



Minutes of Friends of Cammo General Meeting held at Turnhouse Golf Club on 2nd March 2022

Present: - Nick Bengé (Chairperson), Simon Gillam (Secretary), Karen Edwards (Membership Secretary), Lynn Whitehead (Treasurer), Michael Roe, Gill Harris, Grahame Whitehead, Sheena McRobie, Cllr Norman Work, Claire Wallace, Bruce Angus, Esther Davidson, Alan Childs, Bert Scott, Euan Drysdale, Joyce Herriot, Norma Johnstone.

Apologies; - Ian Rodger, Rachel Stewart, Carol Turnbull, Peter Scott, Marian Allen, Harry Taylor, Liz Drysdale, Judy Arrowsmith, Ann Currie.

Annual General Meeting

Minutes and Matters Arising: None

Annual Report and Accounts: Friends of Cammo ended the period with a credit bank balance of £4,946. The charity had unrestricted general funds of £4,631 at 31 December 2021, At 31 December 2021 restricted funds were £315 (£215 for information panels and £100 for wetlands).

Election of Office Bearers and Committee members: All of the Office Bearers and Committee members were willing to stand for re-election and there were no objections or other nominees. Nick Bengé (Chair), Simon Gillam (Secretary), Lynn Whitehead (Treasurer), Karen Edwards, Michael Roe and Gill Harris, proposed by Euan Drysdale and seconded by Sheena McRobie.

Date for next Annual General Meeting: Wednesday 1st March 2023 to be held at Cammo Lodge (if this is possible, if not other venue to be decided).

Other Business

Membership Update: Karen Edwards reported that there were now 220 fully paid-up members with 42 members having joined/re-joined this year, with a month of the membership year still to run. Compared to last year this is an excellent position as last year the membership only increased by 27.

Treasurer's Update: Since the financial year end, we have received a very generous donation from Anthony Seaton of £500. Nick has arranged to use this to acquire additional wildflower seeds and bird boxes. The current balance stands up £229 to £5175. Simon advised that the emails reminding members about next years (2022/2023) subscriptions will be sent out at the end of March, slightly earlier this year. There will be no change to amount (£5) and members joining from Christmas will not be expected to pay until the 2023/2024 membership year.

Environmental Update

- Nick has been helping with the woodland near Cramond Kirk.
- Twenty squirrel proof bird boxes for blue tits and great tits have been ordered from Devon.
- The planting of the Jubilee hedgerow was extremely successful with volunteers including Forest Kindergarten families planting 160 native plants. A further 80 trees were also planted in a corner of South Field including live Christmas trees, birch and dog rose.
- Glendale contractors have completed the work in which they were contracted to plant 3000 hedgerow plants although this was not without its problems – only 2600 were actually put in, (David Kyles had been asked to recover the missing trees/guards and stakes) many of these were poorly planted and needed the attention of Nick individually and with a party of volunteers to rectify the problems and give the trees a

better chance of growing. Nick has done a report on the problems for David Kyles to pass on to the Council's procurement department.

- Wildflower seeds have been planted in the areas of bare earth where the hedgerows were planted and in the piles of turf scraped from them.
- Tenders have been invited for contractors to carry out the work on the wet meadow, including Nick's company Water Gems. Work has to be started this month and it is funded through Nature Scot and the Home Farm Capital Fund. It was confirmed that it had passed planning and that there were no objections from the airport.
- Special Branch continue to supply woodchips, logs and brash which are moved to appropriate sites within Cammo by Simon Gillam and volunteers.
- Nick has been moving stone, which had been donated to us, to create a pile in woodland near the Canal to provide animal habitats.
- In view of the recent high winds Nick has staked the Christmas trees which are around the bases of some of the trees, hopefully this will stop them blowing about.
- There has been no report from Rachel Doughty on the state of the bees. Nick will follow this up.
- Forest Kindergarten –In addition to the Forest Kindergarten four days a week, Cammo is now used by a primary group for Forest School on Wednesdays using area near the yew grove and it appears that the whole of the central woodland will be impacted by the programmes, but there has been no discussion as to the impact this is having on the Environment. Nick is to speak to the Forest Kindergarten organisers about this. Lynn mentioned the impact the Local Nursery has had on the Cramond woods. Alan Childs queried whether there should be a responsibility on users of the park to look after it. Cllr Norman Work asked about the numbers of children now using the park and whether there should be a limit. He mentioned the Forest Kindergarten in Lauriston which only seemed to have small numbers of children. Sheena asked why the Kindergarten was still using the Lodge when they had had the Portacabins specially installed. Norman said he would take this forward for us and ask some questions.

