

## Friends of Glenan Wood

### Notes from meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2025

#### **Present:**

Katharine Lowrie, Kate Gray, Hannah Buss, Peter Black, Rhyddian Knight, Robin Webster

#### **Apologies:**

Niall McFarlane, Iain Waugh

### Minutes of last Meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2024, and Matters Arising:

#### Deer Stalking & Enclosures.

Rhyddian said that two enclosures had been completed, but he wanted to use a different screening material for others. It was agreed that building more enclosures should be a priority, as the “High seats” for the stalker were not yet available (Katharine is chasing these, they have been promised by the end of February. Peter is Andy (the stalker)’s brother in law, and has helped him in the wood.)

**Action Katharine and Rhyddian.**

#### Forest Plan

Angus has now submitted this: once this has been formally accepted, it should allow us to apply for funding from Forestry Scotland.

#### Rhododendron clearance by Crispie

Ian Dow is pursuing long term funding for rhododendron clearing.

Ryan has been injured, but is now recovered. We need a professional forester to advise us regarding the felling and converting of the hemlock by the Crispie boundary, which is dense and poses a threat to our wood, although extracting the timber would be a difficult issue.

**Action Rhyddian**

#### Big Marquee

Katharine agreed to write to David Blair to thank him for donating this. It was agreed that this might be erected near the orchard in the summer, and people might sleep there if required.

**Action Katharine**

#### Finance Report

Niall submitted a brief report indicating that we had about £3k available to spend, but querying whether we required two of the carts for transporting timber. Rhyddian said that they were not the same, and that ideally we did. It was not agreed that we needed both immediately, but we do need one.

**Action Rhyddian**

We also have said that we will install a people counter, which we need to purchase. **Action Robin**

#### Capital Spend proposals

It was agreed that we should install a “Woo Woo” composting toilet near the orchard (It was also agreed that this should be the larger version, suitable for wheelchairs). Rhyddian said that he felt the maintenance of this (i.e. the exchanging cycle of the compost ) was something that he as ranger would undertake. The cost of this is around £8-9k, and will have to be paid for before claiming the funds from the lottery, so we need to accumulate more funds.

**Action Rhyddian**

John Blair has offered to undertake the water supply from the old Wood Chip shop to the orchard, at the cost for materials. The road would have to be closed briefly to allow for this. Peter agreed to speak to John and to expedite this, and also to clarify it with the new owners (Richard?) of the old wood chip shop, (which is now to be the Portavadie Whiskies bonded warehouse). **Action Peter**

We will require a lawyer to prepare a draft agreement to formalise this so that it is future proof. Robin will ask his nephew. **Action Robin**

Robin to inform our contact at the National Community Lottery of our revised capital spend proposals, which now include the purchase, moving and repurposing of the container, the water supply, and the composting toilet. Note that we will need invoices from John Blair for this.

**Action Robin**

### Email Address

Rhyddian to set up a new Glenan email address for Peter (and anyone who wants one). .

**Action Rhyddian**

### Forest Ranger Report

This had been circulated. The full report and programme for the year should be completed by the end of February.

**Action Rhyddian**

Rhyddian was congratulated on having got a core volunteer group together, (who meet on Wednesdays at 9.30 at the carp[ark, and who were helping move timber for the path this morning).

We are With You, a charity specialising in social prescription) wishes to make formal links with our conservation volunteering programme.

### ABCAN

Hannah was congratulated on her success in winning a grant of £1k for this, which has to be spent by the end of March this year, (although the funds have not yet been received).

Hannah has already managed to delay the requirement for a report to the end of March.

Hannah produced an excellent chart indicating an approach to understanding what the wood and community needs are, and is proposing a session with the school, and another in the wood. Hannah agreed to take the responsibility for dealing with this grant, and will ask for help when required. She is also meeting with SSEN regarding funding.

**Action Hannah**

### Drainage

Rhyddian has dug some drainage channels in front of the container: more soil has to be removed, and sunken perforated drainage pipes laid, before the gravel can be spread.

**Action Rhyddian**

### Decking

Rhyddian and the "Core team" have been moving timber up to the end of the existing decking behind, to deck over the existing knee deep bog blocking the path at that point.

**Action Rhyddian**

### Mink Trapping

Mink are a serious problem. Katharine noted that there were "automatic" traps available. Would require co-operation with neighbouring landowners. Katherine to pursue.

**Action Katharine**

## **Funding**

Hannah had produced a list of what we might ideally need in the future, should long term funding be available.

There was discussion regarding what we needed funding for. Robin said that he felt we needed to establish what biodiversity we actually had in the wood at present, and establish a scientific benchmark, and then in the future we could monitor this baseline at regular intervals to establish whether we were doing well or not. To do this we would need to hire specialist biologists, botanists, dendronologists etc. to survey the wood.

Katharine to produce list of specialist advice needed.

Robin said he would consult with Mick Eyre regarding what we might ask for from TDDT, although we would need to seek more funding elsewhere.

**Action Robin and Katharine**

## **Forest Ranger Personal Development Plan**

It was agreed that Peter might take this on, referring to the contract that was drawn up by Amie and helping Rhyddian prioritise opportunities etc.

**Action Peter**

## **Date of Next Meeting:**

**Wednesday 19th March at 1.30pm**

Rhyddian said that he was hosting weekly meetings at his house on Thursday afternoons at 2.00pm, to which all Trustees were welcome.

**Action All**

## **Post Meeting News**

We have been approached by an organisation offering us £5,000 to support our activities. This could help us bridge the funding gap between paying for capital expenditure and being reimbursed by the National Community Lottery.