

Laide and Aultbea Community Woodland

Annual General Meeting

Thursday 26th September 2013, 7.30pm in the Aultbea Hall

Minutes

Present: John Rippin (chair), Peter Jarosz, Jan Barclay, Alan Turnbull, Nick Murray, Tony Carpenter, Kevin Ginty. 15 members and guests also attended.

Apologies: Paul Bolton, Andrew Jackman

Welcome

John Rippin welcomed everyone to the meeting, and reviewed the agenda and procedures for the retirement and reappointment of directors and office bearers.

Approval of previous minutes

Copies of the minutes from the 2012 AGM had been circulated, and there were two minor amendments noted. The revised minutes were proposed by Sylvia Foster, seconded by Carol Jackman, and approved by the meeting.

Chairman's Report

The chairman reviewed the achievements of the past year, specifically the improvements made to the blue trail. He thanked Jan Barclay for organising a full programme of events through into the autumn. The fungi have been particularly plentiful this year, and the most recent organised walk had identified a wide range of specimens. Martin Rowe was thanked for his work with the willow this year, coppicing and utilising the wood for a number of projects locally. Tony Carpenter and Nick Murray have carried out much work throughout the year, managing tree cutting and maintaining the benches and the hide.

We have continued to liaise closely with Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and the Wester Ross Fisheries Trust (WRFT) on a number of initiatives. We have also worked closely with the Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP) on aspects of woodland maintenance and deer management.

The chairman thanked the membership for their continued support throughout the year, and also acknowledged the valuable donations received from Poolewe Market and the Fundraising Shop in Gairloch.

Work in progress includes the new trail from the SNH hide to the cascade. We have begun work identifying and felling trees to make way for this trail, which will be our main project for the winter period. This work may occasionally mean that sections of the Wood near the

cascade have to be roped off for safety, but we will keep these instances to a minimum. This current work is the last under the existing SRDP grant framework, and there will be a one year gap before new funding becomes available. The support of the SRDP has been invaluable, as has Andrew Jackman's work in preparing and submitting applications on our behalf.

The next phase of our twenty-year plan has been sent to SNH for comment, and will be published for comments locally when it is returned. The next phase will include some more felling, and can be claimed for under the SRDP. Work not in the plan cannot be claimed, and so the plan is key for the future development of the Wood. Copies of the notes will be available in the Butcher's shop in due course, and notice will be given in the newsletter and on the website.

The phase one new plantings are growing well now, helping to hide the unsightly leftovers from felling. The new firewood collection scheme is being launched, with ten permits initially available as a trial. Details of that scheme will be available after the formal close of the meeting.

Treasurer's Report

Peter Jarosz presented the annual accounts, and income and expenditure for the year. Overall, the Wood has broken even, and is in a fairly strong financial position. Some new equipment has been purchased, including a moth trap and a Kilworth mower. The Poolewe Market and the Fundraising Shop in Gairloch have between them donated in excess of £500 to LACW over the past twelve months. Grant funding receipts have been relatively small this year, owing to the reduced availability of grant funding for which to apply. Changes to our insurance policy have also resulted in a considerable saving.

New Directors

Paul Bolton was appointed as a director during the year, in accordance with article 37 of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, and is nominated for election by the membership in Resolution 2.

Retirement of Directors

Janet Barclay and Nick Murray as longest serving directors since reappointment are retiring by rotation in accordance with Memorandum and Articles of Association articles 31 and 32.

Re-appointment of Directors

Resolution 1 – 20122013 Proposed by Kevin Ginty and Seconded by Peter Jarosz that Janet Barclay and Nick Murray be re-appointed as Directors of Laide and Aultbea Community Woodland and Trustees of the Charity. Carried unanimously.

Appointment of new Director

Resolution 2 – 20122013 Proposed by Tony Carpenter and Seconded by Alan Turnbull that Paul Bolton be appointed as a Director of Laide and Aultbea Community Woodland and

Trustee of the charity. Carried unanimously.

Re-instatement of Office Bearers

Resolution 3 – 20122013 Proposed by Nick Murray and Seconded by Janet Barclay, that John Rippin in the capacity of Chairman, Alan Turnbull in the capacity of Company Secretary, and Peter Jarosz in the capacity of Treasurer be retained as office bearers for a further year.

Carried unanimously.

Open Discussion

There were two questions from the floor. One regarding the status of the woodland building – John Rippin replied that grant funding opportunities were coming up where we could apply for funding for the woodland building, and it was hoped to go ahead in the future, but that nothing definite was available to report at this stage.

A second question was raised concerning the status of the mink population investigations. John Rippin replied that we were working with WRFT and SNH, monitoring the Wood. So far, no mink have been found, although there have been recordings close to the shore in Laide and further inland locally. We will be continuing to monitor water courses (using rafts and tunnels and if necessary laying traps) in the coming year.

Meeting Close

The formal part of the meeting closed at 8.10pm

Those present were invited to remain for tea, coffee and refreshments and to chat with the directors informally.