Other environmental issues raised by the members

Esther commented that a large amount of holly which was growing on the south side of the walled garden had disappeared and she wondered whether people had been harvesting it to sell? In a similar vein it was noted that previously many of the apples in the walled garden disappeared in one day.

Michael noted that the thicket of blackthorn near south car park had been significantly damaged when it was cut back by the Council. The issue of severe hedge cutting along roads has been raised before and Simon is going to write to the Council about this.

Michael also mentioned the lovely wildlife photos which were available on the website and Nick said that this year should be a good one for Cammo wildlife, reflecting all the work which we have done.

Forestry & Natural Heritage Report: There had been no update from David Kyles, however Simon mentioned the parts of David's last report to the Committee that were relevant.

- David Jamieson the head of the Council Parks department is leaving and he will not be replaced. A new structure will be set up
- Seating – Simple log seats would be our preference for most locations. There is also to be 'History' seating with carved scenes depicting the past life of Cammo and benches with backs – David is finalising the plan and will then seek tenders for these.
- Cammo Lodge Extension – the Committee had started to explore plans for using the Home Farm Capital to extend the Lodge, initially asking David Kyles to use the capital to fund one day's architect work to identify possible scale and options. However, it had been decided that the Council would take this forward in-house and there had been no progress reported. After this initial work, there would be consultation with potential users and other stakeholders.
- We are still awaiting the consolidation report relating to the stables and the walled garden.

Archaeology report: Report from Christine Macpherson read by Esther Davidson:

- Regular digs by the EAFS (Edinburgh Archaeological Field Society) continue on Mondays
- Open days are going to be held on one Saturday a month, 12th March and 9th April are the next two. The lodge will be used and the Friends of Cammo leaflets and maps will be made available for those who wish to purchase them. Simon will ensure stocks are up to date.
- They have established that the Steading includes a byre and wright's workshop, and the nearby area is still being investigated. At the walled gardens investigations include the heated wall and the glasshouse, where there are the remnants of a vine or hop.
- Following the restrictions of Covid, Edinburgh Archaeology students are now able to revisit the site, and on the 19th March, they will be involved in a geophysics survey being carried out in the south west meadow.
- The EAFS are keen to complete an oral history of Cammo and want to gather memories/photographs from people who have recollections of life on Cammo. These can be passed on to Esther or Christine.
- The EAFS exhibition has moved from the museum and a reduced proportion of it will be exhibited in the Maltings at Cramond around Easter time.

In response to the oral history request Alan suggested that local care home residents may have a lot to contribute. This was acknowledged but had had to be halted because of Covid but was now something the EAFS could actively pursue.

Any Other Business

- The Lodge re opened for visitors a month ago and Joanna Morris has been organising the rota. There has been a very good response from existing rota members and new members are always welcome. Thanks were expressed to Joanna and the other Lodge volunteers.
- Proposed Development North of Craigs Road. One day short of the date for the planning meeting due to discuss this, the developers appealed directly to the Scottish Government, so it is now out of the Council's hands. The Council committee agreed with the officials' report that had recommended that it be refused, but they can take no further action.
- Nick mentioned that Friends of Cammo had purchased Hi Vis vests for use by volunteers when working on Cammo projects, these will have the logo on front and back so people will know who we are. Lynn advised that these will be available shortly.

On a final note, Nick thanked all those who help at Cammo and the meeting closed

Friends of Cammo
March 2022