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**Outdoor Woodland & learning North East Group Meeting**

**Via Zoom**

**29th August 2022 7pm-8.30pm**

**Minutes**

**1. Welcome & Apologies**

**Present:** Joanne Evans, Julia MacKay, Jill Birch, Lindsey Duncan, Doug Gooday (Aberdeenshire Council Ranger), John Malster, Joan Anderson,

**Apologies:** Neil Taylor (Forestry & Land Scotland Ranger)

**2. Minutes of previous meeting 14th March 2022, matters arising**

* Julia MacKay is now OWLNEG treasurer. She has received everything from Estee and will update everyone in the treasurer’s report later in the meeting.
* Networking event happened at Aller Croft on Saturday 23rd April where core members met and discussed the future direction of OWLNEG. The minutes were sent to members.
* Bird ID and rock pooling events have been postponed.
* Minutes approved by Julia and seconded by Jill.
* No other matters arising.

**3. Events**

**Completed Events**

* Doug reported on the Glen Tanar Forestry Day run in May/June 2022. Eric has sent through the invoices and report on 29th August 2022 for review.
* Julia reported on the Glasgow School of Art Logbook Project held at Loch of Blairs in July 2022. OWLNEG and Friends of Loch of Blairs worked in partnership with 4 Glasgow School of Art students to help deliver a community art project called The Logbook over 3 sessions. The project linked two water environments, Loch of Blairs and the Claypits Local Nature Reserve in Glasgow. The participants enjoyed a history/nature walk with storyteller Grace Banks, papermaking using the reeds from the Loch and crafting origami. It was a well organised, hands-on, fun and informative project. Julia attended as an OWLNEG volunteer. Grace was paid by OWLNEG for her time. Participants completed learning journals as part of the project. Julia has offered to do guided walks/SOAC introduction around the Altyre Estate for Glasgow School of Art students based in Forres. **Action:** Julia to send Joanne pictures of paper and origami for minutes. **Action:** Julia to share project report once it is published.
* John reported on the Wildflower/Seed Collection Workshops which he has run recently. These have been for SCRA, Earth and Worms and a public event in Portlethen. These have been well attended because they have targeted specific audiences and the events have been organised by those organisations. John is organising another event for Deveron Arts Project in Huntly on Tuesday 13th September 5.30pm-7pm. **Action:** John to send Joanne further details once venue is confirmed and Joanne will share with group.
* Joan – sending me update

**Future Events**

* First Aid course being organised by Lindsey on 17th and 18th September at Alford. 7 bookings are confirmed and 5 spaces left. Ideally need 3 more bookings to break even. **Action:** Lindsey to contact Duncan/Lorna at First Aid Cooperative to promote course on their social media/website. **Action:** Doug to share on SCRA page. **Action:** John to promote on Early Years/Nursery network.
* Foraging Event 27th October run by Dan Puplett. Confirmed venue of Haddo by John. **Action:** Doug to confirm hourly rate with Dan.
* Joint Moray OWLS Group/OWLNEG networking event March 2023 – date TBC – at Aller Croft. Moray OWLS can apply for funding for event and OWLNEG can match fund it.
* Collaborative workshop at Loch of Blairs for OWLNEG and Moray OWLS – March/April 2023 – date TBC. Doug visited Greenmyres in Huntly as a potential venue but the elevated site would be too windy at that time of year. It has potential for a summer event. Day rate for Greenmyres is £160 per day.
* Julia reported on a NESOLG CPD one day event which she ran for 66 nursery staff at Cornhill Hospital in Aberdeen on introduction to fire safety and food hygiene. Anne Robertson would like to commission a full day Campfire and Food Safety course in the future. She would also like nursery staff to build on their skills for outdoor learning and have a great site to do this on. Julia has suggested OWLNEG run a series of round robin workshops as part of a CPD day. Action: Julia to contact Anne to confirm date.
* As part of Aberdeenshire Council Ranger Service’s work Doug and David will be running introduction to fire safety on request to schools and nurseries in Aberdeenshire. Auchterellon Nursery and Skene School have already expressed an interest. Doug is borrowing fire kits from OWLNEG shed for these courses.
* Fungi Foraging Event at Loch of Blairs in October 2022. **Action:** Julia to confirm dates.
* Special Grant for Forester’s Award through OWLS. Julia has emailed Eric about this. Deadline is for grant application is 1st September 2022. All meeting attendees agreed that OWLNEG should apply for this grant. **Action:** Doug to email Eilidh to register OWLNEG’s interest.

**4. Branching Out South Aberdeenshire (BOSA) (Jill)**

* Programme 8 finished in June 2022 with 6 attendees.
* There were many positive peer relationships formed and all of the programme has joined Branching Out Plus.
* A reunion event was held in July 2022 for all pass attendees of BO where river activities and craft activities were run.
* National Lottery funded.
* Stirling University are to assess programmes as part of a research project.
* Programme 9 to start on 1st September at Crathes and run for 12 weeks with 12 referrals. A couple of sessions will run at Newton Dee. Tutors will be Julia, Jill, Bryan Duncan and Julia Leith.

**5. Treasurer’s Report including review of accounts 2021/22**

* Julia has taken over from Estee as treasurer.
* Julia has set Eilidh updated accounts for 2021.
* Estee is sending Julia bank statements.
* Julia is chasing bank for online banking access. However, there is a huge backlog.
* OWLNEG total balance - £21,960.10p. Running balance for OWLNEG is £18,570.83p (3 payments received for first aid course) and running balance for BOSA is £3,389.27p (£8406 coming in from NHS for BOSA).

**6. Admin Grant**

Julia has applied for £1200 admin grant from OWLS Scotland and this has been approved.

**Action:** Joanne, Secretary to claim for admin at rate of £15 per hour from 1st April 2022.

**7. Updates**

Please send any updates to Joanne to be included.

Updates received.

**Neil Taylor, Forestry Land and Scotland** - new practitioner looking to run forest school type events in Dunnottar with younger children. Is going to start under SOAC Jessica Hernandez Woodland Whispers.  I met Jessica on site and we had a good discussion about outdoor learning. We are still dealing with storm damage.  Sites on the edge of Aberdeen- Tyrebagger and Kirkhill should reopen soon but will look very different.

**Joan Anderson** – please see separate document about future events and walks.

**Stephen Reeves -**The Dorenell Ranger Service are in the middle of recruiting a second Ranger at the moment with the process looking very promising. We hope to have a new Ranger starting this Autumn so that we can have a good plan of events for 2023 and know our availability for partnership working also. We’ve been doing a few bits of engagement over the summer including our first guided e-bike ride on the waymarked trails but the focus has been on the survey and monitoring as it has just been myself in post since April.

**8. AOCB**

* Doug is attending the OWL Scotland Networking Event on 9th-11th September 2022 at Pillars of Hercules, Falkland. He will collect selected OWL Scotland old logo branded resources from Eilidh including Tree Measuring, Wolf Brothers, Scotland’s Native Woodlands, World Beneath Our Feet, The First Foresters and Into The Wildwoods for OWLNEG. Doug to take 1 box of Woodland Whispers books down to Networking Event and keep 2 boxes for OWLNEG. Doug also to raise update on OWL fire guidance in light of recent hot weather this summer. Doug would also like to discuss OWLS governance with Eilidh, Bonnie and other OWL groups if possible such as GDPR, child protection and membership forms.

**Action:** Doug to report back at next OWLNEG meeting.

**8. Date for next meeting**

Thursday 1st December 2022 at 10am-2pm at Greenmyres Bothy, Huntly. **Action:** Doug to book venue.