

NORTH EAST MOUNTAIN TRUST
SCIO Scottish Charity no. SC 008783

Approved Minutes of Council Meeting held 7.30 pm Tuesday 27 August 2019
at the Sportsman's Club, 11 Queens Road, Aberdeen

Present: George Allan*, Alex Brown** (AMC), Brian Cornock (Bailies of Bennachie), Catherine Lacy-Roberts** (Secretary & Culter HWC), Jean Robinson*, Alison Mitchell** (Treasurer and Ramblers Scotland), Donald Thomas*, Ken Thomson* (Minutes Secretary), Dave Windle* (in the chair)

* Charity Trustee as Individual Member; ** Charity Trustee as Club Rep

1. **Apologies:** Alistair Beeley (Stonehaven MHW), Debbie Fielding (Cairngorm Club), Carlos Oldani (Stockets HWC), Roger Owen (Stonehaven M&HC), Richard Spencer (MBA)
2. **Declaration of conflicts of interest:** none.
3. **Minutes of Council Meeting 4 June 2019:** with three minor corrections, *approved*.
4. **Matters Arising from above Minutes:** see below.
5. **Dates of Next Meetings:** These were *agreed* as 8/10, 26/11 and 28/1/2020
6. **NEMT Management**
 - 6.1. *Membership and Subscriptions:* Catherine reported 2 outstanding individual memberships, but that nearly all clubs had now paid their subscriptions. George reported that Maureen was happy that Catherine's address be on the leaflet as Membership Secretary.
 - 6.2. *Finance:* Alison reported that the LINK subscription of £150 had been paid, and that the Trust's bank account stood at £11632.
 - 6.3. *Website:* Donald reported that this had been updated with the 2019/20 lecture series.
 - 6.4. *Mountain Views:* It was reported that the first full draft was now with Dave, who would return it to Catherine for her to send to the printers once she returned home for 16-18 Sept. Via George, Sandy would prepare the A5 leaflets with photos etc., for inclusion with the posted MVs at end-Sept. In mid-Sept., Catherine would email all members the lecture series leaflet, with the Adam Watson event included.
 - 6.5. *Lectures:* Alex reported that all 6 speakers had been agreed for the standard series, though the March 2020 topic/title had still to be finalised. All were Wednesdays except 28 November. For the first lecture on 9 October, Alex and Dave would host, with meal, screen, projector, etc., and Jean agreed to take the door money, with cash (net of Sportsman's Club room payment) delivered directly to Alison.
 - 6.6. *MV and Leaflet Distribution:* Catherine was delivering to country locations, Jean to city ones. George would offer MV to the shops he visited re leaflets. Alison reported that she had arranged MV to be available at the NTS Crathes Castle shop.
 - 6.7. *ACVO Membership:* It was *agreed* to renew this £25 subscription, since NEMT lectures were included in the ACVO e-newsletter.
7. **Adam Watson Event:** Alex tabled a draft A4 poster, on which various comments and suggestions were made, including its title (it was agreed to stick with "Commemorative Lecture"), the introducer (Dave to ask Roger), logo, map, timing (7:30 start preferred), booking (EventBrite rejected), tea/coffee (wanted beforehand if

available). Alex to finalise once Hutton Institute agreement secured, and Will Boyd-Wallis title known.

8. Consultations:

- 8.1. *Forestry & Land Scotland (FLS) Draft Corporate Plan*: Ken reported that he had not managed to draft and submit a NEMT response.
- 8.2. *Space Port at Talmine*: consultation response to be left to individuals.
- 8.3. *Alison Johnstone MSP Private Member's Bill on Protection of Mammals*: Dave reported that this would cover brown and mountain hares, as well as better protection for foxes. He would write on behalf of NEMT in support, and a summary would appear on the website and in the next issue of *MV*.

