

Open Community Meeting

Monday 3rd May 2010, 7.30pm

MINUTE OF MEETING

CDT Directors: Felicity Snowsill, Blair Urquhart, Cathy Tilbrook (Chair), Chris Palmer.

Apologies: William Levack, Isla Valenti

CDT Staff: Emma Margrett, Will Reid, Andy Heming, James MacDonald Turner

Welcome:

A very warm welcome was extended to those who attended this Community Open Meeting. Cathy Tilbrook, volunteer CDT Board Member and Chair, thanked everyone for attending especially as it was a Bank Holiday and noted a number of new attendees at the meeting. Cathy explained that tonight's meeting would focus on updates from the Trust's Working Groups, Comrie in Colour and a number of other updates. Cathy also mentioned that the Cultybraggan update would be relatively short as there is going to be Cultybraggan specific meeting on June 7th.

Cathy explained to the meeting that Emma, Carbon Challenge Officer is going to be leaving to go on maternity leave and Fran Loots (previously a CDT Board Member) and James MacDonald Turner would be taking on a job-share of the post until November working two and four days respectively.

The evening started off with an update from the Skatepark Group and Cathy mentioned that the youngest ever member of a Working Group was present at the meeting – everyone said hello to Molly.

Skatepark Group:

The Skatepark Group had put together a powerpoint presentation that played in the background while Cameron and Ally explained what has been happening over the past few months. Andy explained that the first planning application had been rejected however, a new plan had been drawn up for a different location in Laggan Park (attendees had plans on the tables). The Group had also been fundraising with £500 from a very successful event at The White Church. Ian Young from Skateboard Scotland had run a ramp making workshop and the Group had also organised a skatejam where youngsters and parents had a great time. Andy mentioned that the Group had put together a petition to be submitted with the next planning application (petition circulated to all present and is in the CDT office should anyone else wish to sign it). The Group is now busy trying to raise more funds so that they have enough to build the skatepark if and when planning permission is approved.

There was a question regarding the planning process and what the planners had said re the new location. The planners were happier with the new location however, the application has not been submitted yet. The structure would be permanent, however, should it fall out of use it will be possible to use it for other purposes for example, a tennis court. The meeting also heard that there are a number of girls also involved in the Group.

The meeting heard that CDT, the Community Council and the Laggan Park Committee are all in support of the new position, which is nearer the road and less visible, therefore hopefully there won't be any objections. Cathy thanked the Group for their presentation and for all of their hard work.

Oral History Working Group:

Grant Carstairs provided an update on what had been going on with the Oral History Working Group. The Camp 21 Cultybraggan A History was published on April 1st 2010 with a print run of 1000. Fifty complimentary copies have been sent to schools, libraries, contributors, designer, Perth & Kinross Council and the Heritage Lottery Fund. In the past month 320 copies have been distributed with estimated sales currently at 200 plus copies. The booklet is being distributed from four outlets in Comrie, two in Crieff and one in Perth. The cost of the booklet has been kept low to ensure that the aims of the Heritage Lottery Fund are met in making heritage accessible to as many people as possible. Income to date is approximately £730.00 and any surplus will be used by the Group for more history purposes. Grant also gave thanks to Scott Russell for helping make the booklet look so professional.

Grant mentioned that the Heritage Lottery Fund grant was realigned to absorb the total print costs with less than anticipated being used for transcription costs as the Group found that people didn't like being taped. However, the Group had held a very successful Afternoon Reminiscences Tea at the WRI Hall.

Grant explained the camp history doesn't end with the publication of the booklet and had interviews with someone who had helped build the camp, the Commandant's son, a former Commandant, the Black Watch museum and more local people. There was also interest from two film-making companies and had received a copy of 'Execution at Camp 21' which was made by Caledonia TV. It is anticipated that this will be used at promotional events. There was also a site visit by the Glasgow Paranormal Investigators who have some very interesting video and audio files of their experience!

The Group is also getting a display stand and will be at the Culty Quake on May 29th to provide more information and to sell the booklet. Grant explained that there was the potential to develop a museum on site at Cultybraggan, however, there is a lot of paper so it could include a wider exhibition on Comrie. The Group have also been offered a Military History Book Collection which could be sited on Cultybraggan or at some other location. There has been interest from the village in railways, agriculture and other subjects – so the remit of the Group could widen to include these other subjects.

