

SWT CENTRAL BORDERS GROUP

NOTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday 30th July 2020 7.00pm

ZOOM Meeting

Present

Mike Rutherford (MR)
Dawn Spark (DS)
Tricia Wylie (TW)
Kate Bisset (KB)
Lucy Hoad (LH)
Louise Wallace (LW)
Jim Russell (JR)
Malcolm Lindsay (ML)
Lisa McLeish (LMcL)
Alison Smith (AS)

Apologies

Eric Middleton (EM)
Julian Warman (JW)

Item		Action
1.0	PRESENT & APOLOGIES	
1.1	See above. Noted that John Ferguson had been technically unable to 'join' the meeting.	
1.2	The Notes of the meeting held on 20 th February 2020 were approved.	
2.0	MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS NOTES OF MEETING	
2.1	(2.1) Noted that Lisa McLeish's election to committee had been delayed due to postponed AGM, as a result of coronavirus lockdown measures.	
2.2	(2.2) Noted that LW had contacted the new agent for TESCO and awaited confirmation of the lockdown easing situation in relation to the planned the CBG collection.	LW
2.3	(2.4) Noted that no action had been taken on the proposed 'Bird Bus' trip due to the coronavirus outbreak.	
2.4	(2.5) See item (8.1).	
2.5	(2.7) Noted that the bird trapping/ringing event had been cancelled due to the coronavirus outbreak.	
2.6	(2.8) Noted that the follow up Fungi Survey at Hare Moss had been cancelled due to the coronavirus outbreak.	
2.7	(2.9) Noted that ML's moth recording exercise at Dunhog Moss had not taken place due to the coronavirus outbreak.	
2.8	(2.12) Noted that the repairs to the artificial island at Hare Moss had been successfully carried out. The swans had declined to nest there this season, nesting opposite the hide, but were now using the island regularly for resting and preening with their three cygnets.	
2.9	(2.13) No action to report on speaking to the Selkirk Bookshop owner about the possibility of stocking the Eildons Booklet publication due to the coronavirus outbreak.	
2.10	(2.15) Noted that no further action had been taken on filling the vacant CBG	

position on the Lindean Management Group due to no decision having been reported by SBC on their review of its estates and the future of the reserve and the bird hide.

2.11 (9.1 &9.2) Noted that litter pick event at Hare Moss had been cancelled due to coronavirus outbreak.

2.12 (10.1) MR had noted that he had been down under wrong Group on HQ e-mail list and had now corrected this. Receipt of last e-mail from HQ to be checked as received by him.

AS/MR

Noted that there had been no CBG e-mails to members via HQ since the beginning of lockdown when it was announced that no events would be taking place until further notice.

2.13 Noted that LW had reported not been receiving the HQ weekly e-mails which had been posted during the lockdown. AS had forwarded the CBG subscribe instruction sheet to show what boxes had to be ticked to receive selected information from HQ. JR stated he had been receiving some information from HQ. AS to forward the guidance sheet to him.

AS

2.14 (18.2) Noted that notes of the Environmental Alliance for South of Scotland, (EASoS), on 28th January 2020 at Lockerbie had been circulated along with subsequent information.

2.15 (18.3) Noted that MR's First Aid Training had been postponed due to the coronavirus outbreak.

2.16 (18.1) Noted that the SWT AGM was to be online on Saturday 12th September 2020 and Members' Day Live online on Saturday 5th September 2020. Registration details supplied with SWT magazine.

ALL

2.17 (18.5) Noted that AS had applied for a stand at the Border Union Schools Countryside Education Day at Kelso on Tuesday 19th May 2020 but this had been cancelled due to the coronavirus outbreak.

2.18 (17.2) Noted that TW had taken over from LW in arranging the Langlee CC bookings.

3.0 TREASURER'S REPORT

3.1 JF had provided the following:

Bank Account £1888.52

Skipton BS Account £654.91

3.2 Noted that the £1000 held in CBG account on behalf of the Lindean Group had been paid back to the Clark Woodlands Trust. (See item 2.10)

3.3 Noted that Chris Whitmore had kindly agreed to independently check the Group's accounts. This had been delayed due to the coronavirus outbreak but was to be completed now that restrictions had been eased.

JF/CW

4.0 FUNDING

4.1 Noted that a donation of £500 had been sent to SWT HQ.

5.0 PUBLICATIONS

5.1 ML reported that Main Street Trading co. had just bought 10 copies of Eildon Hills Booklets and that other retailers may soon re-order.

