

Maryburgh Community Woodland Group

Thursday 25th January 2024 @ 7.00pm

Maryburgh Amenities Centre

MINUTE of meeting.		ACTION:
1.	<p>Welcomes and Apologies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attendees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ian Fraser ➤ Siobhan Fraser ➤ Rosie MacLeod ➤ Ewan McHardy ➤ Elsbeth Neil ➤ Jim Neil ➤ Megan Parker (Chair) ➤ Donald Stuart (CC rep) ▪ Apologies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Craig Evans ➤ John MacKay (MAC rep) ▪ Members of the Community: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Community Member 1 ➤ Community Member 2 ▪ MP welcomed attendees to the meeting. 	
	<p>Note: Prior to the formal business discussions and arrangements of the meeting, the Community Members present introduced themselves and indicated that they wanted to highlight their concerns regarding the continued flooding and mud residue on Dunglass Road which was impacting on their properties.</p> <p>Community Member 2 suggested that the problem was caused by silt build up within the drain situated in the layby which sits on the South side of the Woodland. IF indicated that the road gully silt trap was designed to catch silt from the road. The problem was that leaves during the Autumn are drawn into the road gully and causing a blockage of the outlet pipe from the gully to the soakaway within the woodland. He also highlighted that it was the local authority's responsibility to regularly remove any build-up of materials from every drain and that this was urgently required to be carried out on Dunglass Road.</p> <p>DS informed the group that the issue had been raised at the recent meeting of the Community Council and that he had already sent an email to the Council requesting that this work would require to be undertaken with some urgency.</p> <p>MP indicated to the Community Members that IF with the support of the Woodland Group, had drawn up a comprehensive drainage plan for the Woodland which when eventually implemented would go some way to alleviate some of this problem.</p>	

2.	<p>Approval of minute of 22.11.23 & Review of actions from previous meeting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MP asked for approval of the minute dated: 22.11.23 <p>Minute Approved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Proposer: Ian Fraser ➤ Seconder: Donald Stuart <p>Review of Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EN will try again to raise the issue of dog waste bins. ▪ EN said that she had received confirmation from the school that they were happy to run the logo competition and that a Graphic Designer was ready to proceed with the flyer for the school, they were just awaiting confirmation from EMcH about the arrangement for the prize. ▪ DS informed the group that he had raised the importance of developing a Fair Work Policy for MAC and that a first draft of the document was being drawn up. EN emphasised that this would be an essential policy for future funding applications. ▪ RMcL indicated that although the woodland group name was on the bank account, she still had no access to the account. DS said that this issue had been discussed at the MAC meeting and that it was agreed that RMcL should have full access. The necessary steps to do this should be in place for the next meeting. ▪ It was agreed that representatives of the Men Shed should be invited to the next Community Woodland meeting in February. 	<p>EN to ask once again about dog waste bins.</p> <p>EN to continue liaising with the school, and the Graphic Designer and EMcH to contact the Cottage Bar re sponsorship.</p> <p>DS to continue to update the group on the development of the Fair Work First policy.</p> <p>DS to continue to work with the Treasurer of MAC to implement access for RMcL.</p> <p>EN to invite reps from the Men Shed to the February meeting.</p>
3.	<p>Funding/Grants/ Banking arrangements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>SGRPID registration</i> • <i>HC Discretionary Fund</i> • <i>HC Regeneration Fund Full Application</i> • <i>Nature Restoration Fund</i> • <i>Scottish Forestry Community Fund</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EN tabled the Group's funding spreadsheet and updated the group on funding applications as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We are now registered with SGRPID and therefore we will get £1,000 towards the preparation of the Woodland Management Plan. However, this will be in the form of a backdated payment once the Plan is approved. ➤ We have received £800 from Highland Council's Discretionary Fund. RMcL said that the treasurer of MAC had confirmed that the £800 had been paid into the account. This money will be used to 	

		<p>pay back to the MAC account for the cost of the felling of the dangerous trees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ EN informed the group that the deadline for the Regeneration Fund was in November and as there was no Fair Work First policy in place we were unable to proceed with this application. ➤ The deadline date for applications for the Nature Restoration Fund was also closed, but this could be possibly accessed sometime in the future. ➤ It was agreed by all present that once the Development Plan was approved, the Group would be in a better position to apply for funding, having all our requirements assessed and detailed in the plan. This had led to a request being made to IF to consider what the drainage plan would look like and how much it would cost for future application for funding. ➤ EN informed the Group that she had prepared an invoice for the final claim of funding for the equipment purchased for the Clean-up day. The completed invoice along with the receipts and forms had been sent into Scottish Forestry and the funding would be paid into our account in the next few weeks. Once again, this money will go back to MAC as they originally paid for the equipment. 	
4.	<p>Felling Update & Replanting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SF confirmed that most of the designated dangerous trees were felled, however the two trees which had been left have since come down in the storms. ▪ It was agreed that once the development plan has been approved a tree survey protocol should be put in place. ▪ MP informed the group that biodegradable tree shelters had been donated to the group by NextGen Tree Shelters. She also informed the Group that she will contact tree growers to ask for a donation of the tree seedlings which are required to be planted as part of the conditions of the approval from Highland Council for the tree felling. 	<p>MP to contact tree growers to request a donation of the required trees for replanting.</p>

