

Scottish Wild Land Group
2022 Annual General Meeting
Saturday 3rd December 1.30-4.30pm
Lecture Theatre, Perth Museum & Art Gallery

Draft
J Fenton
6/12/22

MINUTES

Present: David Tidmarsh, Grant Cornwallis, Doris Dietrich, Pete Ewing, Scott Peddie, Liz Bibby, Tim Ambrose, Charles Wallis, David Roper, Beryl Leatherland, Chris Townsend, Rod Brodie, Bill Stephens, John Allen, James Fenton, Sue Fenton

1. Welcome & apologies

Pete Ewing chaired the meeting and welcomed the attendees. He thanked Jonathan Binny, who has recently stood down as Convenor, for his work for the group, in particular the development of the website, Facebook and Twitter pages.

Apologies: Kate Ashbrook, Stephen & Fiona Marston, Alf Barnard, George Herraghty, Hilary & Bob Shorter, Keith Griffiths, Allan Bantick, Peter Dunn, Tom Leatherland

2. Minutes of the 2021 AGM

The minutes of the 2021 AGM were agreed without amendment.

Proposed: Tim Ambrose. Seconded: George Wallis

3. Matters arising from the 2021 AGM

Tim Ambrose reported that the process of the Scottish Wild Group becoming a Scottish Incorporated Charitable Organisation (SCIO) had now been completed.

4. Report of the year

In addition to the Group successfully converting to SCIO status, the group commissioned and published a major report on the state of wild land in Scotland; this was carried out in partnership with the Cairngorms Campaign and the Scottish Mountaineering Trust, and was circulated to relevant interests, including the government and planning authorities. The Group continued to publish *Wild Land News* and also responded to government consultations on onshore wind and the National Planning Framework, both issues relevant to wild land. During the year the website had a makeover.

5. Treasurer's report & accounts

Tim Ambrose, the treasurer reported that the report was for an organisation 'which no longer exists', *i.e.* the charity as it was before becoming a SCIO. All the assets have been transferred to the new SCIO. He thanked David Roper for his help with the legal side of the transfer, in particular because he offered his services at no charge.

At the year end (31 March) the organisation had a balance £20,342 in its bank account, down from £23,209 at the same time last year. This was due to expenditure on the Wild Land Report (£18,545). He thanked the Cairngorms Campaign who donated £6,000 towards its costs and the Scottish Mountaineering Trust who donated £5,000. Money was also spent on updating the website, but these costs were covered by a donation. It was now being planned that the surplus money in the account would be used to pay a contractor to raise the profile of the Group.

The Report & Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022 were unanimously approved.

Proposed: James Fenton. Seconded: Beryl Leatherland.

6. Membership Report

The Membership Secretary, Grant Cornwallis, reported that it had not been a very active year. Covid restrictions meant it was difficult to publicise the Group through retail outlets. More younger people were joining through Facebook & Twitter, and paying with PayPal, but it is likely to be difficult to retain these as members for more than their initial year. Membership stood around 350.

7. Election Steering Group Members (trustees)

The current committee is Tim Ambrose (Treasurer), Grant Cornwallis (Membership Secretary), James Fenton (Wild Land News editor) and Pete Ewing. The Convenor position is currently vacant, but Pete Ewing agreed to take on the role in February 2023. All stood for re-election and were re-elected unanimously.

Three new trustees were elected:

Mark Aitken. *Proposed: Pete Ewing. Seconded: Tim Ambrose*

Bill Stephens. *Proposed: Pete Ewing. Seconded: James Fenton*

David Roper. *Proposed: Pete Ewing. Seconded: Tim Ambrose*

Beryl Leatherland, while not on the Steering Group, will remain as the Group's representative on Scottish LINK.

8. Any other business

– Tim Ambrose reported that he had cards for sale, dating from the 1990s, with a picture of Suilven taken by Pat Macdonald.

– James reported that a publicity leaflet for the group had been produced and was available to take away to gain new members.

The AGM closed at 2pm

Following the formal AGM:

a) There was discussion of SWLG's draft policy statement on Wild Land Areas, prepared by James Fenton. This was agreed subject to two amendments: "wildness" needed to be defined, and the current planning situation with regard to hill tracks needed to be clarified.

b) James gave a short Presentation on the SWLG Report *The State of Wild Land in the Scottish Highlands*. Copies were circulated and members were encouraged to promote its findings. He also reported a worrying development, viz. that under the proposed new National Planning Framework, development outwith a Wild Land Area, even if close by, would not be a significant planning consideration.

c) The invited speaker, Chris Townsend, gave an illustrated talk 'Wild Land in the Cairngorms and the NW Highlands: A comparison from a walker's perspective'. Amongst other topics, Chris raised the issue of the impact of planted woodlands (commercial or native) on wild land. Pete thanked him for his presentation.