

JOHN MUIR TRUST: TRUSTEES' MEETING**Minutes of Meeting held on Saturday 23rd September 2017 at Inchnadamph Lodge****Present:**

Peter Pearson (Chair), David Broom, Alan Dobie, Peter Foulkes, John Fox-Davies, Steve Green, Patricia Jordan, Duncan Macniven, Jo Moulin, Hugh Salvesen, Chris Townsend, Andrew Whitfield and Deirdre Wilson.

Apologies: Derek Johnston and Douglas Wynn.

In attendance:

Andrew Bachell (Chief Executive), Kerry Ross (Director of Finance and Resources – items 1-15), Rob Bushby (John Muir Award Manager – items 1-14), Mike Daniels (Head of Land Management – items 1-14), Kevin Lelland (Head of Communications and Membership – items 1-14) and Helen McDade (Head of Policy – items 1-14).

Item 1 – Introductory items

Peter Pearson welcomed all to the meeting. The apologies were noted. Peter Pearson requested declaration of any conflicts of interests, noting his own interest in item 16. In relation to item 6, Peter Foulkes noted that he lived close to Bugeilyn Moor, was a voluntary warden at the adjacent Monmouthshire Wildlife Trust property, and was a trustee of the Cambrian Mountains Society.

Item 2 – Minutes of last meeting

The draft minutes of the meeting on 16th June 2017, which had been circulated, were **approved** with two minor corrections.

Item 3 – Matters Arising

The Land Report (item 18) had been finalised and would be distributed to Trustees.

Item 4 – Action Points from Previous Meetings

Andrew Bachell reported on the Action Points from the previous meeting:

- Action Point 1 had been discussed at the Topical Forum on 28th July and was on the agenda.
- Action Point 2 had been discharged.
- Action Point 3 was in hand and Andrew Bachell would report at the next meeting.
- Action Point 4 would be discussed at the Governance Working Group meeting in October.
- Action Point 5 was on the agenda.
- Action Point 6 would be discussed at the Topical Forum meeting in October.
- Action Point 7 was on the agenda.
- Action Point 8 was in hand: Helen McDade was contributing to an omnibus response to the consultation from the Alliance of Designated Landscapes in Wales and would circulate the final version to Trustees.

Progress was **noted**.

Item 5 – Licensing of driven grouse shooting

Mike Daniels spoke to the paper and the RSPB’s “call for action” which he had circulated by email. He explained that the Trust had no policy on the licensing of grouse shooting. It was desirable to agree a formal position because the matter was on the political agenda and the Trust would be expected to make its views clear. The Trust’s concerns about the landscape impact overlapped with the RSPB’s concerns. The campaign called for licensing to ensure that grouse moors were managed in accordance with the existing law, rather than for a ban on shooting.

While recognising that not all Trust members would agree with the RSPB’s campaign, Trustees **agreed** that the Trust should support the campaign, specifically focussing on wild land issues such as muirburn and hill tracks.

Item 6 – Wales Working Group Report and Bugeilyn Moor

Peter Foulkes, speaking to the Wales Working Group Report proposing a Trust-wide programme for Wales 2017-2019, gave an illustrated presentation on wild land in Wales and on the Bugeilyn Moor property in the Pumlumon range in mid-Wales which was on the market.

He explained that the Group had refocussed their programme proposals to align with the period and structure of the Trust’s current Strategic Policy. The paper described the ways in which the Trust was already active in Wales, including the excellent work on the Award spearheaded by Phil Stubbington and Steve Carver’s mapping of wild areas which showed that important areas (especially the Cambrian Mountains) lay outside the National Parks and lacked protection. The Group proposed that the programme set out in the paper be included in the Trust’s work over the next two years.

In discussion, Trustees welcomed the underlying thinking in the paper. They noted that the proposals were uncosted and that it was difficult to rank them against other work including managing the new Glenridding property, replacing HLF funding for the Award in England and relieving pressure of work at Tower House consequent on the staff reductions in 2015. It was also undesirable to have a separate corporate plan for only one part of Britain. It was **agreed** that the proposals in the paper should be taken into account in the preparation of the budget for 2018, and in the new corporate plan from 2019 [**Action Point1**].

Discussion about the Bugeilyn Moor property is recorded in a separate confidential minute.

Item 7 – Topical Forum topics

Andrew Bachell listed the topics proposed by the Management Team - an update on the media strategy (including the work of the membership research panel) and on the preparations for the next corporate plan, the impact of the forthcoming lobbying legislation and the skill set of Trustees (with a view to seeking particular skills in the 2018 nominations). Trustees added Brexit and Bugeilyn Moor as possible additional topics. Trustees were invited to suggest any other items to Andrew Bachell in the following two weeks, whereupon he would finalise the agenda [**Action Point 2**].

