

**Minutes of Balloch Castle Country Park Regeneration Group Members Meeting
Held on Tuesday 6/2/24 at 7pm in the Balloch House Hotel.**

Present: Audrey, Matt, Catherine, Gillian, Michael Mason, Jan and Robert Shields, Heather Vincent, Ian Bain, WDC, Greenspace Manager.

Apologies: Sally, Karon, Gavin, Aileen, Maurice, Helen McCallin and Michelle Lynn, WDC, Assets Officer.

Audrey welcomed all to the meeting.

Previous mins proposed Audrey, seconded Catherine.

Ian gave us an update on the Park.

He stated the Council were keen to work with CHAS and suggested we discuss further at our next Partnership meeting.

South Lodge - WDC Housing Dept will be allocating it to a new tenant.

Castle - listed buildings consent has been granted for works to the windows.

Slipway Cafe - they now have a preferred supplier and it is currently sitting with the Legal Dept. Ian will check with Michelle if the toilets will be open as there is an issue with the capacity of the pump. It may be possible to extend the opening hours of the Castle toilets.

Matt asked if signage with opening hours of the toilets could be sited at the Castle, also signage at the Slipway Cafe to direct people up to the Castle toilets. Ian will check this out.

Our draft Partnership agreement has been passed onto WDC's Legal Dept. Ian, Michelle and Gillian Neil were happy with its contents.

Large litter bins, six have been trialed in the village, a further 10 have been ordered for the Park and suitable positions will be found for them.

WDC Policy on memorials in the Park - WDC have suspended the planting of memorial trees and supply of memorial benches and are looking at other options e.g. a Memorial Woodland outwith Balloch Park. Their current policy is that no flowers etc should be left at trees/benches.

Invasive non native species - WDC has received £257,000 from the Scottish Government's Nature Restoration Fund. £180,000 has been allocated to Balloch Park to

produce a Habitat Management Plan, a Woodland Management Plan and for eradication of invasive species. Audrey asked if we could have a meeting with the contractor, Walker Heinz, Ian will speak to Gillian Neil about this.

Audrey asked what was the current status of the National Tree Collection within the Park and also pointed out that conifers were growing out of the wall in the walled garden and asked if these could be removed?

Ash trees, it may not be necessary to cut them all down because of the Ash dieback, can we protect them?

The mountain bike track will not be going ahead at the original site as not suitable, WDC are looking at another site, the old tree nursery, if not suitable then other sites outside the Park have been identified.

Ian will arrange another Partnership meeting in 2/3 weeks, Ian left the meeting.

Audrey and Gillian met up with Jenny from the Clydesider magazine for a walk around the Park. The Clydesider has set up a Community Heritage Group bringing heritage groups together. Audrey will write an article for the magazine about INNS in the Park and will do a monthly column featuring a species of tree from the Park.

Thanks to Angela for putting us in touch with Jenny.

Catherine gave an overview of her meeting with Katherine Gunderson, founder of Grand Bequests. The Company aim is to match funders with projects looking for funding and could help us with funding applications.

They could produce a story/journey of what we are aiming towards to show to prospective funders, they can do mock ups of e.g. possible uses for the Castle which we could put out to the public to vote for. We could import possible projects to the Grand Bequest portal and have funders contact us if interested in getting involved.

We will carry out our next visitor count on Tuesday 13/2/24, 9.30 -11am
Michael, Matt, Audrey and Sally's friend Charlotte will attend.

John Muir Day 21/4/24, MAC, Balloch Park Ranger contacted the group to ask if we wanted to participate in the planned event. Suggestions were a guided walk, an invasive species and tree trail, a stall at the Castle with the wishing well. Gillian will contact Turkey Red Media to see if they are available to film some footage on the day which we could incorporate into a film we could show to prospective funders.

Michael kindly offered to pay for a pop up banner for us, layout to be agreed and Gillian will arrange with JJR Print.

Treasurer's Report

Balance £1148.23 (includes £500 ring fenced for a film)

Invoice submitted to ????? for £450 for carrying out Business Engagement Exercise on their behalf.

Zoom renewal due, Catherine has spoken to Microsoft, they could give us access to TEAMS.

Request made that no Acronyms be used on the Agenda, noted.

Next Trustees meeting 5/3/24

Members meeting 7/5/24

Meeting closed