

▪ FRIENDS OF GLENAN WOOD STEERING COMMITTEE - MINUTES OF MEETING

- **Date:** 10 February, 2018
- **Time:** 10.00am
- **Place:** Kilfinan Community Forest workshop
- **Attendees:** Mark Appleton, Andree Hawke, Eve MacFarlane, Heather Muir, Lucy Roper, Robin Webster
- **Apologies:** Rob Borusso, Mick Eyre.

1. **Minutes of Last Meeting** It was agreed that the minutes of the previous meeting were approved and could therefore be dated and signed off by Eve prior to posting on the FoGW website.
ACTION: Eve.
2. **Date of Annual General Meeting.** Provisional dates for May or June were proposed, it was agreed that the final decision would be based on progress made in terms of the overall CATS application.
3. **FoGW Membership** In respect of the membership of FoGW, Heather explained that the process of collating all personal details and loading them onto a database was ongoing. She raised the issue of the data protection and the requirement to conform to the appropriate rules and regulations surrounding this issue. Eve suggested that by using the Mail Chimp mailing programme there would be adequate provisions for data security and all agreed that data protection should be a priority. The group agreed to send out an enewsletter to all members and supporters updating them about the group's activities. Eve will do this as soon as Heather has loaded all the addresses onto the database.
In terms of generating additional membership numbers, it was agreed that it would be beneficial for FoGW to have a presence at the next Kyles Allotment Group Producer's Market.
Lucy suggested that rather than offering baked products, other items such as jams, chutneys and other preserves could be offered, possibly using produce foraged from the wood.
ACTION: Heather to continue collation and uploading of membership names and contact details, Eve to save them in Mail Chimp, Eve to send enewsletter. Eve to book table at next Producers' Market.
4. **Scottish Land Fund Stage 1 funding & Feasibility Study.** Eve confirmed the news already circulated by email that funding amounting to £10,820 had been secured from the Scottish Land Fund. Of this sum, £9000 is to pay for the Feasibility Study consultant, while the remaining £1320 covers FoGW's half of the cost of the asset valuation (the other half being covered by Forestry Commission Scotland) plus £500 for an asset valuation refresh.
Eve said the formal documents associated with this grant would arrive in the coming week, upon which they would be signed and returned to the Big Lottery before the formal process of engaging the consultant could take place.
Lucy expressed concern that she had not heard back from the Bank of Scotland in respect of her attempts to open a bank account on behalf of FoGW. She explained it was not possible simply to visit a branch to complete the process until she had heard back from Bank of Scotland about her application. There was some concern that the bank account would not be set up before the funding was ready to be received.

ACTION: Lucy to follow up with bank ASAP. Robin also offered to help by taking the issue up at a larger branch in Glasgow if required.

Heather updated the group about her visit to a Community Woodland Association workshop on the Community Asset Transfer Scheme (CATS). She explained how the requirement to create a legacy for future generations was seen as a key element in all CATS applications. She also explained how, during the workshop, the attendees were asked to provide written answers to questions about their various asset transfer schemes and said she could circulate her answers to the group by email. After mentioning how the Forestry Commission had become more aware of the potential for transferred land to be exploited commercially, committee members agree that while commercial gain is not our motivation, it might be possible to undertake small scale activities such as ash planting and coppicing, charcoal making and willow growing for basketry, all of which could take place for educational and community engagement purposes.

- 5. Other sources of funding post acquisition** The group agreed there would be ongoing costs associated with maintaining the Glenan Wood, assuming the acquisition goes through. One of the most pressing maintenance issues will be cutting the grass in the open area next to the car park. How pressing this would become will depend on when Forestry Commission Scotland cease maintaining this area. Eve said she would find out about FCS's intended timescale for discontinuing this activity. The idea of approaching Portavadie Marina to undertake this task was discussed. This led on to further discussion about possible engagement with other local businesses and how they might be able to provide practical or financial assistance through sponsorship etc. It was agreed that the committee should adopt a single, unified approach to our engagement with any third parties, based on the majority view.

ACTION: Eve to discuss grass cutting issue with FCS to establish how long they will continue this activity and whether FoGW would hand over this responsibility before completion of the asset transfer.

- 6. Communication and publicity** The possibility of producing a press release announcing the success of the application for Scottish Land Fund Stage 1 funding was discussed. It was agreed that this would be a good idea. Robin said that he needed to complete some work on the FoGW logo.

ACTION: Mark to draft press release, Robin to work on logo.

- 7. Red Squirrels** None of the three camera traps loaned by the Scottish Wildlife Trust and set up by Lucy yielded any red squirrel sightings. They did, however, capture images of a number of birds, humans, dogs, deer and mice! Lucy said it may be possible to borrow the camera traps again. The group considered it an interesting and worthwhile exercise if only to help establish that with no sign of red squirrels present, consideration should be given to what kind of future planting might encourage their presence. Lucy said that she would write a short article about the project that could be posted on the website & Facebook page. The group agreed that acquiring camera traps of our own would be a good idea, as would, eventually, the creation of a bird hide and, possibly in the shorter term, the placing of some owl boxes. The possibility of working in partnership with a fledgling eco-tourism business in Glendaruel was also discussed. This was generally thought to be a good idea.

ACTION: Lucy to send short article and images to Eve for website.

- 8. Bio Blitz** Andree explained that a BioBlitz is an exercise to gather information about the presence of flora and fauna within a given area in a specified timeframe, typically 24 or 48 hours. It could be as specific (e.g. concentrating on identifying only butterfly species) or as

wide-ranging as desired. A day or weekend Bio Blitz would, however, require some associated temporary infrastructure such as a marquee and generator. It was suggested that catering and toilet facilities might be made available by third parties such as CalMac (ferry office) or Portavadie Marina's Lodge. Andree said that there might be a possibility to secure some funding for this exercise from the Tighnabruaich Development Trust. It was agreed that a BioBlitz could only take place with the go-ahead from FCS and with appropriate public liability insurance in place. Possible dates for the activity were June 1st and 2nd. Andree and Lucy agreed to progress the issue, including making an approach to the Tighnabruaich Development Trust.

ACTION Andree and Lucy to consider logistical requirements and approach Tighnabruaich Development Trust in respect of funding. Eve to contact FCS re: holding a Bioblitz event.

9. **Path improvement and work parties.** Andree stated that it should be possible to get funding to improve paths in Glenan Wood, based on her and Mick's experience of doing so with the Agri-Environment Climate Scheme which, among other aims, provides funding to improve public access to the countryside. Andree said that she, possibly in conjunction with Mick, would be prepared to make a funding application to the organisation. Lucy and Andree pointed out that Paths for All could supply information and expertise to assist in determining what kind of paths would be required. As FoGW do not yet own the land it was agreed that any application for funding could only be done with the consent of FCS which Eve said she would attempt to secure. Andree said she would undertake an informal survey of the priority paths – the Forest and Shore paths – and would let others know a time and date for this activity nearer the time.

ACTION: Eve and Andree

10. **Next meeting** A provisional date for the next meeting was set as March 23 at 4.pm in the same venue at KCFC.

ENDS