

Minutes of the RAW Committee held via Teams on Tuesday, January 24th 2023

Present; Andy Stott, Norma Fears, Annan Griffin, Andy Tunnicliffe, Peter Dreghorn, Martyn Lyall, Nick Chisholm, Nick Major and Gareth Pedley

Apologies: None – Full attendance

1. **Minutes of Last Meeting**

Andy had circulated them. The meeting accepted them. Andy would change the status from Draft and upload to the RAW website and add the link.

Action: Andy

2. **Actions arising from the minutes.**

a) **Feedback from Eagle Festival and Moffat Academy**

A lot of interest in RAW, and Rick Taylor who organises the festival is very supportive. Again, a lot of interest from a few people. School is interested in Fly Life monitoring. And to follow up with Shara Routledge.

Action: Andy - We are now following up with the environmental group of Moffat Academy sixth formers – Carried over

b) **River Flies**

Now happening on three sites. Andy will speak to Anna about getting old data and trigger levels.

Action: Andy & Anna - Anna to write letter to River Annan Trust after discussion with Andy S

SEPA Partnership

Andy suggested we have a joint SEPA/RAW meeting. Possibly visit to Little Yarrow.

Action: Anna – Anna will arrange a suitable date in 2023 with Roberto Martinez, Hydro Morphologist. He has been involved at Bodesbeck long term and Anna is hoping we can do this Tweed Forum Possibly end of January. – Carried over

Anna has the name of the contact for showing the film in Annan. Anna has a short video to show at the Climate Ready Event in Annan on Monday 12th December. Carried Over

c) **Re-Meandering of stream at Moffat Distillery**

We will try to get Roberto to look at the same time as looking at Little Yarrow. Then decide on the feasibility going forward.

d) Andy raised the needs to change the constitution to allow single approval of payment through the Bank of Scotland app.

Action: Andy S to investigate with Andy T – Carried over

Peter asked if Anna could find out if there are any records of eels using the eel pass.

Action: Anna Anna suggested that July 2024 would be a good time to do a survey.

We could approach GRT about a survey in 2023 for fish passing the caul.

Action: Andy - Andy to approach Ollie Routledge re surveys. Anna to check what SEPA have done.

3. Treasurer's Report

Andy T reported that there is £914 in the account. Out of this will come some funds for seed trays, compost, watering cans, staging, and netting etc for the tree nursery

4. Riverwoods Project

Andy has recently spoken with Ollie Routledge and he has asked if we can put together a listing of who owns land along Annanwater, and what the potential is for planting. Andy has given Andy T an OS map of upper Annanwater and asked him to fill in as best he can.

Meanwhile GFT are pulling together similar input from the Annan catchment, into a database prior to making contact.

5. Milnbie Caul

Peter mentioned that he had discussions with the NDA (Nuclear Decommissioning Authority) and they are now involved in restoration around their Sellafield facilities in Cumbria, similar to RAW's activities. He suggests we write to the NDA and ask them to fund it as part of their decommissioning efforts. Gareth stated we should explore all funding opportunities and mention Dam Removal Europe too as a possible source (<https://damremoval.eu/>).

Anna seems to think Scottish Water are using the Caul to protect their pipe infrastructure, This needs to be checked. There may be other abstraction licences in the area too. There may be a requirement for using the Caul for water abstraction for potential green hydrogen projects on the Chapel Cross site. Gareth made the point that if the 'green energy' is not really green if it seriously degrades the river. Nick mentioned that he believed the pipework to take water from the Caul has been dismantled/destroyed. He said we should involve the local council too. Peter will write to the NDA and D&G council.

Action: Peter

6. Funding

Peter gave a presentation to Kirkpatrick & Juxta Community Council (basically Beattock) asking for £500 for the tree nursery, they wrote back agreeing to give us £400. This for cells for the tree saplings (1000 off) and the stop tap for the polytunnel. But Derrick and Suzanne Pollock have already agreed to do this for free. The proviso is that we involve the primary school which we had planned to do anyway. This would be planting trees and growing plants from the seeds. Peter is keen to get in account float to fund, and Anna thinks that the Riverwoods project will provide this in the medium term. Annan mentioned that new businesses at Chapel Cross will be keen to get opportunities for carbon offset.

7. Tree Nursery Update

Currently we have the polytunnel, hose pipes, and two raised beds built at the site in Beattock, with 800 trees in them. The staging in the polytunnel has been built, We have 150 Bird Cherries that need immediate planting. Martin has offered to help at the nursery on a routine basis to water, check for mice etc. There's a national tree shortage currently, Peter suggested that Andy factor this into the Riverwoods project. We have a tremendous number of tree seeds collected locally by Davey Cairns and others.

Peter mentioned that we need to get registered with the Animal Plant Health Agency and the Forestry and Land Services organisation.

Nick suggested that Chris Ryde may be able to advise, even though we aren't big.

8. Re-Meandering

Anna will get visits set up. Any river engineering will require SEPA input, registration, or licence. It needs to be a cautious approach. Anna suggested the following approach, visit by SEPA, survey, to get the evidence then seek funding from the Scottish Nature Restoration fund.

9. Riverwoods Film Showing at Holyrood

Great event, did some networking beforehand, but due to two emergency debates the event was delayed, so there was no time for Q&A. But it was well attended. Norma, Andy & Janice attended. Great support from Mairi McAllan & Rachel Hamilton gave very good supportive inputs, so clearly good cross party support.

10. Annan Climate Change Group

Poorly attended, Anna will try to get the Riverwoods film shown in Annan.

11. South of Scotland Scheme

Nic has sent 5 forms into Jonathan Barrett. He will review when he hears back.

12. Forestry Co-Op Grant Application

Treesurv have now signed a contract with FLS, to cover a group of landowners to plant 500-1000 trees. This has taken longer than anyone had thought, there are a lot of steps in the process, and we have learnt a lot. It is now unlikely that we will be able to plant this planting season, it will be next season. We need to understand the issue of tree unavailability. We have 6 sites under consideration. It looks like Treesurv will overspend the £2500k on the initial admin. But the next phase is looking to be better. RAW is extremely grateful to all the effort put in by Treesurv.

13. Oak Plantings

Andy recounted the planting of two oaks grown from acorns by a couple in Moffat. He had been in possession since the summer and was waiting for them to become dormant and for there to be a suitable planting day. He and Peter have now planted them along the Annan footpath opposite Lawrencefield, He took photos and sent them plus a map with the location to the couple and received a lovely thank email by return.

Bird Cherry saplings – in amongst the 950 trees given to us by TCV, there were 150 bird cherry trees that are of a size that need immediate plantings. Andy T and Norma and Beattock House will take some.

14. AOB

Martin mentioned Winter Watch has eel ropes on the TV.

15. Next Meeting

Andy to send out Rally poll for meeting in early March via Teams and face to face at

Lawrencefield. Any ideas for sites to planting gratefully received.

Andy Stott
29/01/2023