - vi. Xmas tree day: 10th December
 - vii. Bird box building: November weekend Date tbd. DB & SG liaising with bird box expert (Dave Gibson). Will prepare 'kit' which can be easily assembled by kids, and premake some ready for erecting. Liase with school re event publicity
9. Updates

Please give any other updates to Stuart.

Interpretation Board - Tanji, Louise and Mike to give detailed feedback to Eilidh and fine eg photos of the moss



Portmoak Biodiversity Booklet

Marje would like to organize meeting/walk to discuss ideas for leaflet- Stuart to liase with Marje re date.

Church Car Park – no update

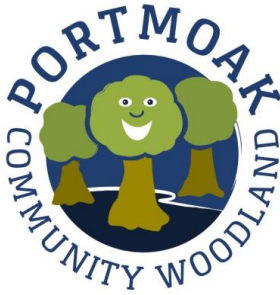
Balsam Bashing next year – need to plan definite dates from beginning of August to be most effective and weed before seed

10. WT meeting with Issy and Roy on the moss on 4th Aug – see Jeffs notes Appendix A

11. AOB

1. Pumping St site.DB talked to Scot Water guy re more sustainable way to suppress weeds cf to current spraying regime which could then be adopted on wider scale.
2. Louise meeting new biodiversity officer end of september

Next meeting on the and will be preceded by AGM (NB current Chair, Secretary and Treasurer standing down so new replacements required)



Appendix A

Walk-around meeting at Portmoak Moss 4 August 2023

WT: Izzy Roy PCWG: Louise Stuart Michael Marje Tanji Jeff

Captain Carbon / Bogtastic and Biodiversity on the way

Educational tool for young people and schools. Is there a way for WT to make more use of this material? Via publicity team or volunteer network?

Portmoak primary have completed a John Muir Trust project on ash die back in Kilmagad. How about letting them present it to WT?

Paths

Why cut back so hard during the summer? Standard WT practice to prevent encroachment. Is it really necessary here? Why knock the butterbur back so hard?

Paths are still in quite good shape. No need for major work but renewal needed in a few places. Could create a lag at the same time in some of those areas.

Dipwells

Record of water table going back for ~20 years. Plus the two auto monitors. Proves that the restoration efforts have raised the water table and also allows us to see the effect of the significant steps taken along the way.

Dams

How to make progress on dam 119? Reinforce with strong wood structure downstream of plastic dam. Can contractor to get in with a digger? PCWG to do the work? Could be some other dams that also need reinforcement. Potentially put some peat dams on the N side of the main ditch too. Need to finalise a plan.

Compartment 3c and remediation of coppicing

As expected, the coppiced birch is even stronger and more difficult to remove. Need a better approach.

Compartments 3a and 3b and approaches to restoring the raised bog / peat dome

Valuable time spent on the dome at the point where three regimes meet:

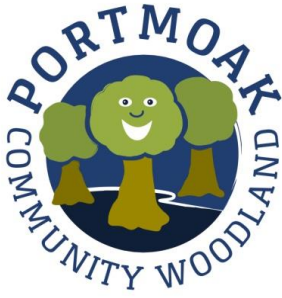
- PCWG programme to pop and pull - little birch regrowth, easier to maintain the little that comes back.
- Intermediate size birch. Could pop and pull with a lot of hours required.
- Large growth. Impossible by hand.

WT keen to find a good approach for each regime. How old is birch before it produces seeds? Could the large birch be cut and poisoned? These are the main seed problem and WT expect to take them out. Could the intermediate size be brush-cut before producing seeds, with glyphosphate wiping? Maybe worth some experimentation on various approaches? A proper experiment with defined protocol, sample sets, baseline, measurements, statistical treatment. Rather than doing something and seeing what happens.

Lag fen

Almost in place at some areas with reprofiling. Stabilises water table and good habitat - especially for dragonflies, etc.

Remaining plantation area: clear felling and mosaic habitats



Big area, needs a big plan. Need a good understanding of the topology, hydrology, peat depth, etc. in order to make the best decisions. Should we commission an independent report to study these factors? PCWG could, if need be and within reason, pay for this (as we did with the 2015 Robin Payne report).

Need a long term vision for the Moss as a whole: something on the timescale of trees = 50 years. PCWG have some starter ideas. Be good to have a meeting to talk about a vision (strategic) and the next management plan (tactical).

Perimeter wooded areas and under planting

Be good to remove the birch (seed shower) and replace with less invasive, natural species.

SUMMARY

This was a very good reset meeting with a lot of ideas floated and a lot of common ground. Next step would be to get together to assess this discussion and plan the way forward. This should include the long term vision, which informs the 5 year plan and that in turn affects the way that the WT and the PCWG work together.

Jeff Gunnell

Portmoak Community Woodland Group