9. Threats to Wild Land

- 9.1. *Cairngorm Mountain*: George reported on meetings on 19 August (small NEMT group) and on 20 August (he and Dave, plus reps from B&SCG, Cairngorm Campaign, Mountaineering Scotland, and new group Campaign for Cairngorm). He had also spoken to Bob Kinnaird (ex-CEO ski area, ex-Principal, Glenmore Lodge, now retired) re his earlier idea of an Eden-type Centre for Mountain Environment (CME) for which HIE had “lost” the only report: George had submitted a FOI request for it. On behalf of the ENGO group, George and Dave would develop a Vision for Cairngorm, comprising (i) skiing focussed on Coire Cas with snow-making facilities but not funicular and Ptarmigan, (ii) a base station CME, and (iii) foot access to the mountain environment (but not zipwires etc.). The Vision would be placed in the public domain and used for campaigning, e.g. against the government putting more money into the funicular even though it might be cheaper to repair than to remove.

George reported (at a later stage in the meeting) that a planning application had been submitted to “improve” ground on the ski area west of the Day Lodge, to help with snow holding. He had objected, asking for more information on how this was to be done, e.g. machine access, an ecological clerk of works, ongoing inspection, etc. If approved and acted on this autumn, damage was highly likely.

- 9.2. *Hill & Hydro Tracks*: George reported as follows:

- (i) *Planning Bill*: the next opportunity would be the review of permitted devt. rights in 2020, but this is likely to extend not restrict exemptions. LINK had met with Andy Wightman and a civil servant: It had been agreed to continue the public campaign but the main need was to influence ministers by playing down the perceived economic threat.
- (ii) *Carn Elrig* (Glen Quoich): Gavin Miles of CNPA had reported that this was an old track damaged by Storm Frank: NTS Mar Lodge Estate were likely to remove boulders and then submit an application to “upgrade” the track.
- (iii) *Derry Lodge Tracks*: Dave reported on the July meeting by himself, Ken and Donald re heavy vehicle tracks near footpaths close the Lodge and elsewhere: it had been explained that NTS felt that this was the only way to remove the carcasses of 600-900 deer shot each year to enable continued tree regeneration. Similar stories had come from other ENGO estates (excluding RSPB), with whom the CNPA Upland Advisory Group had corresponded. Leaving carcasses on the hill was felt to be bad for public relations. Other possibilities discussed included lighter vehicles, waiting until later in the year (perhaps with feed to attract deer for easier shooting), sterilisation, and

accepting slower regeneration after some years. ATV damage was on the agenda of the CNPA Working Group.

- (iv) *Glen Clova/Proven ridge*: investigation still in progress.
- (v) *Glen Banchor* (Monadhliath): application for two track sections, one existing and retrospective), the other new. George had objected, asking for separate applications. The full planning committee had imposed conditions including a middle strip along the whole track, and a borrow pit restoration plan.
- (vi) *Glen Shiro*: there had been an application for a forestry track 4-5m wide over open ground to remove timber from near Corrieyarick. George had objected, asking for more information, not about the actual track itself but about its proposed structure, with no decision as yet.
- (vii) *Monadhliath*: An application had been made to Highland Region (but not notified to Park) for two short sections of track to help with ATV access, for “agricultural” purposes but obviously with sporting use in mind. He had sent in a holding objection, with NEMT to object in detail; but he hoped that the applicant would withdraw, pending a full application.

9.3. *Wind Farms*: Nothing reported.

10. AOCB:

- 10.1. At the start of the meeting, it was agreed that responding to the proposed tourist tax in the Highlands should be left to individuals.
- 10.2. Jean enquired about circular pits NE of Carn Mor above Glen Livet: she was advised that these were almost certainly to provide mounds for medicated grit to be distributed to grouse.
- 10.3. Alison enquired when NEMT had been founded (around 1980), in view of a possible commemorative issue of *Mountain Views*, recruitment effort, etc. It was *agreed* to consider this at the next meeting.

Ken Thomson, 10 October 2019