

Arboricultural Association - Scottish Branch

Minutes of the Scottish Branch Committee meeting held at The Hawes Inn, Queensferry on 8th November 2016

Present: Will Hinchliffe (WH), Robert Paterson (RP), Donald Rodger (DR), Ken Harvey (KH), Fiona Melville (FM), Adam Riedi (AR) and Mike Charkow (MC).

1. Apologies for absence:

Apologies received from Jeremy Davies (JD) and Eric Hamilton (EH).

2. Minutes from the last committee meeting

Minutes approved, and should be up on the Scottish Branch page of the AA website.

3. Officers' reports.

3.1 Chair.

DR had nothing significant to say at this stage of the meeting but would cover specific agenda points later.

3.2 Secretary.

Regarding promoting closer contact with the Royal Scottish Forestry Society, KH attended a meeting on 22nd September with Sir Patrick Hunter Blair, RSFS President, and George Moore, RSFS Administrator. The meeting was very positive and as a result, the Scottish Branch of the Arboricultural Association (AASB) and the Royal Scottish Forestry Society (RSFS) now have an agreement that there is an open invitation for members of each organisation to attend events/field trips etc. organised by the other.

AASB members will be informed of events and outings being organised by RSFS, and they will let their members know of events and outings being organised by AASB and also of AA HQ-organised events in Scotland.

3.3 Treasurer.

RP reported that the Branch's bank balance currently stands at £1960.39 with a payment for Professor Lynn Boddy's expenses of £234.71 to be paid, leaving a balance of £1725.68. Total expenditure for the Tree Associated Fungi and Veteran Tree Management seminar was £2481.71 giving a profit to date of £550.29, subject to any further income or costs. There appears to be some income still to come looking at the delegate numbers and actual income. RP is waiting for final details from HQ of income details and their handling fees.

Third quarter returns for accounts were made on 16th October.

4. Tree Associated Fungi and Veteran Tree Management on 3rd October:

4.1 Feedback from seminar.

DR said that all in all it had been a good day and that the venue and speakers were excellent. The main downside was the catering which all felt had been sub-standard (Sodexo were the contractor). All agreed that in future we should be tighter in specifying that aspect. FM said that there had been feedback from delegates about issues reaching the venue but that the major problem experienced was due to having to repeatedly feed

parking meters. There were no course notes or handouts, but that isn't surprising as the speakers were essentially free, and this is a problem when working on a 'goodwill' basis. In future, it may be better to ensure such events are run on more of a business arrangement so we can get notes / presentation information etc.. We should also have more information on parking charges and locations to give out to delegates in future. WH said that there are facilities at RBGE to film seminars and record them, and although there can be issues with copyright, all agreed that this was worth looking into for any subsequent events.

4.2 Donations to speakers (for above seminar).

AR said that donations to speakers were expected in lieu of them charging a fee. All agreed that we should give £500 between the two, which would be most of the £550.29 profit.

5. Arrangements for Scottish Branch 2016 Annual General Meeting:

5.1 Venue.

The venue (Dundee Botanic Garden) is booked and everything arranged. DR is to draft a programme for the day.

5.2 Office bearers.

DR said he was happy to stand as Chair for another year. FM said she was happy to continue as Vice-chair and RP said he was happy to continue as Treasurer. KH said he was happy to continue as Secretary for another year. All Office bearer appointments will, of course, be subject to a membership vote at the AGM. Committee members present (AR, WH & MC) all confirmed they wish to continue on the committee. EH and JD were not present, but they will be asked before the AGM. DR will call for new members at the AGM if anyone else is interested in joining.

5.3 Nominations for the Ken Martin Memorial Award and Dr. Tom Hall Literary Prize.

Nominations have been received from the members for recipients of the Ken Martin Memorial Award, but a final decision was not reached at the meeting. All agreed we need to wait until we have seen the final edition of the ARBMagazine before any nominations for the best article in the 'In Scotland' section for the year can be nominated for the Dr. Tom Hall Literary Prize.

5.4 Speakers.

DR has asked Kevin Frediani (AA Fellow and Inverewe Property Manager at the National Trust for Scotland) who will be happy to speak. WH said that Sally Eaton had verbally intimated she would be agreeable to speaking, but has subsequently said she will not be available. Stewart Wardrop, new CEO of the Arboricultural Association, has confirmed he will also attend and speak to the membership.

6. AA Scottish Branch representative on Forestry Advisory Committee meetings.

WH confirmed that he will take this on. DR thanked him on behalf of the committee.

Action: WH to contact Dr. Liz Barron-Mejerik, Programme Development Manager at Scottish School of Forestry, directly.

7. Possible outing to Castle Kennedy near Stranraer.

Tom Christian has contacted DR about organising a possible visit to the property. All agreed it would be a good place to visit, but numbers are likely to be limited due to travelling difficulties.

KH said we would also let the Southwest & NI Region of the RSFS know, and that that could boost numbers. WH suggested combining the visit with one to RBGE's Logan Botanic Garden which is nearby, but this would probably be difficult to organise due to travelling and time constraints for most members.

Action: DR to contact Tom Christian to take matters further.

8. Possible ATF / AA outing to Abbotsford.

AR said that he had been contacted by the Land manager at Abbotsford, through the ATF, inviting a visit. All agreed that this would be interesting and is worth pursuing.

Action: AR to contact Abbotsford to look into it further.

9. Proposed VTA workshop with Chris Simpson for 2017.

FM has spoken with Chris Simpson about organising a workshop event. Chris felt that it would be a long day for one speaker to manage. It has been suggested that Matt Cooper may also be able to do a climbing element to help fill in the day, but FM said she thought it should be solely a VTA event. All agreed we need to give Chris a brief of points to cover. WH suggested we could invite Sorbus International to come up with Picus and Resitograph to do half the day. DR suggested Callendar House in Falkirk as a suitable venue.

Action: FM to draw up a brief for circulation to the committee, and also to ask Chris Simpson if there is a venue he would prefer.

10. Calendar of proposed events for 2017.

Visits to Castle Kennedy and Abbotsford, and a VTA workshop are possible events, although none have dates set as yet. AR suggested the visit to Lochwood Oaks which was shelved earlier this year should be considered again, with a recommendation that it take place on a Saturday at the end of May (27th being the most likely date).

11. Arb magazine articles.

MC said there was a good range of articles in the current ARB Magazine.

12. Any other competent business.

Nothing raised.

13. Date & venue of next meeting.

Sometime in February - date to be arranged.