

SCOTTISH WILD LAND GROUP

Minutes of 2017 AGM held on Saturday 4th November at 2.00pm

Venue: Birnam Arts and Conference Centre, Dunkeld

1. Welcome: All those present were welcomed to the venue by the Convenor

Attendees: Members: Bob Aitken, John Allan, Tim Ambrose, Martin Ashdown, Alistair Cant, George Charles, John Digney, James Fenton, Tim Fison, Nick Kempe, Beryl Leatherland, Tom Leatherland, Anne Macintyre, Helen McDade, Susan Matthews, Mel Nicoll, Bill Stephens, Hugh Tooby, Peter Willimott. Guests: Debbie Davidson, Dave Morris, Donald Thomas, Charles Wallis, Heather Willimott

Apologies: Grant Cornwallis, Pete Ewing, Keith Griffiths, Jane Meek, Anne Thomas

2. Draft Minutes of 2016 AGM: These were accepted as a true record of the meeting, *Proposer Tom Leatherland and Seconder Peter Willimott.*

3. Matters arising from the 2016 Minutes: There were none.

4. Chairman's Report: The Convenor's report was on the website. In addition the Convenor reported that it had been a very busy year again with several consultations having been responded to and more expected imminently, in particular a Draft Planning Bill. Several objections had been made on specific hilltrack applications, and comments had been submitted on others and on various hydro schemes. Our responses to consultations and letters of comment or objection to local authorities were displayed on the website.

During the year, Chrissie Valluri had resigned from the Steering Group, due to the pressures of a growing family. Calum Brown, on whom we relied for our IT work and the editing of the magazine for several years until 2016 had also resigned due to his move of home and work to Germany. We thanked both Chrissie and Calum for all their efforts in the interests of wild land, and they were greatly missed members of the team.

George Charles had edited three editions of the magazine and James Fenton had edited the current copy. This is a big task for a volunteer and the work of both George and James was much appreciated.

Wild Land News is our main means of communication and is valued by members and non-members alike. In addition we have a Facebook and twitter accounts but need someone to manage these more regularly.

- Grant Cornwallis continues to work as our membership Secretary, and diligently chases up lapsed members very successfully as well as distributing the magazine to retailers and accommodation providers throughout Scotland. Depending on content, the magazine is distributed to MSPs and others in a targeted way as well as other organisations with similar interests to ours.

Tim Ambrose was thanked for his continuing efficient work as our Treasurer. It was noted that Tim is also treasurer for several other organisations and charities including the RSGS, the Cairngorms

Campaign and Scottish Environment LINK. He has been our Treasurer since taking on the role from Irvine Butterfield in 1988.

The Convenor thanked all the members of the Steering Group for their work and support over the previous year.

Members were reminded that SWLG is constantly seeking new members of the Steering Group and anyone interested was encouraged to come along to a meeting to get to know the team better and hopefully then to consider joining us.

Finally, the Convenor reported we had that week received a letter confirming that the Camusrory Lodge Track application, despite this being in a Wild Land Area, had been approved. SWLG had written a strong objection so this outcome was disappointing.

5. Treasurer's Report and Accounts: Tim highlighted reasons for the current surplus which contrasted with the deficit last year. If approved, the accounts would be filed with OSCR. Tim pointed out that the External Examiner is his nephew, but is a fully qualified Chartered Accountant, and works for a very reputable company and that he charges no fee for this service. It was proposed [*Hugh Tooby*] and seconded [*Bill Stephens*] that the accounts should be accepted by the members. It was also agreed that the Independent Examiner should be re-appointed.

6. Election of Officers and Committee

All the existing Steering Group members had indicated that they were willing to continue and it was proposed that the committee should be approved by the membership, *Proposer Hugh Tooby*, *Secunder Bob Aitken*. For 2017 to 2018 the committee would be:

Convenor: Beryl Leatherland

Treasurer: Tim Ambrose

Membership Secretary: Grant Cornwallis

Editor: James Fenton

Committee: Peter Ewing, Peter Willimott, Bill Stephens

7. Questions: Helen McDade suggested that given that volunteer time is tight some funds could be used to hire suitable persons to carry out some of the work of the volunteers on the committee. It was confirmed that someone was paid to maintain the website and another to format the magazine, but there was certainly some scope to hire more support for specific tasks.

Mel Nicoll similarly suggested that some funds could be directed towards promoting our presence on social media. This was another positive suggestion and these points would be discussed at the next Steering Group meeting.

8. Thanks and AGM close: The Convenor thanked everyone again for their support and attendance, and James Fenton proposed a vote of thanks to the Chair/Convenor. The AGM closed at 2.30pm.