Woodland and Orchard Working Group:

James explained to the meeting that this was a newly formed Group set up with the purpose of taking forward the planning, implementation and ongoing management of the Community Orchard and Woodland on Cultybraggan. To date funding has successfully been awarded by Awards for All to the CDT for the

creation of a Community Orchard – this amounts to £9,669. The first meeting of the Group was held on Tuesday 20th April and another meeting is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 4th May at Cultybraggan. Anyone interested in joining should contact James at the CDT office.

Sports Working Group:

Peter McRitchie explained the Sports Working Group had been meeting every two weeks to take forward plans at Cultybraggan. It is a large undertaking but the Group is aiming high. The Group is looking at a two-pronged approach – getting the playing fields up to a standard so that they can be used and looking into longer term plans involving tennis courts, multi-surface areas and changing facilities.

The Group is also organising a number of activities at the Culty Quake including football sevens, football coaching, archery, children's races etc. These activities will be advertised throughout the village and schools in the Comrie and Crieff area. The Group's next meeting is on Wednesday 5th May if anyone wishes to attend.

Comrie in Colour:

Isabel Fraser updated the meeting as to the activities of Comrie in Colour. At present Comrie in Colour are working on 95 baskets for the village – 22 for businesses and 80 containers. Comrie in Colour is also working with Comrie primary school, the Guides and Beavers plus adults from Kinoull day care centre.

Comrie in Colour is hosting a sale at the White Church on Saturday 22nd May and will also be selling plants at the Culty Quake on May 29th.

Isabel explained that Comrie was in Britain in Bloom and there will be a very large display banner in the village quite soon. Judges will be in the village between August 2nd and 13th and Comrie in Colour will let everyone know what route the judges will be taking.

Comrie in Colour have also been fundraising for a new village noticeboard and at present are £300.00 short. The Community Council and CDT have both contributed £300.00 each however, if anyone would like to contribute please contact Isabel as the majority of the funding required has come from Comrie in Colour's own funds.

Perthshire Master Composter Scheme:

Douglas Boyle, the Perthshire Master Composter Co-ordinator introduced himself to the meeting and explained a little about the Perthshire Master Composter Scheme. The purpose of the project is to recruit volunteers from within the community to act as Master Composter Volunteers and assist others with home composting. There are four communities in Perthshire working together on this project – Comrie, Muthill, Guildtown and Letham. If anyone wishes to volunteer there are volunteer forms in the CDT office. The project will reduce carbon emissions and encourage home composting. Doug also mentioned that he is

working on the Compost Doctors Programme with Ruth Graham and Wilde Thyme and hopefully there will be a rocket composter at Cultybraggan in the not too distant future.

There was a question regarding the use of composted food waste on farmland, Doug stated that this is currently under consultation.

Renewables Working Group:

Will updated the Group regarding the progress of the Renewables Working Group. SAC Consulting have completed the Renewable Energy Feasibility Study of Cultybraggan. They have recommended a phased district heating system derived from wood energy. A single boiler could initially serve the larger existing heat users to provide space heating and hot water however, the viability of such a system would be marginal at present.

From April next year, however, the Government is introducing an incentive for the use of heat from renewable sources – the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI). This will pay consumers over a 15 year period for the heat that they produce. This could make viable the provision of a centralised heat network for the camp, however, the viability would be more certain if major heat users for example growers of crops that require constant high heat, were attracted to Cultybraggan. Discussions are taking place with Perth & Kinross Council and Scottish Enterprise as to possible research into this sector of the market.

SAC also investigated the potential for a micro-hydro scheme to serve the hillground self-catering chalet proposal (the eco-pods). This appears doubtful given that the water source passes first through an adjacent landowners property, who has his own plans for a small hydro scheme. Any proposal would therefore have to be a joint venture.

RD Energy has been commissioned to carry out a village-wide Hydro Study of Comrie and the surrounding area. From April this year the Government has been running an incentive scheme to encourage the generation of electricity from renewable resources. The Feed in Tariff (FIT) is paid for electricity consumed and surplus exported to the grid.

The village-wide study had identified a preliminary list of several locations that could be worth further investigation. Whether these are progressed beyond this stage depends on the landowners involved.

Anaerobic Digestion is the final feasibility study being commissioned under the renewable energy theme. A brief is being developed for a study of the potential for a facility to be located at Cultybraggan. This very much depends on the feedstock (food waste) that can be sourced to supply the scale of facility required, and whether there is a market for the by-products, for example, heat, fertiliser, bio-gas, bio-fuels. Ideally any facility deemed viable would produce electricity.

