

Portmoak Community Woodland Group

15 November 2016

Present

Alison Bradley	Sheena Jamieson	Michael McGinness	Chris Vlasto
Elaine Carruthers	Nic Cassidy	Dave Carruthers	Stuart Garvie
Stuart Byers	Jeff Gunnell (Chair)		

Apologies

Louise Batchelor	Dave Batchelor	Leslie Botten	Chloe Vlasto	Gary Bolton
------------------	----------------	---------------	--------------	-------------

1. Matters arising

- a. Several people went to the LLLP project party. Good time had by all.
- b. Lag fen project. Note sent to LLLP for their final newsletter.
- c. Lag fen project. Should send an article to CWA for their newsletter: **Jeff**.
- d. Lag fen project. Remove old signs (maybe leave one for information on the work). **Nic + Stu**.

2. Woodland Trust Update

Gary not present but report provided:

- a. Kilmagad Wood higher level tree planting- the area was previously a rabbit fenced trial area to encourage trees to natural regenerate from the adjacent woodland. This trial proved unsuccessful and the old rabbit fence was removed in 2013. The site has recently been planted by the Woodland Trust Scotland with Scottish provenance native tree species ; mainly sessile oak, with some rowan, silver birch, hazel, blackthorn, aspen and Caledonian Scots pine in 1.2m tree shelters and 0.6m shrub shelters. The Caledonian Scots pine and aspen was mainly planted on the south westerly edge to help shelter the oak, etc from the exposed winter weather conditions and strong prevailing winds. Any old trees on the site have been retained along with some open ground to ensure habitat diversity. The area will be annually spot weeded until the trees are fully established. The site will be monitored annually and any trees which fail within the first two years after planting will be replaced.

This is the first of a new tranche of tree planting planned over the next few years to gradually restore Kilmagad Wood back to its original woodland tree cover.

Comments at meeting:

This is a good story. Should publicise!

Possible Newsletter article. **Louise**.

Should mention at Burns Supper. **Mosses, waters...**

Add to website. **Jeff**.

Can we find any old photos or maps showing how it used to be? **All**

- b. I have informed our dedication team at Grantham that we have a location available for a Woodland Trust dedications bench near to the viewpoint board on the path-I'll let you know when I hear something.

Comments at meeting:

If nothing comes via WT, we could publicise locally. With a link to the WT web so the whole thing would be done through the WT system.

Meanwhile, should do something to stop the old one from falling down. **Chris + Stuart**.

- c. Step improvements; I have added this work to the 2017 work programme. Wooden entrance signs will be renewed at the same time.

Portmoak Moss

- d. Work is scheduled to start soon on improving the Grahamstone access-the damaged raised walkway will be done at the same time and any of the old netting fixed to the walkway will be removed.
- e. Management Plan review is well underway and the draft will be going for internal review shortly. Once approved by WT. I'll send out a draft to the group for consideration/discussion.

Comments at meeting:

We're keen to get this paragraph included:

In 2014 the Portmoak Community Woodland Group commissioned a study by the environmental specialist Robin Payne to produce a report on "Management Options for Portmoak Moss". The Woodland Trust acknowledges the value of this long term view and supports the content. However, the Woodland Trust cannot commit the resources which would be required to deliver the ideas in the Payne Report and so they are not included in this management plan. If resources or funding to implement some ideas from the Report could be raised by the Portmoak Community Woodland Group, then the Woodland Trust would look favourably on such proposals. The final decision on whether any are carried out will be made by the Woodland Trust, taking into account the overall objectives for Portmoak Moss. One proposal from the report which has been achieved is an example of how this process can be successful. Following an effort led by PCWG, in September 2016 the peat face was re-profiled. The resources and funding came from the Living Lomonds Landscape Partnership and the PCWG.

We think that this wording will help us to raise funds: "*The Woodland Trust acknowledges the value of this long term view and supports the content.*"

But obviously the WT are always in control of what actually gets done: "*The final decision on whether any are carried out will be made by the Woodland Trust.*"

In practice, we'd never go for funding on any project without firstly making sure that the WT would support it.

- Should there be a proposal for development of footpaths?
- Expect to see removal of sitka on left hand side with planting of stands of mixed native species. Will there also be a plan to put in areas of open water and wetland species?

- f. On a recent visit I was pleased to see and hear plenty of green woodpeckers and greater spotted woodpeckers on the Moss.

3. PCWG maintenance required: notes for WT

- Any movement on the Grahamstone entrance improvements? *In Gary's plan above.*
- Wearing out: the bridge by the steps at the leaky area. *In Gary's plan above.*
- Bridge off the main track track to the south looking in poor shape.
- Trees on the airfield side at the southern perimeter look vulnerable.
- Dangerous looking tree on the main avenue into the Moss from Scotlandwell entrance.
- **NEW:** Going in from Scotlandwell, turning left off the main path, informal route, bridge and especially the rail looking rotten.
- **NEW:** Alison's fence. According to Alison's deeds, the WT own it. Needs a bit of restoration. Preferred option is to repair rather than remove. Just needs 2 fence posts.
- **NEW:** Going in at Grahamstone, turning right where there used to be some edging boards - they've rotted away so the retainers for them are sticking up and are tripping hazards. Also some metal loops here and there also tripping hazards.

