

## Minutes of the RAW Committee held via Teams on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2023

Present; Andy Stott, Norma Fears, Peter Dreghorn, Andy Tunnicliffe, Martyn Lyall, Anna Griffin Nick Chisholm, Richard Smith

Apologies: Nick Chisholm

### 1. **Minutes of Last Meeting**

*Andy S 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) **River Flies Data**

Anna still not heard from Olly, Richard offered to help. There are 9 years' worth of information missing.

*Action: Richard*

#### b) **Milnbie Caul**

Peter asked if Anna could find out if there are any records of eels using the eel pass. Latest information is that this won't happen

*Closed.*

Anna offered to get the invertebrate survey information and share with RAW.

*Action: Anna*

Peter will raise at the Chapelcross Stakeholders with Scottish Water

*Action: Peter (Anna will send copy of email she sent to Scottish Water)*

#### c) **Grant Application**

Andy explained that a grant request had been sent to Foundation Scotland for £2000 and has had a telephone interview with them about the request. We have applied for materials for the tree nursery.

#### d) **Tree Nursery**

Nick had suggested we get in contact with other community based tree nurseries and set up a WhatsApp group, this has happened yet but one nursery has been in contact. Peter mention that he is in weekly contact with Graham Dalby of Beechgrove Tree Nurseries near Dumfries.

#### e) **Landfill Tax Grant**

Peter and Andy need to do more work on the application for £7k.

f) **Foco Sites**

Nick has emailed the sites as requested.

g) **Chapel Cross Stakeholders Meeting**

Andy & Peter attended the recent meeting and we were adopted as stakeholders.

h) **Luke Scott visit to Dark Sky Distillery**

Andy invited Luke to visit and he suggested that the river flood the area rather than just meander the beck. Anna stated that she would like to give a presentation as a result of her SEPA guys survey and report. Andy suggested he organise a one off SEPA meeting, he will send out a Rally poll, for a meeting sooner than the next RAW meeting and include Luke. The presentation will include Moffat Water.

*Action: Andy*

i) **Ericstane Planting**

There was a small attendance at the walk, including Oliver Mundell and Lyn Davies. The environmental impact report was expected soon.

**3. Treasurers Report**

Andy T had submitted a statement showing the account had just less than £446.38.

**4. Tree Nursery Update**

Peter reported that a lot of silver birch and alder germinating from seeds from Forest Start. We have collected 1000+ acorns with more to come and then they need planting. We also need to move trees from the raised beds to actual planting sites this winter to make room for new seedlings.

Andy has got a new 3-year agreement with the Pollocks to host the nursery.

Anna suggested that SOSE or Borders Forest Trust interns or apprentices.

**5. Funding Updates**

FIRNS project moving along. The first phase is to set in place a scoping study looking at green finance. Andy has asked to be included in the first meeting.

*Action: Andy to follow up*

**6. New Funding Ideas**

Peter suggested applying to Hollywood Trust and Heritage Lottery for funding for a project officer. Danger of confusing this with FIRNS application. Andy suggested just approaching Hollywood for now. Anna suggested that there are other potential sources (TCV) and she offered to send them to Andy.

*Action: Anna*

Richard suggested that there is a need to put together a job description of what a project officer would do.

*Action: Peter to write one*

Andy suggested that the group needed a volunteer coordinator, to help with school

liaison and move out of the Moffat Area. The meeting was very supportive of this idea.

#### **7. Little Yarrow Trip**

Visit was very worthwhile and informative.

#### **8. South of Scotland Planting Scheme**

We have five confirmed and several in the pipeline. When we have sites, we need to get the forms into Nic before the end of September. Nic asked Andy to check site we have already approved, and possibly looking at the Woodland Trust?

#### **9. Little Yarrow Visit of Tweed Forum Remeandering**

TF and the local Shepherd gave background to project to Norma, Peter, Erin Bullard of Dark Sky Spirits and Nick Chisholm (thanks for GG Transport). Hugh Chalmers who oversaw it was on WhatsApp from the Highlands. It cost £150k interestingly the planted trees were not protected, but, were not browsed. There was quite a lot of extra flooding at one end of the project The shepherd had lost some grazing but not much. Wemys and March Estate were supportive of the project.

#### **10. River Flies**

Andy has made contact with the Bug Life lady to do training. But we need more nets and kits, hopefully via the next grant from landfill. Most likely this will be Spring 2024. Possibility of getting kids in Moffat Water valley involved.

#### **11. Invasive Species**

There has been funding in the past to survey and organise the eradication of mink, Japanese knotweed and Himalayan balsam.

Andy to raise with Luke a potential visit with Galloway Fisheries Invasive officer. Andy also to raise with Olly what the Annan Fisheries Board's view regarding mink.

*Action: Andy*

Anna to get the SEPA folk to talk to Andy re Rust treatment contacts.

*Action: Anna*

Andy to post the contact for reporting invasive species. See below

[Invasive non-native species | Scotland's environment web](#)

#### **12. McNabb Laurie**

He is now the Director of the Dumfries and Galloway Woodland Trust, funded by the Woodland Trust and employed by Borders Forest Trust. He is very keen to develop a relationship with us.

#### **13. Charitable Status**

At this point we stay as we are. But think about later.

## **Annandale Project**

Regarding the large Annadale and Eskdale project Nick can confirm that an expression of interest has been submitted by Dumfries and Galloway Council for a 10-year scheme aimed at carbon sequestration, climate action and climate adaptation. Topic areas will include things like natural flood management, riparian planting, nutrient reduction, and other environmental matters that will be of interest to RAW. The pot has a nominal value of £15 million ish with about £7million from the National Heritage lottery.

They are waiting for a response from the National Heritage Lottery. If it spikes interest, we will then enter a project development stage which will include more detailed project planning and the commissioning of feasibility studies in areas where we need more knowledge. This will lead on to a detailed application which includes full project plans including indications about where the match funding will come from. The development stage will, likely, take circa 18months. It may be possible to shorten this but as it is likely to be a highly complex set of proposals, Nick thinks we will need the time to get it all correct. He has no idea whether he will be involved in the development phase, that will ultimately be up to his employers!

## **14. AOB**

Anna's job has changed at SEPA, but she can no longer stay as a SEPA person, but wants to continue as a volunteer. She is welcomed as a volunteer.

Richard is welcome to go see the nursery and take his son. The process of visiting involves texting Sue and letting her know when your going and when you're leaving.

**15. Next meeting.** To be arranged for the mid November

Andy Stott

12/10/23