



Minutes of Friends of Cammo General Meeting held at Cammo Lodge on 8th June 2022 at 7.30pm

The meeting was relocated from behind Cammo House to Cammo Lodge because of rain. The date had previously been changed from 1st June to 8th June.

Present: Nick Benge (Chairperson), Simon Gillam (Secretary), Sheena McRobie,, Claire Wallace, Bruce Angus, Esther Davidson, Bert Scott, Harry Taylor, Judy Arrowsmith, Anne Currie, Alistair Emery.

Apologies: Karen Edwards (Membership Secretary), Lynn Whitehead (Treasurer), Michael Roe, Gill Harris, David Kyles, Christine McPherson, Rachel Stewart, Carol Turnbull, Katherine Thomson.

1. **Membership Update:** Simon reported for Karen that there are now 233 members of whom 86 had still to pay (as at 3 May). Gate days had helped recruit more members.
2. **Treasurer's Update:** Simon reported for Lynn that we currently have £6,457 in the bank of which £941 Restricted Funds (£215 for information panels, £100 for the wetland project and £626 received this year from the winding up of Cammo Residents Association for seating). The main items of expenditure so far this year have been £336 on seeds and trees, £403 on bird boxes and £240 on 20 hi-vis jackets for Friends of Cammo work parties (one worn by Simon to the meeting). Annual subscriptions and donations have continued at a satisfactory rate. Lynn will be standing down as Treasurer after this financial year; Bruce has expressed an interest in taking on the post and has been co-opted as an additional committee member.
3. **Wet Meadow:** Nick reported that the Wetland area and stream had been dug by McLaren Plant, and it is now holding water well after action to block field drains. Planting had been carried out by Watergems, and Nick has been adding some additional plants. Wildlife includes frogs, dragonflies and damselflies; no newts had been seen. We are still waiting to hear when the boardwalk will be built by McLaren Plant.
4. **Environmental Update:** Nick reported that the fields have lots of yellow rattle and buttercups and some common spotted orchids. 23 blue tit boxes had been put up and all are being used. Around 100 hedgerow trees from this year's planting had died and been replaced, mostly with hawthorn and goat willow. There could be a problem from the excessive amounts of blackthorn planted running into the fields. The canal has many tadpoles (frog and toad). Woodchip continues to be spread, recently in the Forest Kindergarten areas, and deadwood moved. The bees are doing well, but it has become necessary to remove an aggressive queen. The native fruit orchard in the walled garden had been pruned and seems to be doing well, with many of the apple trees having lots of fruit, and also some fruit on pear/plum trees. There are buzzards and sparrowhawks in the park, but we don't know if any are nesting; also kestrels. Owls have not been seen recently, maybe because of a lack of voles after the fields were cut. It was commented that the park is currently looking amazing, better than ever seen before.
5. **Forestry & Natural Heritage Report:** Simon read items from a report submitted by David
 - a. New heaters have been installed in the Lodge but seem not to be working properly. Heating engineer attending.
 - b. Graffiti in stables and walled garden reported to Council graffiti team, will attend soon. David had removed graffiti from a panel and two display cases. In discussion of this and the loss of orchard fruit, Bruce mentioned the possibility of unobtrusive battery operated CCTV that can feed to a phone, and that signage saying that CCTV is in operation may inhibit vandalism and theft. It was agreed not to pursue these at present, but they could be considered if problems continue.
 - c. Café pitch leaseholder has been back in touch but no further progress.

- d. Cammo has been put forward for Fields in Trust status. This should give an extra type of protection and would not conflict with a Participation Request for greater involvement by Friends of Cammo.
 - e. New seating being purchased, 4 seats with backs and 4 benches without, to be assembled by Estates team, Friends may assist with installation in varied locations around Cammo. Suggestion that one should be near north car park. Although Friends of Cammo had expressed a preference for simple log seats, and it had been agreed to have some 'History' seating with carved scenes depicting the past life of Cammo, neither had yet been taken forward because commissioning them would involve extra work. Some seats with arms were also desired, but a suitable style had not yet been identified.
 - f. Atkins report is still awaited, no update on boardwalk installation, David hopes to progress management plan in next few weeks. Atkins report will be required for Heritage & Place funding bid, which could also include Lodge extension.
- 6. Archaeology report:** Simon read from a report from Christine. Despite one day when rain stopped play there has been a steady turn out of volunteers. Clearing vegetation from the Stables has shown the slots for the stalls for the horses, a drinking trough and a beautiful flagged floor. There is more work to be done here but help from the Green Team made a big difference. The subsequent graffiti is very disappointing. Thanks are due to The Council's North West Community Grants Fund for money towards new tools. At the enclosure (next Steading) clearing has revealed a cobbled surface near the entrance. There are still a few finds emerging from the soil but nothing like the amount and range found in the midden. At the rear of the enclosure butting up against the South wall found bricks which seem to have formed a narrow floor surface, maybe a henhouse. In the Walled Garden the shape of the Glasshouse is continuing to emerge; finds include a large pipe crossing the area. The earth contains a great deal of animal bone in large pieces as well as chunks of charcoal. A third grape variety has been discovered - Lady Down's Seedling. EAFS will be having another Open Day on the 18th June and a further one on the 23rd July - all are welcome to visit and take part.
- 7. Planning matters:** Simon reported on three matters affecting Cammo. The Cammo Walk active travel route had approved in principle, while leaving all options open. The planning appeal for a housing development north of Craigs Road had been allocated to a reporter, a site visit carried out and target to reach decision by 15th July. For City Plan 2030, it seems that the Council are still considering representations received, and have not yet submitted draft to Scottish Government (was due in March).
- 8. Any other business**
- a. David Kyles had informed us that there will be public engagement events for Dowie's Weir replacement, at the Maltings on Tues 21st June 1-5pm and Tues 28th June 4-8pm. We understand that the latest proposal to improve fish passage is to replace the weir with rock ramps below the current weir, so having less impact on structures and environment above the weir.
 - b. Thanks to Cllr Norrie Work, a meeting had been held with senior managers responsible for Forest Kindergarten, at which it was agreed to commission a report on the impacts of Forest Kindergarten and what can be done to ameliorate them, potentially also applicable to other sites. This had not been progressed and Nick will continue to press for it.
 - c. It is proposed that Friends of Cammo submit a Participation Request, which would enable us to have more say in the management of Cammo without taking on the financial responsibility of a Community Asset Transfer. David Kyles and other Council staff seemed supportive of this. The meeting agreed that this request should be submitted.
 - d. Esther mentioned that a mortagon lily is growing beside Cammo Walk.
 - e. As the Lodge had been suitable accommodation for this meeting, it was agreed that we should have the next meeting in the Lodge, rather than move it to Turnhouse GC as previously proposed.