



Management Group Meeting Minutes

Monday 7th January 2013, 7pm, Estate Office, Applecross House

Present: Archie MacLellan (AM), Chair (Applecross Trust), Alistair McCowan (AMcC) (Historical Society), Gill Fairweather (Walks and Traditional crafts group), Tom Kilbride (co-opted member), Mike Summers (Applecross Crofters), Alasdair Macleod (AMac)(Community Council), Jess Whistance, Elodie Matthews

Apologies of absence: Gordon Cameron (Heritage Manager), Mary Gibson (adviser), Lorna Lumsden (Applecross Trust), Owen Kilbride (Archaeological Society), Derek MacLennan (Bealach group), Jackie Liuba (co-opted member)

JW provided an update on ALPS projects

See separate document.

- **South Coast Deer Fence:** Mike advised that there was a section of old fence that needed replacing along the top of the hill before the grid. He also mentioned that there may be some need for tree felling in order to run the fence down to the grid. All agreed that this section should be replaced when Kevin Ronaldson returns to finish the fence
 - o JW stated that she was walking the Toscaig element of the fence with Duncan Fraser later in the week, and the Culduie element of the fence the following week with Duncan Murchison. It was mentioned that there were some issues with the deer getting in around the gorge at Toscaig and that this should be looked at too
- **Gateway Woodland:** AM and AMac confirmed that funding had not been approved or refused for the pier. There was more work required to show commitment from the Trust for future felling of woodland and use of the pier, and a meeting was set for 8 Jan to discuss this.
- AM announced that the Long Term Forest Plan was approved. He mentioned that there would be a commitment from the Trust, where possible, to haulage of additional wood from other plantations.
 - o AM stated that the SRDP grant application had been submitted for harvesting and replanting. He also updated the board on the status with HLF funding – that an additional £120,000 budget had been approved for Gateway Woodland (which is £55,584 in funding). AM is currently working with Bill Watson to bring down the costs of the project.
- **Funding: (LEADER)** JW stated that there were some issues with LEADER funding and whilst all LEADER projects are affected, the financial situation for the Bardic School is the main issue. All outputs and targets for projects had been met and there had been a significant underspend. A

Request for Change had been submitted to utilise this underspend with additional projects; however, the general feeling at LEADER was that if outputs had been achieved then there was no requirement for further funding – the project should then be self sustaining. An application for extension of LEADER funding date to 30 September had also been submitted. This is yet to be confirmed.

- **(ERDF)** JW also confirmed that she had spoken with ERDF about the use of branding on all signage. She was made aware that if ERDF branding was not added to all signage, funding would be clawed back. It was agreed by the board that branding guidelines should then be adhered to but be as low key as possible.
- **Pathways:** JW presented the tender assessment for Kenmore-Applecross glen pathworks. All agreed that the best and most cost effective option was George Mundell. Agreed that work could begin imminently.
 - o AM stated that the section of path from the road to the fence fell into crofting land and therefore could be funded by Kenmore crofting grants. Advised that JW speak with Katrina Johnson (crofting clerk for Kenmore).
- **Hebridean Barns:** JW announced that planning permission had been granted for the south barn and that they would look to begin work as soon as confirmation is received in writing. There was some concern over the stability of the roof of the north barn after the bad storms. AMcC confirmed that the roof of the north barn had not moved at all which was a good sign for the future.
- **Drystone Dykes:** JW presented the tender assessment for the next phase of drystone dyking works (Smiddy area) and confirmed that Darren Jones and Geoff Walker were the only contractors. As such, and due to the excellent standard of work completed on previous jobs, it was agreed by the board that Darren and Geoff should be awarded the contract
- **Staff training:** JW stated that there was still a good deal of funding remaining for training and it had been suggested that a chainsaw course (with certificate) would be ideal for Isabelle. There is the opportunity for three other people to also undertake the course. Mike felt that previously, people took the course but then never utilised the training and that this time around, the individuals should be better selected. It was agreed by the board that those selected should either be utilising the certificate/training for the purposes of their job, or to ensure that they will utilise the training on a personal level. JW to circulate funds remaining in the budget and a list of the people suggested for the course.
- **Land Conditioning & Habitat Improvement:** AM raised the subject of what happens after the deer fence is complete and the need for land conditioning works across the townships. AM asked AMac about his proposal for Species Rich Grassland (SRG) and possible hedging at his croft in Toscaig. AMac confirmed that he had submitted information to Sam a while back with a map of the ground in question. The hedging would be native species such as hawthorn, blackthorn and hazel. JW to source AMac's maps of SRG which should be on file. JW to gather quotes for hedge planting of 200m area, six plants per metre.
 - o It was also noted that Duncan Fraser had proposed some areas for re-seeding and ditching. JW to speak with Duncan to gain detailed information about the areas to be reseeded.
 - o Mike mentioned that he had a small area where he would like some trees planted on his croft at Lonbain. There had also been a proposal put forward for an area around Torr

Mor in Milltown for small scale forestry. JW to speak with Mike about the proposed area and request a survey for feasibility.

- AM asked Gill if there were any decisions made on Land Conditioning work at Culduie. Gill did not think there was anything agreed but advised to check with Duncan Murchison. JW to speak to Duncan when walking the fence the following week.
- AM asked the group to think about the future of ALPS for the next meeting. All to come with ideas about how (or if) to go forward, possible format, and what it should entail. All ideas welcome.

- Next meeting will be held on Tuesday 12 February 2013