6.0 OUTINGS

Agreed that the cancelled 2020 outings could be moved forward to 2021 with dates to be confirmed and walk leader's availability checked.

7.0 TALKS

See item 18.2.

8.0 RESERVES

8.1 JW had spoken to AS prior to the meeting on general and reserve matters and reported that SWT reserve hides were being programmed to re-open early August with guidelines posted on the doors, including the number of persons in the hide at any time. Noted that routine maintenance on reserves was still reduced due to the Covid 19 restrictions.

Hare Moss

See item 2.8 for island repairs. Noted that hide had been locked by JW with explanatory sign erected during the coronavirus lockdown. Entry had, however, been forced with the hide used for nefarious purposes on occasion. No further damage done to date other than windows and door being left open and litter left behind. This had been cleared up by AS along with remains of disposable BBQ party litter left behind on the access road. Noted that the lock had been fixed by JW but the door was being left open to avoid further damage.

Noted that repairs were to be carried out to the boardwalk section towards the hide by Dalkeith Team.

As previously reported at the last meeting the commercial viability and feasibility of carrying out further tree felling work had been considered by JW with a potential forester and the landowner. JW reported that he was about to get back in touch with the landowner and the local forestry company regarding the felling discussions now that coronavirus lockdown restrictions were easing. Work had been provisionally scheduled for this autumn but was now more likely to be autumn 2021. DS requested that JW be asked to provide information that other methods had been considered with details of options, with costs, for carrying out the felling in smaller sections. AS to request more details from JW.

JW

Other opinions were expressed that there was the need to consider the potential repeated disruption to habitat by programming the work in smaller sections. The consideration that one major exercise of felling with immediate re-planting would also allow the overall management plan objective of increasing the natural willow carr habitat to be realised.

AS/JW

Dunhog Moss (SSSI)

No matters to report.

Whitlaw Wood

JW reported that although a SBC site had been identified that could take the annual grass cuttings there was still the question of getting them off site. This, as well as a currently reduced work force, meant that this year the grass may not be cut with removal of the existing cuttings the priority.

Gordon Moss (SSSI)

Further clearing area still programmed for winter 2020/21 with the possibility of a combined CBG volunteer and Dalkeith Team effort. JW to keep CBG informed.

AS confirmed that a dead Buzzard found at Gordon Moss had been notified to the police. AS had directed the Police Wildlife Crime Co-ordinator to the location and the bird was removed for post mortem. AS had received no news of the results but this indicated there were no suspicious circumstances.

Din Moss & Hoselaw Loch (SSSI)

No matters to report.

Yetholm (SSSI)

No longer SWT Reserve.

Bemersyde (SSSI)

Noted that hide had been locked by JW during the coronavirus lockdown, as had the Hare Moss hide. Entry had been forced with the hide used for nefarious purposes on occasion with door and windows left open and litter left behind. Noted that the lock had been fixed by JW but the door was being left open to avoid further damage.

Noted that extensive repairs were to be carried out to the boardwalk section to the hide by the Dalkeith Team.

Noted that JW was to inform the Police regarding the use of the hides for purposes other than bird watching.

JW

9.0 VOLUNTEER WORK PARTIES

9.1 See item 8.1 Gordon Moss.

10.0 DATA PROTECTION

10.1 No further matters.

11.0 PLANNING REVIEW UPDATE

11.1 Noted that the CBG Planning Reviews had continued as normal during the coronavirus lockdown with little reduction in applications. AS and LH were about to carry out a monthly review.

11.2 Noted that a flagged up planning application 20/00509/PN at Drinkstone by Buccleuch Woodlands Limited for a forestry track at Drinkstone, near Hawick, had raised concerns regarding future forestry planting plans as it has good areas of calcareous grassland and wetland. This led to AS raising the application with Greg Macfarlane, the local Scottish Forestry Woodland Officer. He confirmed that no developer plans had been received by Scottish Forestry to date for this site. AS had expressed concern to the Forestry Officer in general terms regarding CBG currently inability to be informed of private developer woodland creation proposals at an early stage rather than when posted on the public register. (SWT not on the SF consultee stakeholder list but a "scopee" which appears to mean only being informed at the discretion of SF.) Some progress was made on the matter but it has still not been properly resolved. MR making himself aware of procedures with the view to working with Reuben Singleton on this at some stage. Further discussion with Forestry Officer also required.

