

Minutes of the RAW Committee held via Teams on Thursday 22nd February 2024

Present; Andy Stott, Andy Tunnicliffe, Richard Smith, Norma Fears, Peter Dreghorn, Martin Lyall

Apologies: Anna Griffin, Nick Chisholm, Emma Coull and Nic Major

1. Welcome

Peter welcomed all the attendees, only Martin was on Teams, the rest were present at Lawrencefield.

2. Previous Minutes

Were accepted and Andy agreed to change status from draft and upload to the website.

Action: Andy

3. Actions from Previous minutes of Tuesday 12 December 2023

Only outstanding action was on Andy T to provide payment dates from Scottish Forestry for the FOCO admin. Andy apologised and agreed to do it asap.

Action: Andy T

4. Treasurer's Report

Andy reported that the current balance stood at £1848.78. He agreed to provide details of how much of the recent £2000 Foundation Scotland grant had been spent.

Action: Andy T

5. Treesurv

Peter reported that Nic Major has been asked to be a trustee of the newly formed D&G Woodland Group managed by McNab Lawrie. Peter wanted to acknowledge all the good work and integrity shown by Treesurv.

6. Small Scale Tree Planting Update

Lawrence who works for Treesurv and provided a spreadsheet with the status of the grants/planting.

Status is;

Sunnybrae	Trees/stakes/tubes with Nic awaiting delivery
Poldean	Planting imminent.
Holehouse	Planting imminent.
Broomhills	Planting imminent.
Meikleholmside Farm	Planting imminent.
Meikleholmside Cottage	Planting imminent.
Hightae	Awaiting discussions with landowner
Crofthead	Waiting Offer letter
Dark Skies	Waiting Offer letter

7. FOCO and Landscape Planting

We currently have 5 sites under consideration. We may have to look at Hightae again

as the landowner is not a farmer and VAT registered. We may have to switch to using the Woodland Trust. Though Poldean may be a 2025 planting.

Sites planned are:

1. Holehouse - planting will be complete in the coming weeks through SSTPG.
2. Hightae - we put a good amount of work into putting an FGS plan together for the owner Kay, but the costs of the planting works be too expensive. We are instead using the SSTPG over multiple years to plant this site.
3. Dark Skies - planting underway using SSTPG.
4. Meikleholmside Cottage. FGS application almost complete, a few final details to confirm before submitting. Planting will be in the autumn.
5. Meikleholmside farm & 6. Craigbeck - I have still to put the woodlands plan and costing together for these sites. Looking to plant in Autumn if it goes ahead.

8. Funding

Peter explained that we could get £9k from D&G woodland and are looking to match funding to supply another £9k. Andy is applying £5k from D&G Community fund for equipment for the proposed tree officer. Peter is also applying to Holywood Trust for match funding. So, we should have a Tree Officer funded and Peter has approached Treesurv to see if they would employ this person. Possibly finding someone who would do self-employed.

9. Tree Officer Post

A discussion took place around the need to draft a more defined job description and the sort of person who we were looking for.

Action Richard to take a look at the JD.

10. Re engineering Cross Law Burn

Richard is still to have a conversation with Nick and Erin. Richard will be looking for examples of real-life projects for his course. Once we have the OK with Erin and Nick and then we should approach the grant authorities to check out the possibility and feasibility.

11. Tree Nursery

Some 100 trees, mainly willow, have been removed from the nursery lately by Nic Major for the SOS tree planting. Martin stated that once the leaves appear later in spring he would like a big labelling exercise to take place as many of the original labels have been lost over the winter.

Peter stated that the big trees need planting out, especially the Bird Cherries. There are Aspen and alders that need planting before the end of March. There are some trees that require to be planted at Granton.

We need to wait to the summer to check on the success of planting last year. Norma will ask her neighbour if she would take some trees.

Action: Norma

There are 90+ scotch pines that need planting at the Dark Skies asap.

Andy asked Martin for the latest stock spreadsheet.

Action; Martin

12. Chapel Cross Visit

The site visit been cancelled, Andy was going, it will be re-arranged. The next Chapel Cross meeting is in few weeks on the 13th March at the Gretna Chase Hotel, Andy is attending as a stakeholder. Members to populate the public attendees would be welcome. It was noted that SOSE has bought land either side of the Caul.

13. Litter Survey Day

Andy reported that he and Nick attended the event along with a dozen or so other people. They included a radio reporter who conducted interviews and we were met at one of the river locations by a TV reporter from ITV Border news. They did some filming which was broadcast that evening. The group split into groups, each doing 3-4 locations on the river. The results were given to the two representatives from Keep Scotland Beautiful.

14. Dumfries and Galloway Trust

Now have their own website and Facebook pages. They have had a recent event on crab apples in D&G. Please visit the Facebook site and like. They have received £200K from the Heritage Lottery Fund. McNab is looking for them to be more of a facilitating organisation.

15. ITV Border Life

Peter will be filmed shortly by them to explore his work and engagement with zero carbon, zero waste and his wood. They also want to do a film about RAW in the future.

16. AOB

Richard reported that he has now a contact at Amey. Andy to speak to Hugo re contacts on the M74 motorway.

Action: Andy

Next Meeting to be arranged for end April with post tree planting review.

Action: Andy

Andy Stott

29 February 2024