

ALPS update for Management Group 13th June 2011

- Initial path work on the Cruary-Heritage Centre has been completed, although significant modifications to drainage need to be made in June with the heavy rain during May causing path failure in a number of areas. These alterations have been agreed with the contractor. Good progress has also been made on the Beechwood path, although as yet there is no satisfactory solution to drainage in the extremely boggy areas related to the woodland close to the white gate. The Highland Council via Brian Stout have been asked to clear blocked culverts under the road to improve drainage across the site, and their archaeological department contacted regarding the possibility of extending the existing drainage ditch past St. Maelrubha's cell and reversing the flow so that the Spout Well is maintained clean. This is a solution they do not favour. Historic Scotland have granted Scheduled Monument Consent for the Clachan path, although all works will need to be supervised by an archaeologist.
- There has been a delay in getting the necessary bat surveys done at Clachan Church due to the unfavourable weather, with the architect also delaying in sending out final tenders for all works to five contractors from an initial list of 14. The reason for the delay cited is due to minor modifications in the tender documents requested by Andrew Wright. All tenders should be in by the end of June and available for assessment by the MG at the next meeting. The bat ecologist and SNH have been made aware of the need to press ahead with lime works asap with October (the likely fallback timing position for works under a bat license) being unsuitable for this component. The ecologist has been provided with a full schedule of works planned and asked to assess each component and its potential impact on bats to ensure we can complete all work by April 2012.
- After advertising locally and in the West Highland Free Press three tenders were received on the 1st June to undertake the consolidation work on the limekiln and Hebridean Barn. One of these is within budget, has exemplary references and is thus the favoured contractor. A final decision will be made at the MG meeting.
- Professor Ian Armit (Bradford University) met with the Archaeological Society on Friday 3rd to discuss final presentation and future archaeological works. Presentation of the broch will continue throughout June, July and August.
- After consultation sessions on the 4th and 5th April and the 20th May, a first draft Interpretation Plan was submitted on the 9th June for feedback from the Management Group. Once a revised draft has been agreed this will go out to broader consultation/feedback. Arriving at consensus may take a significant period of time.
- A preliminary Guided walks advertising poster has been drafted, with a view to the first walks taking place starting the week of the 20th June. There is a target of 32 walks to be completed in 2011.
- The application to CCAGS for the funding of the South Coast deer fence was finally submitted on the 8th June.

- Scottish Woodlands continued work at Smiddy Wood with the raking and burying of wood debris. The Archaeological Society and Cathy Dagg have expressed dissatisfaction with how this work was undertaken due to impacts of works through the large trenches dug on Achincork township, a site clearly flagged up as sensitive in the archaeological report. There is concern that one of the underground culverts may also have been impacted, although this is not clear. Bruce Taylor was made aware of the sensitive area and reported that this was discussed in turn with the sub-contractor. Seeding of the pasture area began during the week of the 6th May. This issue will be discussed at the next MG meeting
- Two further reports and associated payment requests have been submitted to ERDF (Revenue & capital), and one to HLF. A further one to LEADER is currently being prepared.
- A funding application for £2,850 has been submitted to the Forestry Commission (International Year of Forestry funding stream) to support the Hazel Wood/Roundhouse/Tree Festival project.
- An updated ALPS training plan has been submitted to HLF. Ian Gilles, Sam Bridgewater, Ian Cameron and Mark Wright undertook a CS30/CS31 chainsaw course and exam, with Ian Gilles supported by the ALPS general training budget and Sam Bridgewater through a separate ALPS staff training budget.
- A design has been finalised for the roundhouse, with groundworks/drainage of the site now complete. Four members of the community felled 10 larch trees for use in the roundhouse in April 2011, with 10 members of the community involved in debarking the timber on the 30th May ready for the laying the foundations posts.