AS/MR

12.0 TWEED FORUM UPDATE

12.1 Noted that a Tweed Forum Meeting had been held by Zoom with papers sent out.

13.0 SBC LOCAL BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN (LBAP)

13.1 No current matters to report.

14.0 LOCAL BIODIVERSITY SITES (LBS)

14.1 Noted that no further potential LBS sites were to be assessed until landowners were informed of those previously assessed. This was to be done by SBC in conjunction with TWIC. Presumably ongoing but delayed due to the coronavirus outbreak.

15.0 LINDEAN BIRD HIDE

15.1 See item (2.10).

- 16.0 LANGLEE COMMUNITY CENTRE**
- 16.1 JF had received updated costings for Langlee CC which had been forwarded to committee and were as anticipated. Future use of Langlee CC to be reviewed. (See item 16.2)
- 16.2 Noted that Live Borders had informed CBG that Langlee CC would be unavailable for some months. Concerns about the content of the present Live Borders Covid 19 risk assessment details had been circulated to committee. These included a number of checks required to be carried out by the meeting organiser. Agreed that this would be problematic for our CBG meeting organiser to sign off.
- 17.0 CBG AGM MATTERS**
- 17.1 Noted that SWT HQ had approved delaying the CBG AGM until September 2020 due to the coronavirus outbreak. (See item 18.1 & 18.2) **ALL**
- CBG Committee elections and roles as at April 2020 were to be discussed prior to the delayed AGM. **AS/ML**
- AS to contact SWT HQ to enquire how other groups were conducting their meetings and AGMs since the coronavirus outbreak. **AS**
- 18.0 AOCB**
- 18.1 Noted that SWT HQ had issued advice against any face to face meetings/events taking place until September 2020. Advice had also been received from SWT HQ in relation to Covid 19 risk assessments for any face to face meetings/events after that date. These had been noted as being extremely onerous and problematic for a CBG organiser to sign off.
- 18.2 **Due to the above HQ advice and the Covid 19 restrictions currently in place, and likely to remain in place for some time, the following were discussed in relation to alternative webinar formats for meetings or events:**
- Future Committee Meetings as webinar formats.**
 Agreed that CBG subscribe to ZOOM PRO for future virtual meetings. MR to investigate if the subscription had to be in one name and e-mail address and offered to do it in his name paying the annual payment and being reimbursed by JF. **MR
JF**
- AGM as webinar format.**
 Agreed that the delayed AGM, and possibly future AGMs, be held on ZOOM PRO with invitations to attend sent out to members via HQ which would include a link to booking place via Eventbrite.
- Winter Talks as webinar formats.**
 Agreed that the programmed winter talks be held as 'live' events via ZOOM PRO allowing questions to be put to speaker. Event to be recorded to allow viewing outwith the talk itself. Invitations to attend to be sent out to members via HQ which would include a link to booking a place via Eventbrite. KB and LMCL reported having attended other organisations' events on similar formats.
- Booked speakers would need to be approached to confirm that this new format was acceptable to them. **MR**
- Noted that ZOOM PRO allows 100 participants which would be dealt with through Eventbrite on a 'first come first served' basis. Agreed it was difficult to predict interest from CBG members in this format relative to numbers usually attending an AGM at Langlee CC.

MR and LMcL agreed to be technical 'hosts' for the presentations with AS to do introductions etc. as part of the live event

MR
LMcL
AS

Agreed that there could be a nominal donation request on the Eventbrite site for the talks to raise funds as the normal raffle/donation fund raising at talks would not be happening. LH reported that this format had been successfully used by TWIC recently.

Agreed that AS to contact SWT HQ to discuss how other groups were doing things.

AS

19.0 NEXT MEETING

**THE NEXT MEETING WAS TO BE THE AGM ON THURSDAY 3RD
SEPTEMBER 2020 BY ZOOM. PLEASE NOTE TBC**

20.0 CIRCULATION

Malcolm Lindsay
John Ferguson
Kate Bisset
Louise Wallace
Tricia Wyllie
Eric Middleton
Jim Russell
Dawn Spark
Lucy Hoad
Mike Rutherford
Julian Warman
Lisa McLeish
Alison Smith

Alison Smith 01/07/2020