

Arboricultural Association - Scottish Branch

Minutes of the Scottish Branch Committee meeting held at The Hawes Inn, Queensferry on 27th June 2017

Present: Donald Rodger (DR), Ken Harvey (KH), Fiona Melville (FM), Alan McDowall (AM), Robert Paterson (RP), Jeremy Davies (JD) and Stuart Leith (SL).

1. Apologies for absence:

Apologies received from Struan Dalglish (SD), Will Hinchliffe (WH), and Mike Charkow (MC).

2. Minutes from the last committee meeting.

Minutes of the committee meeting of 25th April were approved, and are up on the Scottish Branch page of the AA website.

3. Officers' reports.

3.1 Chair.

DR didn't have anything in particular to say, but said there were several points he would raise relating to certain agenda items during the meeting.

3.2 Secretary.

KH had nothing to mention.

3.3 Treasurer.

RP said the Branch's bank balance stood at £1629.40 at the last meeting, but following the Branch's decision to Opt In, £1379.40 was transferred to HQ's account, leaving a Branch balance of £250 (as agreed with Stewart Wardrop) to show as Scottish Branch funds.

RP doesn't now need to prepare quarterly returns, just an annual statement.

RP will contact the new financial controller at HQ once they are appointed.

4. David Evans and Frank Rinn - V.A.L.I.D. Seminar 10th July.

KH reported that the event now has sufficient numbers booked to attend and will be going ahead. KH and FM will be attending on behalf of the Branch to assist with organisation and housekeeping.

5. "Hazardous Trees - A Practitioner's Guide" workshop with Chris Simpson on 26th & 27th September - venue, arrangements and progress updates (FM).

FM reported that the venue (Stirling University) has been booked by HQ and the deposit paid. A marketing brief has been sent out. There have been some issues with the information about the event on the first postings about the event on the AA website, but these are partly due to the way the booking system is set up. As a result, it is difficult for potential attendees to book for both days, and the cost displayed is for only one day's attendance. As the Branch needs to pay venue and catering costs for two days regardless of numbers attending, FM asked whether it would be better to withdraw the option of only attending one day, and simply make it a two-day event ? After

discussion, all present agreed it should be sold solely as a two-day course, which would be more in line with Chris Simpson's idea of what the course is about and how it should run. (The original thinking behind making either one or two days attendance optional was to give potential attendees who couldn't manage both days an option of only attending one day - see previous meeting minutes). The course will be marketed as being sponsored by Informed Tree Services Ltd. RP noted that HQ will do the feedback online.

DR thanked FM for all her efforts in organising the event.

Action: FM to fill in the event planner spreadsheet, check website details and CPD units are correct and circulate accordingly.

6. Climbing and Rigging Workshop - venue, arrangements and progress updates (AM).

AM reported on progress to date. The venue is to be Palacerigg Country Park in Cumbernauld, and the date is to be Saturday 11th November. The venue has been made available at a charity rate of £62. AM believes there are many good trees there which are ideal for the workshop. He has a catering option of £268.50 including VAT, which gives a total cost of £330.50. The maximum number of attendees would be 20, as it would be impractical to have any more. The cost to attendees was discussed, and all agreed that a fee of £50 per head was sufficient to cover costs and still make it attractive to those interested. It was noted that HQ can insure three climbing events a year, so if there are already three arranged nationally, we may have to cover the extra £200 surcharge to cover this - the proposed costs would allow for this to be covered and still leave a small surplus in income. As an Opted-In Branch, HQ will handle the booking arrangements.

DR thanked AM for his efforts in organising the event.

Action: AM to put together a flyer for distribution, and to continue with firming up arrangements and booking.

7. First Aid and Aerial Rescue Course. (carried over from last Committee Meeting) (JD).

JD has spoken to Chris Cowall about the possibility of organising the event. He said that aerial rescue courses very rarely happen, so it would be worthwhile pursuing. Following discussion, it was agreed that we should try to get this organised, but it would be better to hold it off until early next year as the Branch already has a good number of events scheduled for this year.

Action: JD to progress matters with Chris Cowall.

8. Excursion to Crathes Castle & Garden on 28th October (SD).

SD was not present, but the outing is all arranged and a flyer has been prepared ready for distribution to the Branch members.

Action: DR to see if WH can source a suitable tree to plant at the outing. KH to circulate flyer in due course.

9. Branch attendance at Royal Highland Show 2018.

KH said that Forestry Commission Scotland had a large tent at the Show this year with ICF, RSFS, Scottish Woodlands, CSGN and Confor all having representation there under FC 'umbrella'. This had been organised by James McDougall, FC's Events Manager. It was discussed and all agreed it would be good that if the same arrangement happens next year, for the AA to be represented there too. Several committee members expressed willingness to attend to represent the Branch if it could be done on a 'shift' basis without having to attend all four days.

Action: KH to investigate the possibility for 2018.

10. ARB Magazine articles.

MC (editor of contributions) was not present, but DR reported that two articles had been submitted for publication.

11. Any other competent business.

FM said that she had been contacted by Phil Tomlinson from Infragreen, who is keen to speak at the 2017 AGM. Topic to be green roofs, etc., and he would bring his Dutch colleague. The subject of a venue for the AGM was then discussed, and SL said he had contacts at Dumfries House, which would be a good place geographically with relatively easy access for members, bearing in mind the frequently poor weather at that time of year. All agreed this would be a good venue.

Action: SL to explore possibility of the Branch holding the AGM at Dumfries House.

12. Date & venue of next meeting.

21st November at The Hawes Inn.