

Auchterhouse Community Woodland Action Group

Minutes of AGM held in Auchterhouse Hall on 3 May 2012

Present: Ian Baird; Shiona Baird; Bob Black; Doug Leckie; Robin Lofthouse; Liz Rae; Garry Stewart; Sue Stewart and Wendy Strang

1. **Welcome.** Garry welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for a moments silence to remember Bill Millar, who died so suddenly in February.
2. **Apologies:** Joan Adam; John Brush; Linda Cockram; Tom McGrath; Liz Potts; Ian Wilson.
3. **Minutes of AGM held on 21st April 2011.** Accepted as correct: proposed Robin Lofthouse and seconded Sue Stewart.
4. **Matters Arising** See later reports.
5. **A C W A G Report**

There were only a few work parties organised this year. These were to clear branches hanging over paths in Balkello and to clear timber off the diagonal path in Dronley.

Garry has placed 3 benches at 3 viewpoints in Dronley wood and has, from time to time, carried out some path clearing to remove small fallen trees and also carried out a sweep of all paths (from time to time) to pick up litter.

Feeding of red squirrels continues, - some all-metal boxes (provided by Dundee Squirrel Project) have been installed to replace wooden ones which were getting badly eaten by greys, which are still around. We are grateful to Ian Wilson, who arranged a grant of £50 from Dundee Lions to purchase squirrel food.

The folk who took part in the squirrel surveys in the past were contacted and generally agreed that the surveys should cease, - mostly due to the fact that transects would have to be laid out again as the old ones were largely impassable due to tree felling.

6. FC (S) Report

Dronley.

Car park has been widened on north side allowing space for 4 more cars

A new wooden fence has been erected and the old pedestrian gate removed. Entry is now by the horse gate. Some work is still needed to prevent dogs getting under the fence/gate.

A new gate and fence has been installed at the entrance to the wood beside Dronley House.

A new notice board has been installed (to replace the smaller one). A protective glass window for it is on order.

There is still work to be done on the paths – particularly the diagonal path. Robin has agreed to arrange a walk with us to establish exactly what needs doing.

Balkello.

A new bridge has been installed over the burn at the car park. The railings will be lowered to a height of about 1 metre.

Tidying up and initial drainage work has been completed – but more work on drainage is still needed

The drain hole (in the car park) still needs a low fence for protection.

Fencing, and/or a hedge, on the right hand side from the main road down to, and around, the car park is under discussion. Robin will look at options available.

Tidying up the entrance to the wood to remove loose stone and widen the track would be carried out, and Robin would consider ways of improving the 3 barrier posts.

Replacement picnic tables are on order.

More signs will be erected, especially on the access road to indicate opening and closing times.

The burn running east to the boundary with N Balluderon will be cleaned out and the bank repaired to prevent water overflowing back into the wood. Robin will liaise with Ross Millar to assess the consequence of carrying this out.

The path along the north side of the wood is now impassable due to water logging and overgrowing branches. Robin will look at it but it is probably impossible to restore it to former glory. Other paths are becoming very muddy and can be improved with hardcore and some local drainage – Robin will assess the feasibility.

Land Reform Act.

Robin has received various enquiries about camping and lighting fires in both woods. The Act allows for responsible behaviour, ie. wild camping in small numbers (up to 6 people) but does not include use of the car park for motor vehicles. There is no right for people to light fires under trees or cut trees for firewood. Robin will supply a copy of the country code to both woods.

7. Treasurer's Report

£60.72 was spent on squirrel food and £0.02 bank interest received. Cash and bank balance at 31 March was £72.09.

8. Constitution

Copies of the constitution (revised last year) were made available to members.

9. Nominations for committee and Office Bearers.

Doug Leckie was nominated as member on the committee and all other office bearers were renominated.- proposed Bob Black and seconded Shiona Baird: -

Convener – Garry Stewart; Secretary & Treasurer – Bob Black; Minute Secretary – Sue Stewart; Balkello Member – Liz Rae; Dronley Member – Ian Baird; Member – Doug Leckie.

10. Future Plans

These are as noted in the reports in Para's 5 & 6 above.

11. AOCB

Scavenging for wood is forbidden – no permits are available.

Sidlaw Path Network leaflets are available at the entrance to Dronley Wood.

There will not be an equestrian event at Balkello this year.

12. Date of Next Meeting

This will be in Auchterhouse hall at 7.00pm on 6th Sep 2012.

13. Notes on Meeting held on 17th Nov 2011

These were approved.