

Minutes of Sleat Community Trust Environment Advisory Group

15th October 2018

Present: Peter Roberts (chair), Catherine Dickey, Roger Cottis, Tim Godfrey, Dorothy Jackson (minutes)

Apologies: Alan Drever, Chris Pendlebury, Meg Bateman

1. Notes of last meeting and matters arising

Chris P. has spoken to Simon Larson re setting up a photo archive to capture past information and provide a framework for cataloguing future images. Roger proposed taking photos at regular intervals from a number of fixed posts, to document changes in the forest.

2. Winter programme

Wed 21st November: Bob McMillan, Birds of Sleat -an update. Venue: An Crùbh.

February 2019: Update on South Skye Seas Initiative projects, and community outreach to invite participation in a range of activities.

Ideas for a talk in March needed.

Dorothy to contact Phil to see if a moth trapping event might be feasible around May.

Catherine suggested a night walk. 6.30- 7.30 pm, meet at SCT office, children with adults. Catherine to suggest dates.

Bat survey for the summer.

3. Tormore updates

Official opening of polytunnel on 10th November. Still need to build a potting surface in the polytunnel. The winner of a competition for school kids to write a story or poem, or draw a tree, will cut the ribbon. Catherine to inform people, organise hot chocolate etc. Funds needed to bring children, and the tree seedlings they have grown, up to the polytunnel.

Boggy parts of all the paths have been located, with a view to creating boardwalks across as many of them as possible with the timber available. It may be possible to drain some areas.

Peat restoration project: Roger reported that an otter survey revealed a small, previously hidden lochan supplying the Allt Camaird. Felling machinery unnecessarily damaged the lochan outflow and burn in two places. A protocol from the contractor to show how they will harvest the identified deep peat areas without further damage was requested but nothing has been received to date. Alan to follow up.

4. Information leaflets

Geographic scope is Sleat. Target audience is visitors to Sleat, to tell them where to go to see interesting things. Content to be simple, assume no previous knowledge. To be professionally printed. Initially design as A4 trifold.

Seashore leaflet: Roger will ask James Merryweather, who already has a great deal of information. Suggest simple info on no more than 6 easily accessible shore sites e.g. Ord, Tarskavaig, Achnacloich, Armadale/Ardvasar, Knock?, Camas Daraich, Camuscrois.

The next one could be a woodland leaflet.

Dorothy is available to provide layout or design input, if needed.

5. AOCB

Hydro environmental report. The pipe routing must avoid areas of oak and native woodland (which is rare in Tormore) along the burn side. The environmental survey was incomplete due to high water levels at the time, and failed to detect presence of otters which are known to be there. The surveyors didn't check out local sources of info. The meeting regretted the lack of timely communication with the EAG, which could have provided information.

The meeting noted that the EAG, whose remit is to provide advice and guidance to the Trust on environmental matters, was not involved in the creation of SCT's environmental policy.

A beach clean at Rubha Dhubh is planned during the winter.

6. Date of next meeting

Monday 14th January 2019