

PCWG meeting 21.5.24

1. Attendees: Tanji, Michael, Lesley, Stuart, David, Linda, Charlotte, Sheena, Elaine, Marj, Graham
2. Apologies: Susan, Dave, Louise, Dave, Jeff, Nic, Stu, Calum, Izzy

3. Previous minutes

Lesley approved the last meeting minutes and Michael seconded

4. Treasurers Report

IN

£384 reclaimed from WTS for silkie saws

OUT

£881 - £645 of which was for the design and printing of first 1000 of the biodiversity leaflets

Action 1: Charlotte to look into online account and potentially a savings account

5. Woodland Trust Update

St Andrews Uni recently approached me to do two funded student research projects at the Moss this summer. I'm pleased to say that our research team have approved them to go ahead. I'll work with them to find sampling locations close to the path to ensure we don't disturb ground nesting birds on the bog.

1. Carbon and diversity? Biodiversity impacts of peat restoration on Portmoak Moss.
2. Listening for Biodiversity at Portmoak Moss: using sound to encourage affective interest in peatland restoration.

Izzy due to meet on site with them tomorrow morning for an introductory meeting. Is anyone available to join them?

- Portmoak management plan out for public consultation, thanks to Louise and Charlotte for putting up posters about this. I'd be pleased to receive any additional comments from the group or individuals before the deadline of 10 June.
- Tree mensuration survey should be happening imminently, the data from which will be fed back to NatureScot to continue discussions about possible management interventions.

* In April our contractors removed remaining tree and vole guards from most of Kilmagad. There are a few areas where these remain where trees are not yet established at the top of the hill. Thanks to you all (and Lesley in particular) for all the hard work removing these at the bottom of Kilmagad.

* We have had a few enquiries from our corporate sponsors (People's Postcode Lottery, Lloyds) about volunteering opportunities within 1h of Edinburgh. Would a few additional days birch pulling be useful after breeding bird season is over? WT

could offer support with these days.

* Matilda is happy to provide support to the group or event leaders in getting to grips with Assemble. We'll have to use it in some form going forwards, so I'll come back to you once I understand how this might work to benefit all of us (I'd suggested before it could be a useful way to communicate about birch pulling days).

Action 2: Tanji to advise Izzy no-one is available to join the initial meeting with the St Andrews students on site on 21.5.24

Action 3: Marje to contact Izzy directly about being a contact for St Andrews biodiversity project

Action 4: Tanji to confirm with Izzy that additional corporate birch pulling days would be useful

6. PCWG update

- Visit by Dr Emma Hinchliffe, Director of UK Peatlands Programme, International Union for the Conservation of Nature (Louise)
- Clara from Forth River Trust (FRT)-Loch Leven catchment landscape regeneration project (email)
- Catherine Lloyd (Biodiversity project) Portmoak Festival poster request; Swift walk date (PCWG prioritized): Evening Swift Walk on either Saturday 29th June or Sunday 30th June. It would be to start looking for existing swift nest sites and to discuss the potential for installing woodcrete swift nest boxes later in the year. Daniele will also cover the basic ecology and lifestyle of swifts so no previous knowledge is expected. The walk will be suitable for all
- Norma asking for help with risk assessments

Action 5: Louise to share the forest to bog videos provided by IUCN

Action 6: Tanji to advise Catherine Lloyd that either 29/30th June evening OK for swift walk

Action 7: Louise to meet Clara re Loch Leven catchment landscape regeneration project at festival – FRT will have stall at the gala so anyone can have a chat there

Action 8: Lesley to speak to Norma about risk assessments

Lesley has been continuing to remove small trees from area immediately to the north of the path near main ditch

Suggestion of using the chalkboards to encourage walkers to pull young regenerating birch adjacent to the path on the recent re-profiled area near Grahamstone

Action 9: Marje, Graham and Lesley (plus anyone else who's available) to work with Portmoak PS pupils on their re-visit the Moss (Thursday 12th September to

be suggested) to complete their forecasting fruit yield project – request not to thin fruit in advance of the date

Action 10: David (and others?) to revisit bird boxes in autumn after breeding season to upgrade boxes and move some to increase spread

Suggestion that we should launch the biotastic booklet with a group walk following the trail to Vane farm

7. Portmoak Moss draft management plan – deadline 11 June

Action 11: All provide comments direct to Izzy, or suggestion post meeting to reconvene a meeting to discuss thoughts in advance

8. AOB

Action 12: Himalayan Balsam is growing already – Lesley is going to keep an eye on the areas she is aware of, and will contact Dave B to speak to farmer regarding access to land to remove plants from ditch in field to north of Moss

Action 13: All decide on a group day for pulling within the next month on a date that suits most

Action 14: All share any other points by email as meeting ceased due to midge numbers!!!