

ALPS update for Management Group 6 May 2013

- **Claims & funding:**
 - **HLF** –latest claim has been submitted for the period Oct 2012-Feb 2013.
 - **HIE:** final HIE claim was submitted and approved w/c 29 April.
 - **ERDF:** capital and revenue claims to end of March 2013 have been submitted and approved.
 - **LEADER** – all documentation submitted. A meeting was held with Liz Whiteford (Project Officer, Wendy Anderson (finance), Elodie Matthews and Jess Whistance (JW) on Tuesday 23 April. Now awaiting feedback before final approval of the following is granted:
 - an extension of the project to 30 September
 - a change of project for the Bardic School
 - use of contingency & inflation for the Bardic School
 - use of underspend on Bealach na Ba Interpretation and Archiving Training
 - rectification of overclaim on revenue

- **Staff:** ALPS advertised for a finance officer role (10 hours per week) and received one applicant. An interview took place Monday 22 April and Mary MacCuish was appointed in the role. Mary starts work for ALPS on Tuesday 7 May 2013, although she will be attending the MG meeting on Monday 6 May at 7.30pm (just to get an idea of how everything works).

- **Newsletter:** the penultimate ALPS newsletter is being printed and will be circulated w/c 6 May. This, as well as the website and the Facebook page, will ensure that the community and visitors are well informed of progress on projects, events taking place and how to get involved.

- **Medieval Chapel:** JW spoke with Mia Scott at Highland Buildings Preservation Trust (HBPT) about the quote from Martin Wildgoose, which stated that costs for consolidating the ruin of the chapel would be no more than £12,000. Mia confirmed that they could not complete the project for this amount and that it would be better if ALPS took over the management of the project.

- **Path works (Kenmore-Applecross glen):** work began on the Kenmore-the Applecross glen path w/c 5 Feb and is now over half way to completion.

- **(Lost Path):** it was agreed that work would be undertaken on the Lost Path to bring the route to its original layout. It is advised that this work will cost no more than £1,500 and will take no more than two weeks to complete. Owen Kilbride to mark the route with posts to ensure that the work is completed correctly.

- **South Coast Deer Fence (deer grid):** Duncan Fraser is completing the verging and reseeding of the layby w/c 29 April. Highland Council to visit site to approve the work that has been undertaken. **(fence)** Kevin Ronaldson returned w/c 18 March and has now completed the Milltown section of the fence. Kevin visited Applecross 30 April to look at the area in Toscaig where the deer have made a route through the gorge. He will return within the next week to erect additional fencing which will signal the completion of the South Coast Deer Fence.

There is a plan to remove the deer from the SCDF area within the next few weeks. There are approximately six deer within the fence.

- **Hebridean barns:** completion of the northern hebridean barn was underway. However, original flooring was discovered and work halted while archaeologist, Cathy Dagg visited site (1 May). Cathy to advise on how to proceed. This barn will be complete when Jane Wilkinson arrives 21 June to produce the wattle panels. Jane will take a workshop 22 June for the community and Monique Bervoets will take a basket making workshop the following week (6 July). Cathy Dagg will be supplying comment for the Conservation Plan - JW will circulate for approval as soon as this has arrived.
- **(south barn)** Duncan McCowan is awaiting delivery of the wood to begin work on constructing the roof.
- **Lime kiln:** this project is now complete. There will be signage erected in due course.
- **Gateway woodland project:** update to be provided by Archie MacLellan.
- **Dykes: (Smiddy)** contractors, Geoff Walker and Darren Jones have been working on the Keppoch section, heading down into Applecross. **(Bealach Phase Two and Keppoch)** Further dyking work was advertised 28 March in the West Highland Free Press with a closing date of 4 April. Geoff Walker and Darren Jones were jointly awarded the contract and will work on this project simultaneously with the existing one.
- **Interpretation:**
 - **Booklets – (Wildlife & Heritage)** the booklets are now for sale at the Visitor Centre and will also be for sale at the Heritage Centre, Post Office and The Walled Garden. We are awaiting delivery of stands.
 - **(Geology)** text is being edited. Images are received. We are awaiting final edited text.

- **(Archaeology)** text is being edited by JW and will be sent to Owen Kilbride when complete. Cathy Dagg has sent over an illustration of the broch which will be incorporated within the booklet. JW to source other illustrations and images for this booklet.
 - **Bealach Interpretation** – Dan Macrae has completed work on top of the Bealach. We have received really good feedback from visitors and local people.
- **Hazel Woods & Roundhouse: (Hazel Woods)** The final winter coppicing event was held on 6 April within the fenced area of Càrnach Woodland. Much of the day was taken up with moving the coppiced wood and clearing the site. There will be further events in the summer for monitoring wild flowers, growth of the hazel and such. Les Bates will supply a report outlining all elements covered over the winter months. **(Roundhouse)** The reed is now ready to collect and will be stored at Home Farm until Brian Wilson (master thatcher) arrives to thatch the roof in August. The job will take no more than three weeks in total and will be done in the traditional manner.
 - **Broch: (leaflet)** Owen Kilbride has the drafted text for comment and will send to JW on his return.
 - **Walled Garden Greenhouses:** an initial costing to restore both greenhouses has been provided by Duncan McCowan. This has far exceeded any budget and so JW met with Duncan to look at alternative options, such as restoring just one of the greenhouses. The main aim of the project must still be that the greenhouses are sympathetic to the original architecture and provide a practical space in which Peter and Jackie can work. On receipt of projected costs, there will be a better idea of what can be included within the project and what can be achieved.
 - **Bardic School:** at present still awaiting confirmation of the following from LEADER funders:
 - extension of project to 30 September
 - change of project plan to 3x one week course over three years (2011-2013)
 - use of contingency & inflation to bring budget to £8,125 for 2013
 - repair of revenue overspend

However, there has been unofficial approval of the above requests, assuming that the financial side of the paperwork meets requirements. In the meantime, confirmation has been received that match funding has been achieved with Coman na Gaidhlig and also Bord na Gaidhlig. This means that, once LEADER funding is secured, the Bardic School will be 100% funded.

- **Land Conditioning & habitat improvements:** CCAGS and SRDP funding applications have been submitted for:
 - small scale woodland at Milltown

- hedging and species rich grassland in Toscaig
- reseeding at the Caman in Toscaig.

There is an application for ditching in Toscaig due to be submitted shortly.

- **Policies Woodland:** JW to advertise for tree surgeon to undertake the work within the policies; this will not include the trees along the Beechwood Path. JW to advertise for planting of 500 trees within the policies. These would be individually planted and boxed native trees to replace those that have been lost. This will include some planting of beech trees along the Beechwood Path.