

Carse of Gowrie Group

Paths Project

Report 1 (5 September 2006)

Grant applications

i) The first application to *Perth & Kinross Countryside Trust (PKCT)* was successful and notification of approval received 20 June. The offer of grant up to £5,000 per annum is for a two-year period towards path network planning in the Carse of Gowrie area. The approval was subject to matching funding being secured from other sources and on realistic path network development targets for paths being agreed between CoGG and PKCT at the start of each grant period.

ii) The second (match funding) application, to the *Awards for All Scotland* programme of the Big Lottery Fund, was also successful and notification of approval received 4 August. The award of grant is for a lump sum of £7,000. The money is a contribution towards professional fees for the research and development of an action plan to identify and prioritise development of a small number of routes within the existing local paths network. Consultation with relevant bodies and promotion of responsible access is seen to be an integral part of the action plan. The CoGG's bank account was to be credited in full at the end of August 2006. One of the conditions of the award is that an End of Award monitoring form needs to be completed and returned by 28 August 2007.

It is a matter of importance that the Awards for All Scotland grant should not be made public until the 29 September when it will be officially announced at national level.

Administrative Matters

At the last meeting of the Paths Subgroup (29 June 2006) Eileen Ledingham was proposed as interim Project Officer (PO), reporting to Iain Ledingham as Project Co-ordinator, and to Phyllis Mackay, in relation to financial matters. These arrangements, approved by the CoGG committee at its meeting on 10 August 2006, are seen to be provisional in the first instance and intended to minimise delays in getting the project underway. Other applications for the post of PO are being reviewed. In the meantime Perth and Kinross Association of Voluntary Service Limited (PKAVS) has offered to draft a contract of employment for the PO and act as the employing authority. PKAVS charges 10% of the relevant contract.

Next actions

Preparation of the proposed action plan, which will help to

- identify and prioritise development of a small number of routes within the

- existing local paths network.
- negotiate development of these routes with relevant land managers, public bodies and other stakeholders.
 - implement development of these routes, including, where necessary, sourcing of funds and management of contracts.
 - promote responsible access to these routes by a wide range of users, both local and visitors.
 - monitor and record these activities, for broad educational and general administrative purposes and for the use of funding partners.

The Project Co-ordinator proposes to use relevant computer software (Microsoft Project 2002) to aid in planning and developing the project and communication of detail amongst organisers and relevant committees. The new CoGG website will be an important vehicle for regular dissemination of information about the project and, hopefully, encourage wider community engagement and participation.

Other matters

Westown Chapel:

This 'C' listed chapel is a scheduled monument and along with the surrounding graveyard is owned by PKC. Approaches to PK Heritage Trust and Historic Scotland with a view to conservation and consolidation of the structure prompted a site visit on 8 June 2006. Those present were Phyllis Mackay (CoGG), Iain Ledingham (CoGG), Eileen Ledingham, Andrew Driver (PK Heritage Trust) Anne MacSween (Historic Scotland), Iona Anthony (Historic Scotland).

Andrew Driver distributed two photographs showing how ivy growing over the masonry had extended between 2002 and 2006. He had obtained a quote from a local conservation specialist for initial conservation works amounting to approx £35,000. Historic Scotland thought that their organisation could fund part of the cost and it was thought that Perth & Kinross Council and / or Perth & Kinross Heritage Trust would also contribute to short-term works to prevent more serious damage developing; two further quotes from specialist contractors would be required and Andrew undertook responsibility for moving this forward in conjunction with Historic Scotland. It is hoped that the work, which would involve cutting away ivy and repair of masonry in sections, will commence later this year.

The possibility of reinstating the roof, with a view to restoring the chapel to a useable building in the longer term, was not ruled out. Landscaping of the graveyard might also be carried out and an information board erected. Since the chapel is easily accessible the planned upgrade is likely to make the site attractive to visitors.

CoGG is not required to take any action at the present time but would maintain contact with HS and PKHT through Iain Ledingham. A photographic record of the meeting was taken by Eileen and distributed to all concerned by e-mail.

Prepared by Iain Ledingham

