

Loch of Clunie Preservation Group meeting 6

26th April 2023 in Clunie Hall at 1900 hours

Introductions were made and new attendees welcomed.

Chair raised concerns that Chair, Treasurer and Secretary reside in the same household; this was done simply to get things moving. In due course it would aid democracy if others could volunteer.

Chair described that the organisation has a bank account, opened for the signage funding application, and requires two signatories to withdraw funds (currently Chair and other member are the signatories).

An application for the group to become a charity has been sent to the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator. In March they responded to say that they will endeavour to respond in 100 days. In order to apply, a constitution document was submitted. If anyone wishes to read it they can do, although not approved yet by OSCR and is therefore draft.

Person mentioned that **Lunan Burn Wildlife Cluster** is another new local group to be aware of; its aim is to improve biodiversity and to reduce phosphorus levels. They want to revisit the 'Natural Care Scheme'; a partnership with land managers started in 2004 by Scottish Natural Heritage, now Nature Scot. The idea was to lower pollutants from farm land going into the Lunan Valley lochs.

The Ranger Service

Visitor Management updated us that there will be 7 rangers with 3 funded by Nature Scot.

Blairgowrie Fire Station officers plan to do joint patrols on a rota.

Parking services will continue with penalty cost increasing to £100, reduced to £50 if paid within 14 days. This will soon be Scotland-wide but Perthshire will be first to implement it.

Parking services will patrol up till 10pm at night and can give a maximum of one ticket to a car in any 24 hours.

Portaloos to be installed again in the same place as of week commencing 12th or 19th May. The company say they will be serviced twice a week. They will be cleaned every day by the council.

The composting toilet idea was discussed again.

Perth & Kinross council are opening a fund called the Placed Based Investment Programme. This is a minimum of £10,000. Composting toilets can cost £17,000 to £20,000. They can have 8,000 uses before needing to be emptied. An agreement with the council would be needed for cleaning. Landowner permission would also need to be sought. Wider community consultation would be required. Composting toilets at Queens View have been heavily used and are working well.

Applying to the Placed Based Investment Programme must be done before 14th May; this can be just a simple “expression of interest”.

If the group becomes a charity then people could make donations for the toilets’ upkeep.

Person volunteered to complete the Expression of Interest form.

No Bins trials in other locations have been successful; most people take their rubbish away. The group agreed to do a “no bin” trial at Loch of Clunie. It was asked if the council could put up some signs which request people to take their litter away.

No camping signage at the National Monument by the church has improved the environment dramatically. Police have powers to remove people. If people have lit fires then the right process is to call the police on 101.

Outdoor Access Code

Person, as part of her role as the Scottish Land and Estates Central Regional Manager, advised us about attending a meeting with Scottish Government Ministers over the shortcomings of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code (SOAC), especially regarding wild camping and responsible access.

32 stakeholders participated in the meeting and all apart from two groups agreed change was required. Another meeting will be convened in June.

The SOAC has benefits but needs updating and reviewed, followed by a public information campaign.

The meeting with Ministers was videoed and will be a public record. When available this will be sent to the secretary to share with the group.

Police Communication

Person attended a talk by Blair Wilkie, Wildlife Crime Liaison Officer for Tayside Division of Police Scotland. Nikki has arranged a meeting with her as well. She advised us to get to know local police. Blair also recommended that it would be useful for our organisation to join Scottish Partnership Against Rural Crime (SPARC) and their Rural Watch

<https://scottishparc.co.uk/>

Website

Person spoke about the website and provided questions for those present to answer:

What you want to say? Who is the audience? How do we see ourselves? What effect do we want our website to have on our audiences? How will we tell if we are being successful?

We requested the feedback as soon as able.

Signage

Person showed information gathered which needs filtering and designing.

Person also showed Information Panels which could be used to depict natural history and history within the landscape both above and below the water. This could be supplemented by a lockable poster sign which would have updated information.

Examples information for the poster sign content could be details of the ranger service, fishing on the loch, outdoor access code, other groups' details, who to phone and how? News and events specifically related to Loch of Clunie Preservation. QR codes could be used to link back to the website.

No date was set for the next meeting but it was suggested this could be scheduled for the end of June.