



Minutes from ACF Board Meeting held at Aigas Community Forest Cabin on the 3rd June 2024 at 19.30

Present:

David Garvie (DG) - Chair
John Graham (JG) - Treasurer
Jo Young (JY)
Neil Valentine (NV)
Alasdair Martin (AM) – New Forest Manager
Mark Hedderwick (MH)
Phil Masheter (PM)
Russell Ross (RR)
Bob Bull (BB)
Nataša Kenda (NK) - Minutes Secretary

Apologies:

Graeme Scott (GS)
Stephen Cotterill (SC)
Bob Hemingway (BH)
Fin Denerley (FD)
Greg Jackson (GJ)

Minutes of Previous Board Meeting of 15th April 2024

Adoption proposed by JG. Seconded by JY. Approved.

Matters Arising from Previous Meeting

All present board members introduced themselves to the new Forest Manager Alasdair Martin (AM) who is officially starting on the 21st August 2024. He made a short introduction.

Forest Manager Report

Circulated pre meeting. Fencing work is starting on the 10th June. NV is chasing the roadside clearing and will make sure it's going to be done properly to be left safe and to improve the drainage and the look of the area. Strainers will be put in and double deer net will be in place in the most challenging sections.

Sub-group reports

- **Paths and Access:** Good progress on the bluebell path, another day's work to be done.
- **Wildlife & Ecology:** Will plan a meeting.
- **Deer Management:** Will meet after completion of the fence.
- **Equipment Groups:** Met on the 5th May, report circulated pre meeting. Looking into getting a suitable wood processor.
- **Wood Fuel:** The sales are satisfactory. More clearing at the lochan to be done.

10th Anniversary 2025 (5th March)

JY suggested a few possible activities: evening walks in May, music events, monthly themed activities, anniversary open day (potentially in May). Board members were asked to present their ideas at the next meeting.

SSEN Biodiversity Net Gain Planting

DG highlighted some points from the revised Heads of Terms: planting date postponed to April 2026 and changes in the confidentiality clause. It's a very difficult area to plant, so extra funds will allow us to do the job properly, starting with ground preparation (suggested by NV and Alastair).

DG proposed to sign and agree the Heads of Terms, which is non-committing. It was emphasised that this agreement is not connected to any of the new projects that SSEN are planning relating to Spittal-Beaully. The board will reflect before the next meeting and vote about the final decision. Proposed by JG, seconded by JY.

The proposed Overhead Line (OHL) that SSEN are planning as part of the Spittal-Beaully line.

There was also a brief discussion about the proposed Overhead Line (OHL) that SSEN are planning as part of the new Spittal-Beaully OHL line. Currently it's looking likely that only the lines will cross the land, no pylons. A corridor of 45m either side (30m for broadleaf) will be required. Route will be agreed in August, work starting in 2025. It is currently unclear whether SSEN will need access across ACF land for any of their construction work.

Assuming the OHL does cross ACF land, we will aim to claim compensation for the 5ha corridor lost to the power lines.

Financial Report

£350,000 has been renewed and interest accrued as added to the re-investment of £361,200.00 at 5.01% repayable in September 2025. The O2/Vodafone element of the mast rent will be reviewed in March 2025 in line with RPI. Total revenue for the mast now stands at £14,000 pa.

Insurance (general) is due this month and of note that all our insurances, vehicle, forestry, plant and buildings (3rd party cover only) and public and employee liabilities add up to £5587, our single largest cost.

Items of Expenditure

JG confirmed that the rubbing plaques arrived and are satisfactory.

A new metal pipe and safety stickers are needed for the crane. Sanding machines for the Forestry crane refurbishments were purchased at £20.

Agenda Amendments

JY suggested to attend the CWA Conference on the 4th and 5th October 2024 at Merkinch Community Centre. Ideas for our contributions are welcomed.

MH invited to attend the APF Forestry Show on the 19th – 21st September 2024 at Ragley Estate, Warwickshire.

MH introduced the idea of FISA (Forestry Industry Safety Accord) membership. The new forest manager will look into it.

The meeting closed at 20.50. The next Board meeting will be held on Monday the 22nd July 2024 at 19.30 at the Aigas Community Forest.