Item 8 – Health and Safety

David Broom, the Trustee representative on the Health and Safety Committee, gave a presentation on the scope of his current review of the Trust’s health and safety practices and procedures. The next step was to complete the review, with the help of a consultant, and identify action areas (for instance, improving the reporting of near misses). A report would be made annually to Trustees. The position was **noted**.

Item 9 – Glenridding Update

Peter Pearson reported that the lease had not yet been signed – not because there was a problem, but because of bureaucratic delays and because it was necessary to have an agreement with the National Trust as well as with the National Park Authority. Meantime, however, Pete Barron was making the Trust's presence felt on the ground, and a donation had been secured from the Patsy Wood Trust which would meet over half of the running costs of the property over the first three years.

Trustees **noted** the position, expressing disappointment at the slow progress concluding the lease and congratulating the Development Team for securing the donation.

Item 10 – Operational and Financial Update

Introducing the Operational Report, Andrew Bachell said that he was conscious that its detailed information was not a substitute for a report on key metrics, which he planned to prepare quarterly. In discussion:

- Trustees **agreed** to the appointment of Douglas Wynn as convener of the Finance Committee.
- Kevin Lelland explained that biennial rather than annual attendance at the Royal Highland Show had been part of the 2015 savings. It yielded few new members but good contacts with relevant organisations. The stand was staffed by specially-trained contractors. Hugh Salvesen noted the scope for Trustee help.
- Helen McDade explained that the Glen Affric hydro scheme had been raised at the meeting with Green Highland at the behest of members concerned about the damage to the landscape.
- Andrew Bachell said that he was meeting the partners in the Nevis Partnership the following week and would report on the outcome.
- John Fox-Davies noted the excellent quality of the work to repair the Suilven path.
- Helen McDade said that her meeting with SSE had been surprisingly cordial; she had taken the opportunity to contrast SSE's proposals with those of Scottish Power, which the Trust had never found objectionable.
- Kevin Lelland agreed to include in future reports a summary of the negative media comments. Peter Pearson congratulated the media team for their rapid and effective responses to negative stories.
- Rob Bushby asked Trustees for stories of the early days of the Award, to help mark its 21st anniversary.
- Andrew Bachell explained that the next "Spirit of John Muir" lecture would be linked to John Muir Day 2018 rather than held in autumn 2017.
- Attention was drawn to a campaign led by former Trustee Ben Tindall against a large extension to the Kingshouse Hotel in Glencoe.
- Little of relevance had occurred on Brexit.

Trustees **noted** the report.

Kerry Ross spoke to the Financial Report which showed a very positive position to the end of July, which had not changed in August. She highlighted the Heart of Scotland Forest appeal, which had just passed the £100,000 milestone – a tribute to Liz Auty and Daisy Clark. Trustees **noted** the report and thanked them for their efforts.

Item 11 – Chairman's Report

Peter Pearson spoke to his report, which Trustees **noted**, agreeing that there was no obstacle to him joining the Development Group of the Cumbria Wildlife Trust, and subsequently becoming a Trustee.

Item 12 – JMT Policies

Kerry Ross circulated a prioritised list of internal policies which could benefit from review, and asked for written comments. The only urgent item was to update a number of policies in the light of changes in data protection legislation.

Item 13 – Corporate Strategy

Andrew Bachell said that discussions at the Staff Forum had made a useful input to the emerging post-2019 Corporate Strategy and his intention remained to bring a draft of the Strategy to the June meeting of Trustees. The position was **noted**.

Item 14 – Corporate Calendar

Trustees discussed the paper setting out the proposed dates of key meetings. The interval between meetings might be improved by dropping the October Topical Forum and extending to two days the December meeting. The meeting in September 2018 might best be held in the Scottish Borders. Andrew Bachell agreed to consider these and other points and circulate a final calendar [**Action Point 3**].

Item 15 – Staffing

Discussion is recorded in a separate confidential minute.

Item 16 – Appointment of Chair

Discussion is recorded in a separate confidential minute.

Summary of Action Points

- AP1** The programme proposed by the Wales Working Group should be taken into account in the preparation of the budget for 2018, and in the new corporate plan from 2019.
- AP2** Trustees should suggest items for the October Topical Forum to Andrew Bachell in the following two weeks, whereupon he would finalise the agenda.
- AP3** Andrew Bachell would finalise and circulate the Corporate Calendar.

Duncan Macniven
3rd October 2017