

Portmoak Community Woodland Steering Group

Meeting: 15th November The Well Country Inn

Present: K.McDonnell, R.Barlow (WT) M.McGinnes, L.Botten, J.Shepherd, S.Garvie, E & D.Carruthers, M.Brown,A.Bradley

Apols: H.Rolton, R.McDonnell, L&D Batchelor, J.Gunnell

No matters arising from October minutes

Woodland Trust Update

Path Repair

JG, RB and Anna Cairns (WT) had walked the Moss, of the opinion that the overall standard was fit for purpose, decision made that the ramp onto top of peat bank was too steep to facilitate the development of wheelchair access. Consequently the route will not be promoted as suitable for wheelchair users.

Additional Land Purchase

Agreed in principle that PCW would support WT regards acquisition of adjacent land, particularly is suitable for tree planting. Any land would have to be a best fit in respect of WT acquisition criteria and group would need to support locally.

Large Logs:

KMcD has contacted Mike Demsey, a mutually convenient date to visit site most probably end Jan 2008

Visit to Flanders Moss

HR has been in touch with David Pickett Reserve Manager at Flanders Moss to identify their success criteria in relation to birch control and overall 'health' of the moss. Significant effort has been made to arrange a mutually convenient date for site visit in Spring 2008, a weekend is possible, discuss at January meeting.

Interpretation

SG has arranged to take this forward, KMcD has provided outline 'lifecycle' and supporting information.

Dipwell data

JG has tabulated and created graphs available on website which show average dipwell levels vs time (2003-2008), a 4pt moving mean rainfall has also been plotted to assist clarity.

Viewpoint Indicator

Ongoing

Treasurers Report

£1322.95

Postcards/Greeting Cards

Ongoing

Squirrel Monitor

L. Botten had updated with Mike Turner regards structure of project and findings. He had undertaken 3 types of survey during the period Dec06-Jan 07, tubes, visual and feeding. The first had been unsuccessful. The visual survey very structured involving observation over 5 equal length routes and recorded 11 sitings, including 5 on one survey. The feeding survey involved the clearing of 5 areas and the collection and counting of eaten cones, 4 areas were in populations of Norway Spruce, 1 in an area of Scots Pine. Feeding noted in Norway Spruce areas but not in Scots Pine.

An evaluation of the average number of seeds per cone had been made to identify the energy value associated with this, multiplied by the number of cones eaten per day, and the coverage of Norway Spruce (7 hectares within the Moss) he suggests that the Moss could sustain a maximum of 7 squirrels.

Those present were surprised that Norway Spruce was a more significant food source than Scots Pine, there was also discussion around cone maturity in relation to coniferous trees growing on peat moss and the opinion that there were fewer cones produced this year in comparison with previous years.

The Research report makes tentative suggestions regards management of Moss to support squirrel population. Copy to be made available once assessment process concluded.

Recruitment of Squirrel Officer Fife, applications had closed on 9th November, contact to id name mid-end Jan 2008.

Backmuir Woods had spoken with WT regards Red Squirrel activity, advised to contact PCW to discuss, possibly attend future meeting.

Community Woodland Association

JS/SG did not attend.

Micheal Bruce Way Leaflet

No update, JS and MB both attend Paths Group therefore can keep PCW advised of any developments.

Burns Supper

Numbered tickets and posters printed, EC to place article in Kinross Newsletter.

Next Meeting: Thursday 15th November The Well Country Inn