

## **Management Group Meeting**

**Monday 10th January, 7pm, Estate Office, Applecross House**

### **Present**

Archie MacLellan, Chair (Applecross Trust)(AM), Derek MacLennan (Bealach Group), Alistair McCowan (AMC) (Historical society), Alasdair Macleod (AML)(Community Council), Mike Summers (Applecross Crofters), Gill Fairweather (Walks and Traditional Crafts Group), Tom Kilbride (co-opted member), Jacqui Liuba (co-opted member), Mary Gibson (Adviser). Sam Bridgewater, Elodie Chopin.

### **Apologies for absence**

Lorna Lumsden (Applecross Trust), Owen Kilbride (Archaeological Society), Gordon Cameron (Heritage Centre Curator).

### **Proposal of minutes of Group Meeting 29.11.2010**

The minutes were approved by all present and will be displayed on the ALPS notice board.

### **Update on progress**

SB provided an update on ALPS progress. The ALPS website [www.visit-applecross.org](http://www.visit-applecross.org) was launched on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2010. Although the basic elements are in place, it is still a work in progress. SB specified that it would not integrate all the information from the other societies but help support them by redirecting visitors to the societies' own websites. The contract for the paths of the Applecross area was awarded to George Mundell on the 18th December. His quote should be under budget, even with the recent increase in VAT. He has agreed to take on local labour. After suggestions from the MG at the last meeting, path training qualifications were investigated. Formal routes are available but relate to undertaking options (e.g. ditching & culverts; vegetation management etc.) within broader environment management courses. However, these cannot be done locally in Wester Ross. Thus, any employment of the local community on path work will likely only provide a minimum salary, useful experience and improved employment local path maintenance opportunities (e.g. with the Trust), but no actual qualifications. HLF require that contracts are in place for all works undertaken as part of ALPS. Contracts have been prepared for consulting services (Community interpretive Planning Project and Evaluation & Monitoring), Events Management (Bardic school) and website development. A Minor Works Building Contract is being prepared for the path work. A third meeting was held on the 15th December with the crofters of the southern coastal area. The four tenders received for undertaking the work were presented. The cheapest tender, which also appeared to be the best planned and have the greatest insight to local conditions was still higher than the original estimate submitted to HLF. Additional costs will include the insertion of a grid at Milton which could cost up to £20K. An application will be made by each township to CCAGS before Easter. However, even if successful, this would leave a likely shortfall of ca. £40K for this project. Andrew Wright has approached Ollie Owen at Historical Scotland regarding the scheduling the barns. The issue of the need for a small footprint due to its proximity the broch was made. The broch was not included in the proposal. The site for the 'beginner's dyking course' scheduled between the 20th and 26th January has been finalised. It will be associated with the coal shed, the hole in the wall close to the white gate, and the broken section of wall near the public toilets.

### **VAT increase and its impact on ALPS**

It was generally agreed that the VAT increase should not affect the projects budgets due to the contingency element of the ALPS budget (10%).

### **Society Open sessions**

After the first ALPS newsletter edition, a lot of interest was shown by members of the Community towards the activities of the different partners of ALPS. It was suggested that the groups and societies could organise open sessions to invite people to get involved. It could also be a good way to attract younger people.

### **Clachan Church**

David Somerville has been asked to update plans relating to Clachan Church based on the LEADER application so that they include heating and toilet facilities. He will be undertaking a site visit on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> January and meeting with all interested parties to discuss the plans. Planning permission has still not yet been granted for the windows. Work on the windows can't start until this is in place. The question was raised regarding how many contractors would be undertaking the work. AMC suggested that the best option would be to have a main contractor dealing with various sub-contractors. This would be discussed with David Somerville. Ideally, local contractors would be used where the skills existed.

### **Smiddy Woods**

Work begun on de-stumping Smiddy Wood in the period between Christmas and New Year. Unfortunately contractors started whilst SB, EC and AM were away and sufficient warning and consultation was not given locally about the work and its timing. A few complaints have been received relating the Health & Safety issues. There was a feeling that there should have been improved signage warning of works. This issue has been taken up with the contractor, and signs should be erected by Monday 10<sup>th</sup> January. Hopefully similar issues can be avoided in the future. Nonetheless, the work is progressing very well and it was agreed that the area already looks better. SB raised the question of the timetable to AM. Next step of the plan is to have a deer fence erected around February/March and broadleaved tree planting carried out. The ground will be raked and scarified to make a suitable seed bed for grass seed which, it is planned, will be sown during summer. Planting of food forest trees in roundalls would follow during autumn but no particular species have been agreed on yet. It was suggested that Bruce Taylor be invited to join next MG meeting.

### **Potential implementation of locally popular projects not currently within ALPS e.g. restoration of Applecross pier**

During the last meeting, the question of the location for the first drystone dyking course highlighted a certain number of potential projects that are not currently funded with the ALPS. The Applecross pier, in front of the old coal shed, is one of them, as well as the corrugated metal roofed barns or the square sheds in Milton. The MG group discussed the scenario that if there would be some budget left after the completion of all ALPS projects, whether it would be preferable to increase funding to existing budgets or to try funding new projects thought to be of local value. The general feeling was that it would be preferable to try funding popular projects if any were seen to be of high local value, although Mary Gibson warned the group about the potential difficulty of match funding and AM pointed to the fact that significant shortfall exists with the existing suite of projects.

### **St. Maelrubha festival**

Tim Daplyn (Coillegillie) is keen to be involved in this festival and after meeting with SB and EC, a proposal for a one-day event has been drafted. The pencilled date is Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> August 2011. The MG group agreed that it

was a good idea. AM pointed out there was a successful St. Maelrubha festival in 2000, and the draft plans were along a similar line. The draft proposal will be passed by the Community Council at their meeting in February.

### **Bardic School**

A domain name has been purchased for the Bealach group, in order to set up an e-mail address related to the Bardic School for the co-ordinator June MacPherson. It will also allow the creation of a website specially dedicated to the Bardic School, different from the Gaelic pages that will be available on the ALPS website. A meeting with the group is planned on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> January to discuss the progress made to date.

### **Calendar**

SB raised the question of a possible scope for making an ALPS calendar (available from mid 2011 for 2012). It would be sold in Applecross and the profit made could go towards a good local cause e.g. the school. The MG approved the idea in principle, although plans need to be better developed and costed. SB and EC to investigate further.

### **Other.**

AM raised the idea of involving Calum Martin (Salm and Soul) a mix of Gaelic psalm singing and gospel choir being involved in an opening concert to mark the Clachan Church refurbishment.

### **Date of next meeting**

7<sup>th</sup> February