There will be specific Community Information event on June 21st where the two reports (Biomass and Hydro) will be discussed in greater depth.

Dr Irvine referred to the lade on the hillground and mentioned that the Trust, as owners, had a legal obligation to ensure that it was clear of silt. Cathy said that this would be raised at the next Cultybraggan Working Group meeting.

There was also a question regarding where the wood would come from. Will explained that it would come from local suppliers and that it would be wood chip. It was also mentioned that it seemed questionable that to make the project viable the Trust would have to encourage high heat users to the site. However, it was pointed out that these users would probably otherwise be using heat from non-renewable sources elsewhere.

Cultybraggan Working Group:

Tenancies – steady progress is being made in letting the Phase 1 units. Four of the nine huts are now occupied (five businesses in total). In addition to this, Wilde Thyme moved in at the beginning of March, and unit 15 is being converted for a mushroom business.

Bunker – after a lengthy period of consideration, Scottish Enterprise (SE) turned down the request for financial assistance with a feasibility study into the re-use of the Bunker for a data centre. SE has had a number of such requests and wishes to develop their overall policy on support for data centres before supporting this sector. Perth & Kinross Council Economic Development department are to be approached for assistance.

Future Land Uses – the working group has been developing the vision for the camp and has held meetings with funders and strategic partners to test the support for these future land uses and for the strategy to deliver them. This evolving strategy will be presented in an exhibition at the Culty Quake open day on May 29th, and will be discussed at the Community Open Meeting on June 7th.

Eco-Pods – progress is being made with the proposal to develop on the hill ground, south of the camp, self-catering chalets. This proposal has been developed further after broad support at the community meeting last year. This development is to be highly sustainable, targeted at the growing market for Green Tourism. After a competitive tender, James Denholm Partnership has been appointed to work up the concept for consultation. The submissions received through the tender are displayed at the meeting tonight. The James Denholm plans will be discussed at a Community Information Event on Monday 17th May at 19.30 in the White Church. It is intended that a planning application will be submitted in June but the development would not start until full business/feasibility studies have been completed and funding sought.

There were a couple of comments from the floor regarding the eco-pods – mainly that this development was not in the local development plan – Chris explained that as these were not permanent residences they were outwith the plan; and that the development did not in any way consider the farming community and the proposed development was not compatible with livestock farming. Chris

explained that the proposal had the support in principle from P&KC. Dr Irvine also explained that he was fed up with the Trust using the name Cultybraggan and that it was not appropriate to call the camp by that name.

Comrie Energy Competition:

James explained the Energy Competition was now over and that 50% of those households taking part reduced their electricity consumption by 40% or more. The reductions in households' consumption could also partially be explained by the weather getting warmer. The overall winner of the competition was George Carson. The full results will be published and the participating households will receive their individual reports detailing their consumption reduction. There is the possibility that the Trust will run this project again as the Competition was only a pilot scheme.

AOB:

Muthill Low Carbon Community Project has got four to six vacancies for Energy Awareness Advisors. The closing date is Friday 7th May.

Re-appraisal of Comrie Conservation Area – three meetings will take place in the WRI Hall on May 12th, 13th and 14th.

Perth and Kinross Development Plan – David Adams, a concerned resident, brought to the attention of the those present the proposed plans for up to 200 houses to the south of the village. Residents can access the proposals by googling local plan Comrie. The proposal also indicates a mix of uses from community to commercial. David highlighted a potential conflict with the developments at Cultybraggan. Cathy thanked David for his update and explained that this was a Community Council issue but the Trust would flag this up through the e-bulletin.

Culty Quake – flyers on each table – tickets to remain £30.00 for all those residents with a PH6 postcode. Dr Irvine commented that in terms of noise and the impact on cattle, those attending / organising should remember where they are.

Cinema Club – new season's films are being decided. Felicity thanked everyone for their suggestions which included a silent movie night and a Blues Brothers evening!

Advertising Trailer – Cathy mentioned that the Trust now has an advertising trailer which can be towed by any bike – if any organisation in the village wishes to borrow the trailer to advertise any events please contact the CDT office.

Cathy thanked everyone for their attendance.

The next Community Open Meeting will take place on Monday 7th June 2010 in the WRI Hall.