

Balloch Castle Country Park Regeneration Group

Minutes of (Teams) Meeting held on Thursday 6/2/25, 7pm.

1. Sally welcomed everyone to the meeting. No apologies.
2. Previous mins proposed by Sally, seconded by Matt.
3. No matters arising.
4. Cara Thom accepted our invitation to become a Trustee, Sally proposed, Gillian seconded.

5. Minutes of Meeting between West Dunbartonshire Council and Balloch Castle Country Park Regeneration Group.

Church Street, Thursday, 6th February, 2025.

Present: Ian Bain, Gillian Neil, Michelle Lynn, Audrey Baird, Sally Page.

On-line via Teams: Matt Buckland, Laura Henderson (artist).

Welcome from Ian Bain.

Apologies from Gillian Clark

FLAG PROJECT.

Audrey introduced us to Laura Henderson as the artist who will be working on the flags project. Audrey and Laura have visited the Park together to look at potential lampposts, some posts already have fixings.

CHAS has endorsed the project with a letter that confirms their support and the importance of the Park to CHAS.

Nearly £3,000 has been received from Sustrans to fund phase 1 of the project which will produce 8 flags.

This will then 'unlock' the Awards for All funding for the phase2 of the project which will involve Haldane Youth Services and all WDC schools will be invited to take part.

Each flag will carry a CHAS logo. Mesh/PVC materials being considered, which will be best to cope with the weather?

WDC will take the flags down in the winter and clean them, the lifespan of the flags will be 3-5 years.

Michelle said that Corporate Comms must be made aware of the project.

MoU.

Ian said that the MoU had been signed-off by the WDC Legal Dept., We will appendix the Actions to the Document.

Ian will sign and send it to BCCPRG for signing.

HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND.

Audrey has spoken to the HLF Engagement Officer, who has given advice and BCCPRG will follow this 'pathway to access' which is a two stage process.

HLF runs webinars for applicants, which we will attend. Michelle said that she has previously helped groups that do not have MoU's with the Council to apply for Lottery grants.

Ian expressed concern that the Council will be asked to match fund, either in cash terms or officer time. Sally pointed out that match funding can come from a variety of sources.

The first Lottery application would be for the purposes of a Development Officer who would be tasked with drawing-up and Business Plan, which would look at 'spend to save' and income generation. The new officer would be community and application focussed.

ACCESS TO NORTH LODGE.

Access should be possible in April, there are some H&S issues that Michelle is resolving. The purpose of access would be for Grand Bequests to fly a drone to survey the building and produce a digital image film for BCCPRG to use for funding applications.

Michelle stressed that any footage would be for internal use only.

The film could also be used to make a presentation to Councillors.

Sally has been told that BCCPRG can present to Councillors through an Open Forum request to the CEO of WDC, to either the IRED Committee or a Full Council meeting.

Michelle was doubtful about this information and is going to talk to Alan Douglas.

There is some doubt about what purpose the North Lodge could serve once refurbished. Sally to ask CHAS again if they would consider making use of it. Michelle is meeting with GCC next week and will discuss the lease held between WDC and GCC for the Park to see if there is any flexibility on use of built assets.

STORM DAMAGE plus update on INNS removal.

Gillian said that a safety survey has taken place of trees that are along the paths within the Park. Over 100 trees were lost to the recent storm, with many more damaged.

The updating of the original Woodland Management Plan (2014-2034) is to include a full up to date tree survey, a habitat plan and plant health management plan.

The Green Action Trust is overseeing the work to eradicate the INNS within the Park. Conifer clearance, bamboo treatment, Himalayan Balsam & Skunk Cabbage eradication are all underway.

There is an opportunity for education on the ecological benefits of removing INNS and perhaps this could be conveyed to those who use the Park.

Froglife who undertook work on the Ponds within the Park in 2019 are again working across the WDC area.

Neighbourhood Eco-fund could be used to fund tree planting a project that we could work on together.

6. Sally has been in contact with WDC to organise a date for a presentation to the Councillors.

7. UCL Smart Nature Challenge.

Unfortunately we were unsuccessful but we can reapply next year.

8. BCCPRG/CHAS Flags Project.

Project is going well, Audrey will meet up with Artist, Laura, tomorrow in the Park. Flags will be placed on 8 lamp posts for the first phase of the project. Ian has agreed to have the flags removed once a year for cleaning.

Cara has contacted Balloch Campus and Haldane Youth Services re-project.

We can apply to HLF in the future to expand the project working alongside local schools.

£3000 has been awarded by Sustrans.

9. Development Officer

Matt hopes to have more information for our next meeting.

Audrey and Matt will attend HLF Seminars.

10. Audrey will forward Powerpoint presentations on LLTNP's Green Finance event.

11. Strathleven Foundation

Application has been submitted for £2000 for information boards in the Kiosk area, SF are looking for costings, Matt will take this forward.

12. Local Place Plan

Gillian will coordinate with BHCC with our input.

Action Plan

Visitor Surveys

Nature Restoration Plan

13. Fundraising

Cara will investigate Facebook further for fundraising opps, she has identified Easy Fundraising and Amazon Smile.

14. Treasurer's Report

Balance £1635.33.

Cat proposed we change our bank account to Virgin Money to save on bank charges. She is in the process of submitting accounts to OSCR.

15. Website/Canva

Aim is to have the first newsletter on our website by early summer.

Trustee Biographies to be updated.

Cara will host a training session for CANVA on 26/2/24 @ 7pm via Teams.

16. AOB

Audrey will give a presentation to Kilmaranock Community Trust.

The Community Advertiser has approached us for an article, Sally will take this forward.

DONM Members Meeting 20/3/25

Meeting closed 8.30pm