

DRAFT

## MARYCULTER WOODLANDS TRUST

Minutes of Annual General Meeting at Maryculter Church Hall at 19.30 on Tuesday 30 September 2014

### 1. Welcome

Ed Thorogood (Chair) opened the meeting at 19.35, welcomed those attending and introduced the other Directors – David Brainwood, Inga Milne and Trevor Hastings.

### 2. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as a true record – proposed by David Brainwood, seconded Inga Milne.

Matters arising

- a. Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) has changed the name of the wood to “Kirkton of Maryculter Wood”.
- b. FCS has valued the 167 acre wood at £240000 and this valuation has taken into account the need to re-plant parts of the wood.

### 3. Report of activities of MWT

The Chair gave an account of activities since the last AGM. At the time, MWT was engaged in the process to acquire the wood under the National Forest Land Scheme. Under this scheme, MWT has been offered first refusal to purchase the wood. If MWT does not purchase the wood it will go on the open market. MWT submitted an application and business plan to acquire the wood for the community, and FCS approved these in September 2013. The wood was valued in November 2013 and this is non-negotiable. MWT has been registered as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO), a charity with formal constitution and accounts reporting to the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR). The Chair provided an overview of the constitution, including the purposes of the charity and the role of Directors, and explained that those attending this AGM would be invited to become members. The Chair informed the meeting that most funders require not only SCIO status but also accounts, and the first set of accounts is now ready. With these in place MWT is now ready to start applications for funding. The Chair informed the meeting that the Scottish Land Fund **has encouraged an application from MWT but would be unlikely to agree to anything more than matched funding**. Since the last meeting there has been a considerable amount of fund-raising through wine tastings, a quiz night and participation in the NKRCC plant sale following which NKRCC kindly provided

the proceeds to MWT. On Saturday evening there will be a beer festival. FCS has given MWT 18 months to raise capital to purchase the wood i.e. May 2015. However, an organisation generally has to exist for at least 12 months before it is in a position to raise capital funding.

#### 4. Accounts

The Chair reported that the accounts from 2013 to now have been signed off.

With regard to income, MWT has received £4294 including a donation from NKRCC and loans from Directors. Fund-raising raised an additional £2192 bringing total income to £6486.

Total expenditure for the period was £4860 including

- Postal ballot £725
- Website £675
- Legal costs associated with registration with OSCR £2700
- Other expenses £760

Angela McKinnon audited the accounts as a donation to MWT.

In response to a question from the floor, the Chair informed the meeting that MWT is registering for Gift Aid, and relevant forms have been prepared with assistance of lawyers. In response to a further question from the floor, the Chair informed the meeting that the only large element of expenditure anticipated in the forthcoming year is the cost of conveyancing, and the Directors have adequate running costs for the time being.

#### 5. Question and answer session on the MWT constitution

The Chair showed a slide summarising the purposes of MWT and explained them to the meeting. In response to a question from the floor, the Chair informed the meeting that members of MWT who reside outwith the community will be entitled to be on the mailing list, attend the AGM and have a voice. In response to a further question from the floor, the Chair informed the meeting that a full member who leaves the area could become a supporting member. In response to a further question from the floor, the Chair informed the meeting that any path from Storybook Glen to the wood should be small and should not involve tree clearance; there would need to be a reasonable path but previous paths in the wood have not involved tree felling.

#### 6. Membership of MWT

Membership application forms were circulated to give those present the opportunity to apply for membership of MWT. **23 people at the meeting completed membership forms for the MWT.**

## 7. Election of Directors

The Chair informed the meeting that one of the Directors – Trevor Hastings – was standing down and three of the Directors – Ed Thorogood, Inga Milne and David Brainwood - were willing to stand for election. The Chair invited nominations for Director from the floor. There were no nominations. The Chair asked the meeting if members were content for the three existing Directors to remain in post. There was general assent to this proposal and there being no dissenters Ed Thorogood, Inga Milne and David Brainwood were duly elected as Directors.

Hanneke Klep then offered her services as a Director. The members unanimously accepted this offer and Hanneke Klep was duly elected a Director.

## 8. Any other business

- a. In response to a question from the floor regarding funding the management of the wood post purchase, the Chair informed the meeting that grants were available for planting trees. In addition, entities such as Meikle Carewe wind farm were likely to provide funding for small projects. It is also anticipated that a small amount of funds would be generated from sales of **timber/woodchip**.
- b. Inga Milne drew attention to the forthcoming Maryculterfest and on behalf of MWT expressed thanks to Esslemont Marquees for their generous donation of a marquee for the event.
- c. Dawn Ewan, Forest School Leader, gave a short presentation to the meeting on her proposal for a Forest Kindergarten in Kirkton of Maryculter Wood. FCS has been very supportive and she has also had constructive discussions with the Directors of MWT.
- d. Steve Willis, project officer with Saving Scotland's Red Squirrel (SSRS), informed the meeting that SSRS is keen to link with MWT in efforts to restore native red squirrel populations. The Chair welcomed this approach and commented on a broader need for flora and fauna surveys in the wood.

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 20.45.