BALLOCH CASTLE COUNTRY PARK REGENERATION GROUP 3rd AGM.

CHAIR'S ANNUAL REPORT.

Thanks to Balloch House Hotel for allowing us to use this meeting room throughout the year at no charge, a very generous community gesture.

Welcome and thank you to all those attending our 3rd AGM tonight, we appreciate your support very much.

It has been another busy year. We have held monthly Trustee meetings, Group/Trustee meetings and four Partnership meetings with West Dunbartonshire Council. Agendas and Minutes are available on our website.

MoU.

In April we signed a Memorandum of Understanding with WDC. West Dunbartonshire Council and Balloch Castle Country Park Regeneration Group share a long-term vision to bring Balloch Castle Country Park's built assets back into use, restore the natural assets
and fulfil the Park's potential to become a self-sustaining centre for wellbeing for people and nature.

The Regeneration Group are now able to apply for much larger grants as these all have to be submitted in conjunction with the lease holder.

We have now updated our Action Plan for the next two years.

FUNDING.

Competition is strong for all grant funding now.

We attended the Heritage Lottery Fund application webinar.

At our Partnership meeting in August, we gave a HLF Presentation to WDC . We hope to submit our bid by the end of January 2026, this will be a joint application with the Council. A high level of detail is required by the Lottery.

We have a short presentation on this in a moment.

We were not successful in our funding application to the Trades House of Glasgow this time but have been encouraged to try again.

We have applications pending with the Strathleven Foundation and the Coop Communities Fund.

FLAGS PROJECT.

At the end of January Sustrans confirmed that we had been successful in receiving nearly £3,000 to fund phase 1 of the project which will produce 8 flags.

Audrey introduced us to Laura Henderson the artist, who has worked with children from CHAS and successfully completed the initial flags, now hanging on Balloch Road.

This is a demonstration of good partnership working, CHAS fully endorsed the project and confirmed the importance of the Park to CHAS. The Council took responsibility for hanging the flags on the lampposts and for the ongoing maintenance, thank you to the lighting

team and to Ian Bain for his help.

A phase2 project is underway – Audrey will tell us some more later.

WIDER ENGAGEMENT.

We walked around Balloch Park with Ross Greer MSP, he is supportive of our ideas and offered to help when needed.

Jonathan McColl, a local Councillor also walked around the Park with us. We are keen that Ward Councillors are fully understanding of what we are doing, and able to support us.

We have met with Callander and Killin Development Trusts to glean ideas for employing a Project Officer. Matt contacted SCVS (employment help for charities sector) to discuss the role and responsibilities of BCCPRG engaging a Project Officer.

We met with Peter Hessett the Chief Executive Officer of West Dunbartonshire Council. We would like to form a wider Strategic Delivery Partnership and have asked Peter if he might Chair this. Comprising of local business people, politicians and other supportive groups the goal would be to emphasise shared objectives of the successful regeneration of the Park. This will help to raise the profile of the Park in West Dunbartonshire, Glasgow and the West of Scotland.

In May we gave a presentation to West Dunbartonshire Council's Infrastructure, Regeneration and Economic Development Committee to share with elected members and Officers our aims for the Park and the benefits to WD of improving facilities within the Park.

Audrey gave a presentation to the Kilmaronock Development Trust about the Group's work. We have met with the Loch Lomond South Development Trust and agreed to collaborate where there is mutual benefit.

Mary Sweetland from Kilmaronock Old Kik Trust attended our April meeting imparting her vast knowledge of grant application methods and toptips.

In June for the Balloch 10K event we were given a space for a Community Engagement stall. The event was fantastic, so well attended. We hope next year to be invited back and have a slightly quieter position for our stall.

We have engaged with the WD Heritage Network, Kayleigh Hirst gave a presentation at our July meeting.

WDC WOODLAND MANAGEMENT PLAN/ INNS REMOVAL

In early July a contractor was appointed for removal of Bracken and Himalayan Balsam. Five year programme has commenced for the removal of Bamboo.

2,500 trees assessed for Tree Report after Storm Eowyn.

A Contractor is being sourced for removal of Skunk Cabbage.

Tree Trail is already popular.

Mountain Bike Trail, Skills track to be built this is a £400,000 investment. Potential start date, early Spring and 6-8 weeks build time.

The revision of the Woodland Management Plan is nearly complete.

TRUSTEES.

I would like to thank my fellow trustees for all their hard work throughout the year. Catherine O'Hare stood down as Treasurer in March and I am very grateful that Matt has taken on the roll. Cara Thom has joined us as a Trustee and we are very please to have

her on board.

I would like to thank on behalf of us all the WDC team with whom we work closely- Ian Bain, Gillian Neil, Mary-Ann Collis, Michelle Lynne, Gus from Lighting and Stephen Burns.