5.	<p>Development of Management Plan</p> <p>➤ Path & Drainage plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In preparation for future funding applications and for inclusion in the Management Plan, Ian Fraser very kindly undertook an extremely comprehensive investigation into what was required to resolve the drainage issues in the Woodland. He included details of the estimated materials and costs involved for both the drainage and the accessible paths works. This report on his investigation had been circulated to the Group members prior to the meeting. ▪ IF gave a summary of the work that will have to be done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The two core paths would be made accessible. The Dunglass Rd. to Brahan Gate path and the Gatehouse to the Brahan Gate path. ❖ He carried out a survey over three days to calculate the flood flow to estimate the quantity of water involved. ❖ The issue he foresees is where to direct the water to. Possibilities may be either the Ussie Burn or even the river Conon, however, this may be too far away. ❖ He recommends that a full Topographical survey should be completed some time in the future. ❖ He identified that 6 SUDs devices would be required to be implemented and indicated on his plans where these could be sited. ❖ He also suggested that we may have to go to Highland Council to ask for information on where the old gravel pits of the 1900s are situated. ❖ EMcH asked if there was a possibility of water being directed into the mains drainage system. She agreed to put this question to Scottish Water. ❖ MP informed the group that Brahan Estate had agreed that they would be happy to regrade the surface of the road on the Brahan side of the gate. The surface would be re-profiled to direct the water into the Brahan woodland. ❖ IF highlighted that the combined cost involved for both the drainage and the path repair was likely to be in the region of £51,000. ❖ MP said that the Nature Restoration Fund could possibly be used for some of the funding but the application would have to involve a biodiversity element. ❖ There followed some discussion about the possibility of incorporating a pond into the plans. ❖ MP said that she had watched a video about a permaculture pond, which could be used in the woodland plan and agreed to send the link for this around the group. ▪ Community Member 2 highlighted that the signs warning of the proposed felling were out of date 	<p>The Development of the Management Plan will be kept on the agenda.</p> <p>MP to contact Scottish Water to ask about the main drainage system.</p> <p>MP to send the link for the Permaculture Pond video around the group.</p> <p>EN to contact CE to ask him to take</p>
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6.	Formalising links with Men Shed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It was agreed that members of the Men Shed should be invited to the Woodland Group meeting in February. 	EN to invite Reps from the Men Shed to the February meeting.
8.	AOCB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DS informed the group that the AGM of MAC will take place on Thursday 7th of March. He asked for members of the Woodland group to attend. MP and EN agreed that there would be representation from the Group at the AGM. 	EN to ensure representation from the Woodland Group is present at the MAC AGM.
9.	Date of next meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EN confirmed that the next meeting would be arranged for the 29th of February. 	EN to contact Steph to book the hall.

Summary of the original draft assessment submitted at the January meeting of the Maryburgh Community Woodland Group.

Summary

The core paths under investigation will be identified as D1 and B1 in this report. The D1 core path is approximately 247.39 metres long between the Dunglass road and the Brahan Estate gate. The B1 core path is approximately 632.72 metres long between the boundary fence of the Brahan gatehouse, now in private ownership, and the Brahan Estate gate. The investigation was carried out between January 4th - 5th and 11th 2024. The weather was dry on each day. The woodland area has no existing surface water drainage other than natural infiltration into the soil or evaporation from the site.

The survey methodology consisted of a visual walk over of the core paths, noting any locations suitable for Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and the most suitable device to use in each location. The hydrology estimates are based on the Flood Estimation Handbook Supplementary Report No. 1., while the CIRA SuDS Manual C753F was used to design the most suitable SuDS devices for treating the water runoff during an extreme rainfall. The costings are based on the estimated price guide obtained from the "Paths for All" document issued in March 2023 rev. 4.

It is recommended that a topographical survey is carried out of the paths and the woodland adjacent to the paths, before any further work is carried out. The drainage calculations are based on known results obtained from percolation tests carried out in the village. The soil maps for Scotland indicate that the soil conditions in the community woodland are different from those in the village. It is therefore recommended that a percolation test is carried out within the woodland to determine the actual infiltration rate of the woodland soil.

Six SuDS devices have been identified. These should be able to deal with extreme rainfall with an annual exceedance probability (AEP) of 0.5% (1 in 200 year event). Further discussion on the options available for SuDS device No. 3 will be required. The SuDS devices will involve construction work or flooding of areas of the woodland. These areas might require an ecological study to avoid damaging any specialised plant species.

The report also identifies the options available for the paths at the Dunglass road junction and Brahan Estate gate. These will need further discussion. The B1 path at the old gatehouse will also need to be considered. Discussion will be required between the Community Woodland Group and the Highland Council regarding the core paths as these will need to be closed while work takes place.