

BLAIRMORE VILLAGE TRUST
Minutes of Board Meeting
held on Wednesday March 23rd 2016 at 7pm
at Saltire, Blairmore

PRESENT: Agnes Harvey (Chair); Pat Lynn; Carolyn Stewart; Jim King, Anne Garrod, Bill McKinnon, David McKenzie, Lorraine Whitton; Catherine Rae

IN ATTENDANCE: Becky Hothersall (minutes). Bruce Marshall (Blairmore Hall Trust);

1. APOLOGIES: none
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: Catherine Rae declared an interest in Item 4 (Matters arising, from Scottish Land Fund update (Item 10) of February's meeting) and was not present for this discussion.
3. MINUTES OF FEBRUARY MEETING: the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd February were approved and signed by the chair.
4. MATTERS ARISING:
 - i) *Scottish Land Fund update*. Subsequent to the February BVT meeting, Agnes and Pat met with Eric McNally of HIE to discuss a proposed application to the Scottish Land Fund to cover the purchase of land owned by Catherine Rae. It was confirmed that this would be treated as a new application and that BVT would need to evidence that the community are supportive of such a purchase.

Subsequently, David Knight of the SLF has confirmed that BVT would also need to demonstrate that Blairmore Hall Trust were supportive of the BVT purchase. Bruce responded that he envisaged that the Hall Trust would support the bid and could consider providing a letter to this effect.

A draft consultation document was presented for discussion and comment along with the request for any other ideas for consultation. ACTION: Feedback from all requested to go to Becky ASAP.

Catherine rejoined the meeting at this point.

- ii) Item 8: *Progress on specification for field/green* (joint commissioning of Cowal Design Consultants). A joint meeting of BVT and the Hall Trust should now be scheduled. ACTION: David
 - iii) Item 13: *Year end accounts 2015*. Pat and Agnes have met with the accountant to finalise the accounts. Following a discussion about how some figures were arrived at, it was agreed board members require a more detailed version of accounts than had been distributed by email. ACTION: Agnes to send a full balance sheet.

4a) HALL TRUST: Agnes attended the most recent meeting and reported on discussion of:

The Hall Trust will be proposing at their AGM on 22nd May that they form a SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation). This should help to make them more eligible to apply for grant funding. This would also require the dissolution of the current status which is Trustee led.

The AGM will be held on 22nd May at 1pm, with presentations at 2pm. Catherine encouraged members of the community to attend. ACTIONS: Everyone to publicise the AGM locally. Becky to advertise on the BVT website.

A discussion ensued about this being an ideal time to explore the opportunity to maximise the integration of working together to serve one community. A letter of support would be sent to the Hall Trust in this regards. ACTION AH

Pat reported that she had been asked to attend a meeting to help organise plans for the Hall's summer fundraising event and she was happy to do so on behalf of BVT.

The Hall Trust's 50:50 club is due to re-start in April; BVT members and other interested parties were invited to participate. ACTIONS: Forms available.

5. LAND PLOTS UPDATE: David had spoken to BVT's lawyer today. Offers had been sent out by registered post and four had been returned undelivered, with approximately 50-60% expressing an interest so far and three or four people interested in acquiring plots in addition to the one nearest their property. A list of available plots will be drawn up once the first round of transfers is agreed. One resident has queried the legal process involved. It was also mentioned that some residents were unsure who to contact for advice about rights, responsibilities and liabilities associated with land transfer; Agnes clarified that Stewart and Bennett could advise on such matters, assuming residents wished to use them; or another legal adviser.
6. COMMUNITY SUMMER EVENT: Catherine proposed that the event should be held on Saturday 2nd July, as the hall is available and there are no known clashes with other events. This coincides with the very start of the school holidays, which may reduce the number of local attendees, but alternative dates were problematic and after discussion this date was agreed. It will include a community picnic, with tea and cakes in the hall and a release of butterflies as at last summer's event. Work parties will be required before the day to create some temporary raised beds (Catherine has materials available). ACTIONS: Becky, Catherine and Anne to meet to make a more detailed plan. Pat to produce some plants. Becky to contact Strone Primary to enquire whether they would like to be involved in raising some caterpillars for the proposed butterfly release.
7. WHITE'S BRAE: For February's meeting, Nigel Potts (Argyll & Bute Council) had agreed to provide a specification indicating what the council would expect if it were commissioning repairs to the culvert. This had still not been received. ACTION: Bruce offered to follow this up. Catherine reported that she and Iain Lorimer had carried out vegetation and ditch clearance to the triangle above White's Brae, to help

deal with problems of rainwater run-off. It was agreed that Iain would be reimbursed for hire of a digger and fuel, via Catherine. ACTIONS: Catherine to provide an invoice; Becky to arrange for a cheque to be raised.

8. HAMILTON'S BRAE: David confirmed that Wise Property Group had cleared all the dead Japanese knotweed away two weeks ago. Ross MacArthur's team are now waiting for them to give the go ahead to clear non-knotweed vegetation, as the standard 7 metre exclusion zone around any knotweed would preclude removal of any significant amount. Concern was expressed about vegetation now overhanging the pavement. ACTION: David to ask Ross's team whether this can be cut back in the meantime. Bruce queried why BVT had engaged professionals to remove the knotweed, given the cost, when B&KCDT could have done the spraying for much less. David explained that an earlier BVT meeting had highlighted uncertainty over capacity for further local eradication, especially on sites with an identified owner. Furthermore, BVT could face legal action if it did not act promptly to treat knotweed affecting neighbouring properties. Thus it was agreed that BVT would employ Wise Property Group, which was able to provide a 20 year guarantee.
9. LEASED PLOT - KILMUN: Pat reported that a payment of £80 had now been received for the lease of this plot.
10. CORRESPONDENCE: Bruce reported that Mr R Fraser has been in touch with him stating that the Younger Trust has confirmed to him that BVT has responsibility for maintenance of the High Road, solum and ditches. Agnes reiterated that while BVT is committed to getting the road to an adoptable standard, she has documentation from the Younger Trust and from A&B Council confirming the responsibility and is satisfied that BVT are discharging their responsibilities appropriately. BVT confirmed that an invitation had been extended to Mr Fraser to meet with the Board but this had been declined.
11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:
 - i) Keep Scotland Beautiful's 'It's Your Neighbourhood' community environmental improvement initiative has re-opened for 2016 and Becky has completed an application for BVT. Participation in the scheme could be linked in with announcement of our summer event to help generate publicity nearer the time.
 - ii) David reminded the group that BVT is committed to report to SLF on issues relating to sheltered housing/affordable housing sites. B&KCDT are leading on this project for the shore and keen to ensure that at least one site in Blairmore is identified for the feasibility study. A number of possibilities were noted and B&KCDT are progressing this work.
 - iii) Jim reported that Japanese knotweed is coming through the boundary wall of Blairmore House from the field/green. Becky gave a recap of BVT's contact with Ross Petro last autumn, whereby we queried whether all knotweed had been sprayed on the site and he confirmed that it had. ACTION: Pat to contact Ross to check the status of this part of the site.
 - iv) David reminded the meeting of the need to be aware of Tree Preservation Orders and the caution required before taking down any tree within the National Park.
 - v) Bruce noted the upcoming Forestry Commission Easter event at Ardentenny on Monday 29th March.

vi) BVT AGM date: this was proposed for Sunday 5th June at 2pm with a pre-meeting at 1pm. ACTION: Becky to check the availability of the hall.

12. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 17th May in Blairmore Hall at 7pm (ACTION: Becky to check availability).