3. Bog snorkeling

- a. It rained! We were poorly! The dog ate our homework!

4. Treasure's report

- a. No change: £2906.

5. Review of bird walks

- a. Very good! Great! Brilliant!
- b. So popular it was extended from 1 to 2 events. Attended by 19 + 12 people.
- c. Sightings included: crossbill, gold crest, jay, red wing, field fair. Lot's of interesting information, even on things as common as pigeons.
- d. Offer Scott a free Burns ticket for all the work done? **Stuart**.
- e. Idea: how about a dawn chorus event in April or May? **Stu + Stuart**.

6. Place of Standard consultation Dave to fill in. Grrrr.

Whatever it means, it's to be continued until Dave tells us what it is and how he has met all expectations. **Dave B**.

7. Photo competition

Mainly waiting for **Louise** to send an eMail to Alison for the KCC. But in the meantime, here are some ideas:

- a. Could get people to send in prints for display at Festival, if there is one. And could display on a laptop as a slide show.
- b. Could use the FaceBook page.
- c. Could display them in the Moss, near where they were taken. Or on a string in the Moss.
- d. Age group categories. Equipment categories (cell phone, SRL,...)

8. Idea for planning events

- a. How about before an event we try to:
 - i. state the objectives
 - ii. estimate the costs (time and money)
 - iii. estimate the benefits
- b. But be careful! We don't want to turn this into management by spreadsheet. And we don't want to overwork it. And we don't want to stop it all being fun. But we think that the process could help us to make better plans. For example... Christmas Tree event:

9. Christmas tree event

- a. Objectives: Raise money. Get the community and their children into the Moss. Have fun doing it and get all Christmassy. Advertise the Burns Supper.
 - i. So the key for raising funds and community involvement is getting as many people as we can to come. How? Usual ways: eMail list (**Jeff**), Facebook (**Mike**), posters (**Dave B**). But how about using the schools and play groups? **Sheena + all** to think how we can that.
 - ii. Decorate a Christmas tree at the event. Wear Bah Humbug T-shirts and Christmas pullovers. And so on.
 - iii. Music?
 - iv. Need Burns publicity material at the event. And make an effort to push it.
 - v. If we give trees to the kirks, get Burns publicity from them too.
- b. Costs:
 - i. A few pounds for mulled wine and mince pies. **Stuart**.
 - ii. Preparation - about 5 hours total (say 5 people x 1 hour).
 - iii. Event about 20 hours (if we go on to 16:00).
- c. Benefits:
 - i. Funds - we made £620 last year. Aim for the same or more.
 - ii. Get as many people as possible into the Moss: we had about 60-80 families last year.
 - iii. More people for our eMail list.
 - iv. Good vibes with the community.

Go down the day before at 11:00 to set up. Especially crossing the ditch to the main area. Reminder from **Jeff**.

10. Burns Supper

In the absence of the BurnsMeister we did what we could as a pale imitation of what the BM himself would have done.

- a. Whisky. After many years of very generous donations, we need to find a new way with whisky. Considered buying bottles and pouring it with borrowed optics. But we have another generous donation - of 100 miniatures which we would get for half price = £100. Under just about every scenario, this is the most cost effective and it avoids all sorts of hassle. If we get 120 people, might need to use one bottle too. Confirm we want to do it with miniatures. **Dave B.**
- b. Cutlery. Could buy 120 settings (7 piece) for £202.56. Need to find out what we could charge for hiring them out. Some would go AWOL so if we do it, buy 140 settings.
- c. Alcohol license applied for.
- d. Need publicity material soon - next week if possible. And a few more than for the apple day. Say 100 more?
- e. Keep price at £25. Need to look at last years financials to plan for this year. Especially the cost of catering. **Jeff.**
- f. Catering: Dave and Louise and probably Mike and Leslie to meet Helen on Sunday at breakfast time to discuss. **Dave B, Louise, Mike , Leslie.**
- g. Raffle very important to finances. Really to push ticket sales. And make an effort to get more donated prizes. Matt has already made a bird table. Possible donors: Wellside Powerwash, Wellside Motors, for example. Local businesses and supermarkets?
- h. Need to find some Lads and Lassies. And Mosses, waters. **All.**

11. AOB

- a. Kirsty Jamieson says we should label our apple trees as Eaters or Cookers.
- b. And we should have much bigger labels (cf Dunkeld Orchard).
- c. Push WT for another lantern event.