

Maryburgh Woodland Management Committee

Thursday 26th January 2023 @ 7.00pm

Maryburgh Amenities Centre

MINUTE of inaugural meeting.		ACTION:
1.	<p>Welcomes and Apologies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attendees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Craig Evans ➤ Ian Fraser ➤ Siobhan Fraser ➤ John MacKay (MAC rep) ➤ Rosie Macleod ➤ Ewan McHardy ➤ Elsbeth Neil ➤ Jim Neil ➤ Megan Parker ➤ Donald Stuart (CC rep) ▪ Apologies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ ▪ DS welcomed attendees to the meeting and thanked those present for agreeing to form the Committee to oversee Maryburgh Woodland.
2.	<p>Guidance from Maryburgh Community Council and MAC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DS & JMack informed the group of the background to the funding and purchase of the woodland and offered guidance about what is expected of the group and suggested that the first task would be to appoint a Chair to drive the aims for the woodland and a secretary to record the meetings.
3.	<p>Appointment of Office Bearers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ After a discussion Megan Parker kindly agreed to take on the role of Chair of the group. Megan has a wealth of experience with native woodlands and knowledge and understanding of various funding sources. She also has a background in the study of Ecology. ▪ Elsbeth Neil agreed to take the minute of the meeting. ▪ All present informed the meeting that they were happy to take on a hands-on approach to any manual tasks which may be required.
4.	<p>Setting Priorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There followed a discussion about what the main priorities would be for the group, and it was agreed that first and foremost the group should follow the guidance highlighted in the tree survey. ▪ The group agreed that the second priority should be to ensure that the wider Community of Maryburgh were informed of this new initiative and consulted on what they would like to see happening in the woods and to ask if anyone would like to be involved in the work of the woodland management.

5.	<p>Tree Safety Survey – tasks to be addressed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EN asked if there was confirmation as to the value of the Public Liability insurance held by the MAC committee. DS advised that this should be established quickly and receive confirmation in writing. ▪ There followed discussion about gaining funding for any work required to be carried out. MP informed the group that local authority approval would have to be sought and that she had experience of doing this and would investigate. ▪ MP Informed the group that there may be various sources of funding for the work which must be carried out including the Forestry Grant Scheme. She also agreed to investigate possible options. EMcH highlighted that the community could possibly get access to Community Benefit money, from SSE for example. ▪ MP said that to gain access to funding the group would have to ensure the upkeep of the health and biodiversity of the woodland and would have to prepare a management plan. ▪ SF & RM both raised concerns about tree felling where there may be bats, squirrels and pine martens. MP said that an ecological survey would be a necessity prior to any tree felling and agreed to do an informal walk through to examine the habitat to ensure no disturbance to wildlife. ▪ EN informed the group that two trees within the woodland had been highlighted in the survey for felling within 6 months of the survey date and therefore the work should be completed by 22nd of May 2023. ▪ JMacK suggested that Brahan Estate may be able to assist with the tree felling and agreed to inform the Estate of the new initiative and ask if they could help with the trees which require removal. ▪ IF suggested that notices should perhaps be erected to inform the public of the tree that are a hazard and of the work to be carried out in the wood. 	<p>EN to seek confirmation of scope of insurance.</p> <p>MP to enquire about LA approval for actioning the recommendations in the tree survey, and to seek possible funding opportunities.</p> <p>MP will undertake to examine wildlife habitats.</p> <p>JMacK will inform Brahan Estate and ask for a quote for the tree removal.</p> <p>CE agreed to start to prepare the wording for the notices and said that he could also possibly erect the notices once prepared.</p>
6.	<p>Community Consultation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It was agreed that a community consultation was essential to keep the Community informed of the work in the woodland and also to garner their views and possible assistance. MP said that it would also be vital to inform all stakeholders including Scottish Forestry and Nature Scotland. ▪ IF suggested that it would be important to ensure that Scottish Water were also consulted. ▪ It was agreed that perhaps relying on Facebook would limit participation in the survey and that a paper consultation involving an update and questionnaire 	<p>MP & EN agreed to start to prepare the consultation paper.</p>

		would be more appropriate to ensure everyone in the Community could have their say. This could be distributed in a similar way to the 'Roundabout'.	
7.	Next Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ After some discussion it was agreed that the next meeting should take place on Thursday 9th February at 7pm in the Centre. DS agreed to inform Steph O'Connell of the booking. ▪ DS brought the meeting to a close. He thanked everyone present and agreed that the group had made a positive start. 	DS to contact Steph about the hall booking.