



Minutes
of the
Annual General Meeting
held on Wednesday, 30th June 2010 at 2.00 pm
at Breakish Hall,
Isle of Skye

- Present:** Chairman - James Merryweather (Independent), Secretary - David Ashford (Independent), Treasurer - Sarah Stephenson (Independent), Rule Anderson (NTS), Hazel Bews (Rowan Tree Consulting), Stephen Bungard (BSBI Recorder), Roger Cottis (Independent), William Greig (NTS), Barbara Macritchie (NTS), Donald MacDonald (SCF), Fergus Mosey (NTS), John Phillips (The Highland Council), Sarah Prall (SNH), Jonathan Willet (The Highland Council).
1. **Apologies for absence:** Rob Forrest (Independent), Chris Marsh (Forestry Commission Scotland), Alasdair Munro (Kyleakin Environment Group) and Cllr Audrey Sinclair (The Highland Council).
2. **Minutes of the last meeting held on 13th May 2009** Adopted with Stephen Bungard proposing and Roger Cottis a seconder.
There were no matters arising therefrom.
3. **Chairman's Report.**
- a) There was a lively General Meeting on 17th February 2010 at which two representatives from the Scottish Crofting Federation were present. They were Donald MacDonald and Sandra Holmes. This, followed by a one-to-one meeting with Sandra at Auchtertyre and added to our occasional association with the Scottish Agricultural College and the crofting community around Borge, mark a potentially rewarding reconnection with the crofting community.
 - b) In addition to several Management Committee meetings throughout the year we have embarked upon a fruitful collaboration with Rowan Tree Consulting (RTC) under the guidance of The Highland Council's biodiversity officers. RTC are due to give priority to S&LEF and three other Highland biodiversity groups in the search for funding to manage projects in respect of which Janet Ullman has already produced a general funding strategy. That and her draft outreach strategy document were submitted to RTC following ratification of them

by the Management Committee.

- c) The outreach project is already under way with posters created and postcards being distributed throughout the region. These were displayed and discussed. Assistance with the task of wider distribution would be welcome, so please would members collect postcards before they leave.
- d) The Lever & Mulch remedy for dealing with *Rhododendron ponticum* is now in action locally thanks to work being done by Barbara Macritchie and her two assistants, William Greig and Fergus Mosey, on the NTS estate at Balmacara. This bodes well for training others and thus increasing areas of operation to an impressive extent.
- e) Attendance at a recent Highland Biodiversity Partnership (HBP) meeting involved debate about the Wildlife & Natural Environment Bill, the Marine (Scotland) Act and muirburn issues. They are to be raised again at the next HBP meeting. Roger Cottis reported that he had tabled questions concerning muirburn which were raised at the Scottish Government's consultation on the Bill in Dundee.

Overall it is clear that with projects, activities and funding S&LEF is moving forward with positive potential for which all concerned should be pleased but not complacent particularly regarding the need for an increase in S&LEF membership.

- 4. **Secretary's Report.** David Ashford invited suggestions for any improvements in his secretarial activities which he keeps as computerised as possible.
- 5. **Treasurer's Report.** Sarah Stephenson's accounts had been circulated to Members with the Agenda for the meeting. She explained that the main task to accomplish in recent months was dealing with the requirements of the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator. Thanks to the kind assistance of Mike Taylor, an independent examiner, this undertaking was completed successfully.
- 6. **Election of Management Committee.** Since there were no volunteers accepting an invitation to join the Management Committee, it was agreed unanimously that the current Members of it - James Merryweather, David Ashford, Sarah Stephenson, Roger Cottis, Barbara Macritchie, Annabel Pendlebury and Janet Ullman - should continue.
At the request of Stephen Bungard the Constitution was checked by David Ashford who read the relevant clause confirming the eligibility of the current Members to stand again.
This decision was proposed by Donald MacDonald and seconded by Jonathan Willet.
- 7. **AOCB.** There was none.
- 8. **DONM.** To be arranged via www.doodle.com.

The meeting closed at 2.35 pm