



## **Management Group Meeting Minutes**

**Monday 5<sup>th</sup> March, 7pm, Estate Office, Applecross House**

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

**Apologies of absence:** Derek MacLennan (Bealach group), Owen Kilbride (Archaeological Society), Lorna Lumsden (Applecross Trust).

The minutes of the MG meeting of the 6<sup>th</sup> February were approved by all present and will be made available via the website.

### **Updates**

Provided on separate document.

### **Minutes**

#### **Càrnach Wood Management**

SB gave some background to the project and highlighted the existence of a draft management plan. The area covers 14ha and a small budget (£2.5K) is available under ALPS to implement the plan. SB proposed that this money is probably best spent enclosing a small experimental area to assess regeneration in the absence of deer and to undertake some small scale coppicing of hazel stools of low lichen value. Such a plot would not resolve all the issues facing Càrnach, but would provide a starting point to inform on longer term management of the whole woodland area. AM asked if parts of the existing fence could be used and SB responded that some areas of the perimeter fence were intact. GF asked if the completion of the SCDF would increase the pressure on the unfenced areas. AM stated that it was possible but that new field areas have been opened and food made available for deer to hopefully relieve any potential additional pressure on the woodland. SB stated that enclosing the woodland in its entirety was not necessarily the most appropriate solution and that a balance must be found as a degree of grazing pressure is beneficial. DA reckoned it would take a couple of years before settling the balance because of the SCDF. MG raised the question of seeking more funding to increase the enclosed area. A meeting was agreed on for Friday 9<sup>th</sup> March with DA, MG, LK and TK to decide on a suitable area and look into further funding. AM confirmed the issue was on the Trustees' agenda.

### **Maps / Leaflet designs (updates available)**

VH presented digital copies of the new leaflets' designs to the group. There was general approval by the whole group. MG doubted the presence of black-throated divers on Milton Loch. SB agreed to remove the photo from the Milton leaflet. AM suggested the photo of a fisherman and the discussion turned to fishing rights. SB agreed that it had to be made clear in any interpretation that visitors would have to approach the Angling Society for 'catch-and-release' permits. It was agreed that all drafts of leaflets would be circulated for feedback before going to print to ensure that the facts in the information provided in the leaflets and get the facts right.

Regarding the map, the question of including B&Bs was raised and it was agreed that they would not be included in the leaflet. LK and TK pointed out the existence of different spellings for the same place names. GC and MS advised that it should be as close as possible to the Applecross Gaelic but agreed that where the use of old names was confusing a pragmatic approach should be taken. VH warned the group of the possibility that the colours might come out differently from one print run to another. AML asked about the opportunity of making a sea and seashore leaflet. It was generally agreed that this was a good idea and should be investigated.

### **Clachan Interpretation**

GC circulated his recommendations for the interpretation of Clachan church. His proposal for replacing the existing display panel outside the church gate was approved by all, as well as the creation of an internal panel inside the church. The possibility of installing a talking post was also mentioned to provide audio access to those with sight disabilities. Concern was expressed about this. AM and JL thought the information the post would deliver could be found in the Heritage Centre. GC explained that the Heritage Centre was open only limited hours during the year, and that the talking post would be enable year-long access to information. He also stated that the recordings used on such posts were easy to update as they were on SD cards with the information as short or as long as one wanted. SB reminded the group that the provision of interpretation accessible to all was a condition of the grant from LEADER. GC agreed to circulate the specifications for the various propositions for the group members to review and make their decision.

### **New Signage (trails)**

SB wished to raise the question of signage on the new network of paths. He reminded the group of the existence signage type. The group was in agreement to use wooden marker posts in keeping with the area and those already present. IK pointed out that some of these existing signs were wrong and needed to be corrected or were rotten and should be replaced. AMcC thought that the project required consistency. GF favoured the idea of naming the paths rather than having signs directing visitors to certain places, which was thought restrictive and confusing. AM asked the group if post at start and end of paths were desirable but it was felt that it might be too much. LK suggested using either colour coded arrows, symbols or numbers but VH felt that there were too many walks for these options to work effectively. The MG generally felt that the use of path names gave a sense of place and should be favoured.

### **Archaeological Trail tenders**

SB summed up the result of the tendering process, with five expressions of interest and meetings on site with four contractors, leading to only two tenders submitted. One tender was within budget and the other one was twice the amount of the first. SB recommended choosing the lowest tender and awarding the contract to George Mundell. The group agreed with that recommendation.

### **Gateway Woodland**

AM explained that a pre-qualification questionnaire had been put together and sent out to various forestry companies, including Scottish Woodlands, and UPM Tilhill. The next stage is to complete a detailed specification for a tender submission. AM suggested that interested contractors should need to visit the site. SB insisted on the importance of a tight specification, in terms of what was going to be taken out and replaced, but also regarding access and provision of fuelwood. The specification will be circulated to the group for approval. Fuelwood provision was discussed and it was thought that it should be part of the Gateway woodland project. AMacC stressed the necessity of creating a business plan to inform on the potential fuelwood aspect of this project.

### **Other matters arising**

TK raised the issue of voluntary input into ALPS and whether this could be quantified as it was significant and much of it benefits the Trust? SB agreed to provide an estimate of this.

SB raised the issue of the Hebridean Barns project and highlighted the shortfall on the budget. It was agreed by AM that the Trust could cover the shortfall as long as the project stayed within its projected budget

The date for next meeting was set for Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2012.