

## ALPS update for Management Group 16th July 2012

- **Reporting:** HLF and LEADER visited Applecross on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> June respectively and audited all invoices/procurement, and inspected projects. Both funders are happy with progress and governance. LEADER have since provided the final installment of money due for Clachan Church (£31K) and HLF funding relating to all projects (£127K). An eighth capital and revenue report and funding claim was submitted to ERDF on the 13<sup>th</sup> July. Reporting is currently up to date.
- **Clachan Church:** All works are now complete except for the installation of one pane of glass that was broken in transit. The entrance track has now been narrowed and seeded. There is an issue with the bottom coloured panes of glass not being fit for purpose with some imperfections and lines of weakness/cracking observed. This is being taken up with the main contractor and should be possible to resolve within existing retention amounts.
- **Arrina and Kenmore/Ardheslaig paths:** a line has now been opened from Arrina through the plantation. A kissing gate is still required at the edge of the plantation and some improvement of waymarking to Cuaig. Work has begun on the Kenmore to Ardheslaig path which should take about six weeks to complete.
- **Bealach na Bà interpretation:** All stone has now been delivered. Dan Macrae has begun to work on this. It is hoped to have this completed by the end of August.
- **Broch project:** The final report has now been provided by the archaeology team and is available for viewing in the ALPS office (15 meg file). It will be made available on the web with a hard copy to go to the Heritage Centre. An interpretation leaflet is the final element of this project still requiring completion.
- **Smiddy Wood:** Strimming and associated spraying has been undertaken around the ca. 500 seedlings planted by the primary school in the western-most area of the site.
- **Interpretation:** A first draft of the Wildlife Walks booklet has been produced, with the Heritage booklet close to draft stage and only requiring images.
- **Milltown Loch:** The bird hide has been repaired and an interpretation bench and associated leaflets/posters installed. Fishing permits are being made available through the shop & post office. It is hoped that income from this will fund on-going management. Rushes on the western-most part of the loch have been cleared back.
- **Lime kiln:** A stainless steel lintel is now in place to secure the stonework above the dangerous entrance to the draw arch (James Goldthorpe). Martin Wildgoose will undertake consolidation stonework towards the end of July.
- **Smiddy dykes:** Work is now nearing completion, although further cope stones are required. It is planned to obtain these from one of the drystone walls within Smiddy.
- **Chapel restoration:** With the Highland Building Preservation Trust (HBPT) having now killed the ivy that previously helped support the chapel (under a brief developed by Historic Scotland), the chapel has been closed off to public access. Discussions are on-going with the HBPT and Historic Scotland regarding completion of the necessary stone consolidation work.

- **Hebridean barns:** Martin Wildgoose will continue consolidating the stone of the northern barn during mid July, before focusing on the limekiln.
- **Gateway woodland project:** SB and AM held meetings with Scottish Woodlands and UPM Tillhill on the 12<sup>th</sup> July to discuss their tenders. There is now a basis for comparison. It is intended to get an independent review of the two existing tenders before awarding any contract. The awarding of the contract will need to be discussed and agreed by the management group.
- **South Coast Deer Fence** The deer grid has now been delivered and quotes to undertake its installation being received. The Highland Council will support this work through the provision of machinery.
- **Land conditioning/habitat improvement:** A public meeting on bracken control was held on the 11<sup>th</sup> June. Diverse opinions were expressed and it was agreed that the community should address their concerns to the relevant crofting clerks who represent the land managers. Malcolm Morrison (SAC woodland advisor) met with crofting clerks of Milltown, Culduie, Ard Dubh, Toscaig and Fearnmore on the 19<sup>th</sup> June. Based on this advice, clerks are currently collating woodland proposals.
- **Events and festivals** The following events took place in June: Test pitting on the Applecross broch (16<sup>th</sup> June; four local people); Bee keeping talk (6<sup>th</sup> July; eleven people)
- **Bardic School:** The 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Bardic School took place between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> July. There were eleven paying fulltime attendees, with an addition (on average) of between ten and fifteen people attending each individual event. An evaluation report is being prepared.