

# Holmehill Ltd

Minutes of the Open Meeting of the Board

In Cathedral Halls, Dunblane

Tuesday 6 May 2014 at 7.30 pm

1. **Attendance:** The meeting was attended by David Prescott [in the Chair], Steve Mason, Dave Topliff, Claire Watt, Frances Rankin, Phill Tebbutt, Lorraine Stassin, Mark Ruskell, Caroline Crawford, Alex Nye, Jamie Wishart, Pat Kissock, Alan Booth, Libby Hughes.

**Apologies for absence:** Chris Toop, Alastair McCulloch, Alison Brown, Maureen Mitchell, Andy Mitchell, Diana Davies, Christine Howe, Steve Moizer, Jean Marie Stassin, Mike Christmas, Rosemary Bland, Richard Bland, Chris Spray, Paddy Holmes, Peter Holmes. It was good to have new faces and fresh ideas, all contributions were appreciated and the meeting benefitted as a result.

2. **Minutes of meeting** 12 March 2014 were accepted

3. **Unauthorised tree felling and re-instatement work.** There was lengthy discussion about this, and frustration expressed about continuing destruction, including today, of tree branches and wildlife habitat, no evidence of replacement planting, and access blocked by fencing, even when work is not being undertaken. The meeting considered that Mr Stirling has had adequate time and opportunity to plant bare-root trees. Councillor Mark Ruskell has been active in pursuing Council Officers. Ingrid Withington, Tree Officer, has informed the Holmehill Group, and Peter Morgan, Principal Planning Officer, has informed Mark Ruskell that 'we have sent a letter by e-mail today to Ian Stirling at Wardlaw Developments Ltd, advising that we are seeking authorisation to serve a Tree Replacement Notice within the next 14 days'.

It was agreed that we should get documentary evidence [notebooks and photos] of

- Access blocked by closed fencing when there is no woodland management work, contrary to Access Legislation (and send to Richard Barron – Access Officer)
- Nests [destruction of habitat is continuing in a clockwise manner round the hill], disruption should be reported to PC O'May.
- Tree work, especially the yews, where the land owner is required to obtain consent for tree work when the diameter of the tree exceeds 75 millimetres at 1.5 metres high, and there is infringement of the TPO [before and after photos]

Mark Ruskell agreed

- to ask Council Officers if he/we can see Mr Stirling's re-submitted management plan for Holmehill
- to enquire about the time-scale over possible prosecution
- to enquire about pursuing prosecution through the Procurator Fiscal

David Prescott asked Mark to convey to Council Officers the frustration of the Holmehill Group about continuing adverse tree work, the lack of re-planting and the curtailing of public access.

4. **Finances and 'SCIO's.** The Accounts have been prepared. It had been decided, having taken advice, that now was not the time to change the status of Holmehill to a SCIO
5. **Feedback from meetings with Community Woodlands Association and Community Land Association Scotland.** Members had 2 useful meetings about possible options of how to proceed to meet our eventual aims. CLAS suggested that an error may have been made in 2005, and the Holmehill Group may have not been given the correct advice about re-registering a 'Right to Buy'. We await advice from CLAS. Mark Ruskell advised that he could then ask the Scottish Government if an error had been made.
6. **Medium and Long-term objectives.** Steve Mason suggested a 'Buyout sub-group'. SM, CC, CW, DP volunteered. Others are welcome.
7. **The Fling Saturday 24 May.** We will be there. All needed to erect /dismantle marquee and 'man' it. LH will co-ordinate nearer the day.
8. **Website sub-group.** Richard Bland will convene it soon.
9. **Fundraising and events**  
**Teddy Bear's Picnic on Holmehill,** Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> May, 2 – 4 pm. CC will do flyers to give out at 'The Fling', schools, nurseries. LH contact Woodcraft Folk.  
**Hallowe'en event** Sunday 26 October. LH to book Braeport. Need an organising group - CC. Format as in 2013.
10. **Core path surveys.** Ongoing. Consensus was that there needs to be a buggy-wide track cleared after vehicles stop using track.
11. **Environmental surveys,** always interesting, and good documentation of birds and wildlife on Holmehill. . There was a general view that the level of bird song is greatly diminished compared with previous years
12. **AOCB**
  - CWA AGM Dunbar 23/24 August. CC interested
  - Transition Stirling Big Woodland Event 17 May – would like volunteers
  - Discussion about possible potential economic opportunities for Holmehill that may be acceptable to Holmehill Community Buyout Group and Allanwater developments/Wardlaw gardens.
13. **Date of next meeting**

Tuesday 24 June, 7.30 pm in the Cathedral Halls