



## **Management Group Meeting Minutes**

**Monday 31<sup>st</sup> October, 7pm, Estate Office, Applecross House**

**Present:** Archie MacLellan (AM), Chair (Applecross Trust), Mike Summers (Applecross Crofters), Gordon Cameron (Heritage Manager), Owen Kilbride (Archaeological Society), Alasdair Macleod (AMac)(Community Council), Derek MacLennan (Bealach group), Jackie Liuba (co-opted member), Mary Gibson (adviser), Sam Bridgewater, Elodie Matthews.

**Apologies of absence:** Alistair McCowan (AMcC) (Historical Society), Gill Fairweather (Walks and Traditional crafts group) Tom Kilbride (co-opted member), Lorna Lumsden (Applecross Trust).

The minutes of the MG meeting of the 26<sup>th</sup> September 2011 were approved by all present and will be made available via the ALPS notice board and the website.

### **Updates**

Provided on separate document.

### **Minutes**

#### Ard Dubh – Coilegille tender assessment

Four tenders for the path works were received on the 25<sup>th</sup> October. Based on the specification written by Bob Brown (National Trust), they include repair works on drainage and ditches, all hand built. No extra surface materials will be added to the path, due to the need to bring these in by helicopter, and the limited budget. SB provided the group with a tender assessment report highlighting the good experience and references of all contractors. Based on the cost of each tender, SB advised awarding the contract to George Mundell, who will employ local labour. The group agreed with this recommendation.

#### Archaeological Trail

OK highlighted the fact that there still were questions about the final route of the archaeological trail, especially from the top of the Langwell site to the Smiddy wood area. SB explained that the works done to date mainly consisted in snedding the path on about a hundred metres, for a nominal cost. The group expressed their satisfaction regarding those works. OK proposed a slight change in the project brief, with the building of a new high standard path linking the Street to Milton and the opening of others paths. OK expressed a strong interest in reopening the Lost Path, which would need mainly strimming works and some drainage for the dampest sections. AM raised the question of the maintenance responsibility falling to the Trust after the ALPS lifespan and wondered if smaller paths built to higher specification would be preferable. AMac asked for an estimated cost of the Street/Milton path as there is no doubt this project would be popular. SB answered that the first

estimate would be a cost of £10K excluding the cost of materials, if the path was built below the road. SB also made a proposition for a new section of path to be built from Smiddy Wood to Hillfort viewpoint which would lead to a rougher path. MS insisted on the fact that the existing path, once built as a proper path, had been neglected and needed to be restored to its original condition. SB agreed to obtain a proper specification and costing for each of the path discussed (Milton, Smiddy and Lost path) to help making the final decision.

#### Interpretation

SB provided the group with the drawings sent by Ross Associates for the Bealach interpretation project. The proposition consists in a 15m all-abilities track leading to a stone-built seat and a topographic map of the view. It is a small, non obtrusive feature. The seating and the map are meant to be made of Caithness stone flags and the revetment wall of local sandstone. Although some minor issues were pointed out (the misspelling of Skye in Gaelic, the orientation of the map, the origin of the stone) the group generally agreed with the concept.

For the Beechwood interpretive bench, GC provided a quote referring to the area from a song written by John Mackenzie, a local Bard. For the other interpretive features, it was suggested to scatter verses of the poem 'Coille Mhùridh', with the whole of the poem made available at the Heritage Centre. MG said that from a funder's point of view this approach of interpretation would be unique and tick the boxes.

#### Habitat improvements and South Coast Deer Fence

AM informed the group that all the CCAGS applications had been approved and offer letters reissued, apart from the one for Milton. This delay is due to the deer grid issue, still under inspection. AM suggested calling a crofters meeting to confirm the last details of the works, which are expected to start at the end of November.

AM also reminded the group of the importance of habitat improvement inside the fence and made a proposition to consider bracken spraying.

#### Other matters arising

The date of next meeting is set for Monday 28<sup>th</sup> November.