



## **Minutes of Meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2019 in Cammo Lodge at 19.30**

**Present:** Nick Benge (Chairperson), Simon Gillam (Secretary), Lynn Whitehead (Treasurer), Shay Dean (Membership Secretary), Harry Taylor, Sheena McRobie, Esther Davidson, RG (Bert) Scott, Peter Scott, Marian Allen, Roger Buchanan, Karen Edwards, Grahame Whitehead. Liz & Euan Drysdale, Dorothy Lyle.

**Apologies:** Michael Roe, David Kyles (Forestry & Natural Heritage Service), Cllr Graham Hutchison, Callum Towns, Katherine Thomson, Carol Turnbull, Gill Harris.

Refreshments of mulled wine and mince pies were provided. Minutes of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> September were approved.

### **1. Membership update (Shay Dean)**

Shay reported that we now have 193 members, of whom 28 have still not renewed after recent reminders. In the current membership year we have 23 new members.

### **2. Treasurer's update (Lynn Whitehead)**

Lynn reported that after receiving a £500 donation we now have £795 for interpretation panels, and general funds of £2615. We have applied for around £500 in gift aid and expect to receive it soon. The overall financial situation is satisfactory.

### **3. Environmental update (Nick Benge)**

Nick reported that: We are continuing to receive deadwood from Special Branch tree surgeons, to enhance biodiversity, and more will be spread by volunteers in Jan/Feb. About 900 wildflower plugs were planted by volunteers in North Field in November. The first hive of native black bees is small but thriving, but the second hive has been empty since the colony was wiped out by wasps. Nick has seeded beside the new paths with tansy and Mavisbank wildflower mix. Grass cutting has again caused damage, killing five trees; David Kyles is looking into getting a machine to cut and lift grass. Buzzards nested, with two young; also noted a heron feeding on voles, and owls. Two more bird boxes have been put up, with more to come. A new L-shaped hedgerow is proposed for South Field. Nick gave a talk to Friends of Corstorphine Hill. A new poster has been produced to urge dog walkers to keep dogs under better control; to be displayed in Cammo with copies on Facebook and website.

### **4. Cammo Regeneration (Nick Benge and Simon Gillam)**

- Simon reported that the phase one work was taking longer than expected. The work on paths is complete, with a new path beside the canal and improvements to the paths along the western boundary, from North gate to Cammo House, in Low Meadow connecting Pinetum with west boundary path and in front of the stables. The new car park near North gate is complete, except for a height restriction barrier, gate into North field, hedge to surround the car park and possible indication of parking spaces. There is a new wooden fence beyond north gate that should inhibit fly tipping, but other boundary work (fences and walls has still to be done).
- David Kyles had requested views on priorities for phase two. The Committee had responded that Friends of Cammo would be opposed to suggested redevelopment of the stables, and would prefer any building of additional facilities to be located at the rear of the Lodge. We supported the suggestion at

Cammo Estate Advisory Committee that, in view of the failure of the Council's bid for over £1 million from the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund, a smaller project should be done in the Walled Garden, protecting the walls that are sound and fencing off those that are badly damaged or dangerous, and in part of the area having some more formal planting and a quiet seating area. These projects would be enough, along with the proposed wetland and proposals from the interpretation group. The meeting agreed with these priorities.

### **5. Interpretation and Orientation (Simon Gillam)**

There has been little progress in recent months on phase one. Interpretation panels for Hedgerows and for the Story of Cammo House have been designed and are being taken forward by Susan Dickson, the first with the Council's design team and the second now with an external designer. The 6 fingerposts have been procured and are awaiting installation, with waymarking for 3 self-guided walks to follow. Following the wider workshop held on 2 September, the working group recommended that in phase two there should be no more panels, and that interpretation should be enhanced by three carved benches (at Canal, Stables and Walled Garden) and by outlining on the ground the maximum extent of Cammo House (as proposed by the archaeology group) and that there should be natural play areas using logs and cut sections. The meeting agreed with these priorities.

### **6. Forestry & Natural Heritage Service report (David Kyles)**

David had provided a copy of his report to the Cammo Estate Advisory Committee meeting. Most matters are covered elsewhere on our agenda. The forest kindergarten base near the new north car park has not yet been installed, so they continue to access by East gate and be based in a woodland clearing behind Cammo House. Simon had responded to another Friends group to say that we view this kindergarten activity favourably.

### **7. Archaeology report**

Esther reported on the activities of Edinburgh Archaeological Field Society (EAFS) at Cammo. They have continued weekly digs at the ruin behind the stables (offices / Cammo Cottage), with reports and pictures posted on our Facebook page. EAFS would like assistance from the Council in removing the rubble and soil from the site; it was suggested that some could be used for the requested ramp through the hedgerow between Home field and North field. EAFS would also welcome financial assistance. EAFS expect soon to start clearing the other ruin behind the stables. EAFS offer to give a talk at a Friends of Cammo meeting.

### **8. Proposed dates of meetings in 2020**

It was agreed to revert to meeting on Wednesdays: all at 7.30pm in Cammo Lodge. This will change the date of the AGM to 4th March; with other meetings on 3rd June, 2nd September and 2nd December.

### **9. Any Other Business**

- It will be desirable to remove leaf litter from surfaced paths; Nick said that David Kyles is getting a machine to do this. Concern also noted about muddy areas at field entrances.
- It was agreed that Friends of Cammo should write in support of action to replace the Salvesen steps on the River Almond Walkway.
- Council plans for Cammo Walk are still unclear; the Community Council have submitted a formal community engagement request for information.
- Development of the Cammo Fields housing site is expected to start soon.
- Lynn and Grahame were thanked for providing the mulled wine and mince pies.

**Simon Gillam**  
**Secretary**  
**Friends of Cammo**