

Scottish Wild Land Group [SC004014]

2018 Annual General Meeting

Saturday 1st December 2018 at 14.00 hours at the Birnam Arts and Conference Centre, Dunkeld

Draft Minutes

The Convenor welcomed those present many of whom had travelled some distance, including from Braemar, Oban and Melrose to attend the AGM

1. Attendance and Apologies

Present: Tim Ambrose, Fiona Anderson, Martin Ashdown, James Fenton, Tim Fison, Keith Griffiths, Beryl Leatherland, Tom Leatherland, Bob Marshall, Helen McDade, Anne Macintyre, Susan Matthews, Dave Morris, Andrew Painting, Bill Stephens, Peter Willimott.

Apologies: Grant Cornwallis, Peter Dunn, Calum Langdale, Jane Meek, Mel Nicoll, Roy Partington, Anne Thomson, Roy Partington.

2. Draft Minutes of the 2017 AGM, adoption of Minutes: Bill Stephens proposed the Minutes be accepted as a true record and this was seconded by Tim Ambrose.

3. Matters arising from the 2017 AGM:

item 7, use of social media: the SWLG paid someone to manage the website for us and she also sent out relevant material on social media in her own time. We have recently found a young person who may be able to help with this task as undoubtedly we needed to use this facility to raise our profile and spread information on our work and other matters.

4. Convenor's report and remarks:

This was briefly summarised as a full report had been produced and was on the website. This outlined our activities with Scottish Environment LINK, the adoption of GDPR, the very good editions of Wild Land News that had been edited by James Fenton who also wrote interesting articles for the magazine. Outstanding matters included considering whether to move to being a SCIO and updating the Constitution. Grant Cornwallis had continued to assiduously chase up outstanding membership subscriptions and distribute the magazine to the far corners of Scotland. Some of our more significant letters on development proposals were listed, but we continue to struggle with the numbers of Section 36 energy developments that we lack the resources to address as we should like. A great deal of effort had been directed to Hilltracks work and we had taken the opportunity afforded by the Planning Bill going through the Scottish parliament to raise profile and to try to achieve a change in legislation, with an amendment tabled by Andy Wightman MSP at Stage 2; this had been voted down but Andy was determined to continue to Stage 3.

Sadly two members had died during the year; Richard Gilbert whose obituary had been included on the website, and David Batty of the Munro Society who had been working with James on an exhibition for next year to mark the Sir Hugh Munro anniversary.

The members of the Steering Group were thanked for their efforts and support throughout the year and special mention and thanks were made regarding Tim Ambrose serving 30 years as SWLG Treasurer.

5. Treasurer's Report and Accounts; membership

Tim gave the background to the auditing of the accounts and the Independent Examiner was approved by James Fenton and seconded by Susan Matthews. During the year income was down and expenses were increased. SCENES had ceased production and was greatly missed, this saved a small amount of expenditure. There had been a donation to the Hilltracks campaign and purchase of a pull up poster. There had been a surplus of £1454, and we had a balance of £14483.

Expenditure on a major campaign was suggested and this could be shared with another NGO. This might attract more members. Attendance at event such as the film festivals could be considered as a way of recruiting more members, as had been done in previous years. Keith Griffiths proposed that the accounts should be approved and this was seconded by James Fenton.

6. Election of Office Bearers and Committee

The current committee is Tim Ambrose, Grant Cornwallis, Pete Ewing, James Fenton, Beryl Leatherland and Peter Willimott. Jane Meek was recently co-opted. All are prepared to continue in their roles.

Beryl Leatherland proposed that Andrew Painting should become a Steering Group member and this was seconded by Peter Willimott.

7. AOCB

Concerns were raised concerning developments in wild land areas and the fact that despite some good submissions and evidence there was little progress with politicians. There was particular frustration with the prior notification process which, although some improvements had been made, had obvious loopholes that could be exploited and also excluded the public from commenting, and thereby not able to contribute to the democratic process.

[Issues on the lines of the above were raised and discussed in the post refreshment session when Helen McDade of the JMT gave an introduction and this was followed by a wide ranging discussion on various impacts and concerns relating to the wild land resource].