

The Scottish Wild Land Group

Draft Minutes of Annual General Meeting of 5th December 2015

Stirling Court Hotel, Stirling University

- 1. Present:** John Allan, Tim Ambrose, Helen Armstrong, Roderick Brodie, Grant Cornwallis, Doris Dietrich, Peter Ewing, Gus Jones, Beryl Leatherland, Tom Leatherland, Calum McIntyre, Helen McDade, Peter Pearson, Scott Peddie, David Roper, Roy Turnbull.
Attendees were thanked for coming to the meeting, despite the current gales and floods, by the Acting Convenor, Beryl Leatherland
- 2. Apologies:** Bob Aitken, Kate Ashbrook, Tony Berwick, Paul Bolton, Calum Brown, Chris Creswick, Tim Fison, Linda Holt, Carol McNeill, John Milne, Roy Partington, Andy Walker, Peter Willimot, Peter Wright.
Many of these had sent notes of support and appreciation for the work that the Group does
- 3. Minutes of 2014 AGM:** The draft minutes, as circulated were agreed to be a correct record of that meeting. Proposed by Tim Ambrose and seconded by Grant Cornwallis.
- 4. Matters Arising:** There were none not covered by the Agenda.

5. Convenor's Report:

Beryl reminded those present that the AGM covered the period from 31st March 2014 to 31st March 2015. A very full summary of that year had been prepared by John Milne, the previous Convenor, who had resigned in the spring. John was thanked for his sterling efforts as Convenor, especially for being the driving force for the special edition of Wild Land News "Wind Farms Gone Wild". It was stressed that the Group is run by a very small band of voluntary enthusiasts, and around half of these have busy jobs and families, and members were encouraged to offer any help they could to the work of the Group.

6. Treasurer's Report:

Tim tabled copies of the group's 'Report and Accounts for the year to 31st March 2015', and detailed key features of the Income and Expenditure Account. Key differences from the previous year were the absence of any 'exceptional donations', and the payment this year of £1500 to the John Muir Trust (JMT) in support of their Judicial Review of the Stronelaig windfarm planning decision. Their winning of that Judicial Review case, announced only that day, had clearly demonstrated just how well-spent that money had been. Pete Ewing proposed that the accounts be accepted and this was seconded by Tom Leatherland.

7. Membership Secretary's Report:

Grant reported that despite attracting 29 new members since the last AGM, overall membership had declined from 452 to 439. He attributed this 3% decline to poor sales of the Wild Land News, which had been exacerbated by the various problems which had arisen with regard to the preparation and publication of this crucially important magazine.

8. Election of Steering Group

The Acting Convenor reported that the steering group had received indications of willingness to stand for all but one of the named offices. The exception was for the website and social media co-ordinator. Hugh Tooby had indicated that he'd continue with this work only until we could find one or more others to take over from him. It was further suggested that splitting the work between two people would make the tasks more manageable. Calum Brown had had to resign from being the editor of Wild Land News and George Charles had very generously offered to take on this crucial role. The Steering Group for 2015 to 2016 would be as follows:

- Convenor: Beryl Leatherland
- Treasurer: Tim Ambrose
- Minutes Secretary: Calum Brown
- Membership Secretary: Grant Cornwallis
- Wild Land News Editor: George Charles
- Website and Social Media: Hugh Tooby [until an alternative can be found]
- Members: Pete Ewing and Chrissie Valluri

- 9. AOCB:** Helen McDade and Peter Pearson gave some recent background and updated the members on the progress of the John Muir Trust with their opposition to the Stronelairg wind farm, despite countless obstacles, and indicated the problems they might face in the future. There was no other business and the AGM closed at 3.30pm

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

The AGM was followed by a slide presentation on Forestry Policy and Practice given by Helen Armstrong. The intention had been for James Fenton to give a presentation on alternative theories and proposals. Unfortunately, James, despite negotiating some tricky stretches of road, had finally been defeated by the floods at Crianlarich and had phoned at the start of the meeting to say he was unable to attend. During her talk, Helen indicated where James' views might differ from those she was presenting. After Helen's presentation, Pete Ewing chaired a wide- ranging and knowledgeable discussion.

On behalf of those present, Beryl thanked Helen for her excellent and informative presentation.