



Management Group Meeting Minutes

Monday 26th September, 7pm, Estate Office, Applecross House

Present: Archie MacLellan (AM), Chair (Applecross Trust), Mike Summers (Applecross Crofters), Gordon Cameron (Heritage Manager), Alistair McCowan (AMcC) (Historical Society), Alasdair Macleod (AMac)(Community Council), Gill Fairweather (Walks and Traditional crafts group) Jackie Liuba (co-opted member), Mary Gibson (adviser), Sam Bridgewater, Elodie Matthews.

Apologies of absence: Derek MacLennan (Bealach group), Owen Kilbride (Archaeological Society), Tom Kilbride (co-opted member), Lorna Lumsden (Applecross Trust).

The minutes of the MG meeting of the 22nd August 2011 were approved by all present and will be made available via the ALPS notice board and the website.

Updates

Provided on separate document.

Minutes

Habitat improvements (related to the South Coast Deer Fence). Presentation by Gillian McKnight

AM and SB reminded the group of the importance of habitat management from the point of view of HLF, with funding for the South Coast Deer Fence being conditional on habitat improvements implemented subsequently. Gillian MacKnight (SAC) gave a presentation on rehabilitation of peatland with Beadamoss and with AM, gave an overview of SRDP funding, the likely funding stream to support habitat improvements.

South Coast Deer Fence

AM explained that CCAGS had sent offer letters to the crofting clerks but these letters had to be reissued since they did not include the element of recoverable VAT. The issue of the deer grid was also raised, as CCAGS had not understood in the original application that the grid was to be on a main thoroughfare, and as a result they may not be able to fund it. If so, it would add an additional £6,000 to the shortfall. SB has been liaising with the fence contractor, who has given satisfactory references, and a contract will be written as soon as the amended offer letters are received. Although logistical issues such as storage and transport of materials still need to be addressed, it is hoped that the works can start in November and end at Easter 2012. AML asked the question of how deer inside the new fence will be excluded and whether there would be a cull.

Clachan Church

SB explained the various tenders submitted. All those deemed professionally acceptable and with suitable references were over budget and the group discussed works that could be omitted to

reduce the cost. Considerable saving could be made by excluding rendering of the gables, which although desirable, is not essential. AMcC suggested that if all contingency was used, then the project could be delivered +/- on budget. SB expressed concern about mobilising contingency at the start of the project as it would constitute a risk and another potential liability to the Trust. SB also insisted on the need to obtain a bat license before works can start on the roof, with November being the latest that work could start should a license be approved in time. After this date, bats will be hibernating and can't be disturbed according to the law. It was agreed to ask David Somerville to ask for revised quotes based on omitting non essential works.

At the time of the meeting, the Listed Building Consent had not been granted but Planning Permission had been approved by the Council and sent to Historic Scotland for their agreement. SB explained that this will cause further delays in applying for the bat license as all other consents must be approved before the application is submitted. SB clarified with the group that much of the work on Clachan, including the replacement of the windows, did not require a license.

Smiddy Woods

As discussed in the previous meeting, SB highlighted the £13,000 overspend projected by Scottish Woodlands and asked whether £4,000 contingency budget could be mobilised. AM reminded the group that although the sum had not yet been spent, it was needed for the planting of trees on the area. The use of £4,000 of contingency was not regarded favourably by the group. SB expressed disappointment as he believed that if this contingency was released, Scottish Woodlands would be willing to cover the remainder overspend. Finally it was decided to allow £1,500 from the contingency and for SB to liaise with Scottish Woodlands re. resolving the shortfall. GF mentioned a donation of ca. 400 trees from the Woodland Trust which could be used in planting.

Pathworks

Bob Brown from the National Trust designed a specification for the Ard Dubh/Coillegillie path and gave various options for upgrading it. Repair works, ditches, culverts, drainage were pointed as essentials and are within the budget. A tender has been advertised locally and through the West Highland Free Press and a site meeting with the interested contractors will take place on the 12th October. It was understood that although desirable in places, no extra surface materials would be added to the path, due to the need to bring these in by helicopter, and the limited budget.

SB informed the group that George Mundell has been asked to fix a few drainage issues on the newly built paths (esp. Clachan and Cruary path), adding ditches and waterbars where needed. A small spur leading to the Holy Well has been added with Geoff Walker contracted to repair the spring head itself.

Archaeological Trail

SB reminded the group of the original line of the path pitched by the Archaeological Society, going from the Broch to the Hebridean barns through Carnoch Wood towards Torgarve township, passing Langwell and onwards towards the lime kiln and the glen. So far, only modest work has been done – primarily vegetation management and snedding. SB insisted on the importance of tying down the final line asap so work could begin.

SB stated that a new built path going from the end of Shore Street to the entrance of Milton township had been suggested. This could form part of the Archaeological trail, justified by the presence of the dam at Milton and the lining of the Street to Torgarve. The concept was favourably received.

Interpretation (including Beechwood Trail bench, Bealach & Signage)

SB reminded the group that some elements of the interpretation budget are tied to SNH deadlines, with a component (including the Bealach interpretation) having to be spent before February 2012. During the previous meeting, strong opinions were expressed regarding the suggested features and SB said he was liaising with Ross Associates to arrive at refined designs, including an unobtrusive viewpoint located below the car park. SB also presented modified designs for the beechwood path seat offering several options to the group. Stone seating included in a retaining wall was the favoured option. Gordon Cameron is to be consulted for Gaelic interpretive text.

Other matters arising

The date of next meeting is set for Monday 31st October.