

# TAYSIDE OWL CLUSTER GROUP AGM 2014

Monday 1 December, 3.30 – 5.30pm

 RDM Primary school, Scone

**1. Welcome & apologies**

Present: Alice W (AAW), Lisa S (LS), Bonnie M (BM), Sarah H (SH), Penny M (PM), Alison W (AMRW), Lynnette B (LB), Scott M (SM), Jillian R (JR)

Apologies: Nancy Fuller, Jillian Donnachie, Jo Andrews, Arlene Low

The group welcomed newcomer Sarah H and did a quick round of introductions.

**2. Minutes of the 2013 AGM and last meeting [27/08/14) and matters arising, including:**Minutes from 2014 AGM were proposed by AMRW seconded by BM and points a–g addressed as follows:

**a) Projects update**  
The Nature Time project led by AAW & PM has now come to an end. Part 1 involved AAW working with JR and the Blairgowrie Early Years Development catchment area to deliver outdoor learning sessions with early years & primary aged pupils and their parents, carers and teachers. JR continuing to deliver regular outdoor learning with these groups.

Nature Time Part 2 involved PM & AAW working with Perthshire Women’s Aid (PWA) on a partnership Forest Schools project. PM & AAW delivered 2 x 6 week programmes to families receiving support from PWA. Full project report to come detailing project highs and lows, to be shared via OWLS website. Key successes: PWA & OWLS Partnership very strong, PWA keen to train 1 staff member to Level 3 FS and deliver ongoing FS with families. Key pitfalls: continuity & attendance patchy, transport costs excessive. PM & AAW to review in full with PWA shortly. AAW to apply for funding for a follow up project. AAW & PM are currently signing off accounts and submitting report to Lottery Communities & Families Fund to conclude this project. Lottery have said we can reapply for a follow up project provided it demonstrates significant development.

*Actions: AAW & PM to produce report and submit further funding applications in partnership with PWA*  
  
Scots Pine activities – Funded by OWLS  
AAW is working with 4 schools to run an outdoor learning session using CH’s Tree Stories resource, plant a Scots Pine Tree in school grounds and provide teachers with follow up activities & resources. BM to sign off grant application and AAW to invoice to cover costs in due course.

*Actions: AAW to deliver sessions & invoice to PM*  
  
**b) Membership update**

Membership currently sits at 93 members, though not all of these are active. LB queried *why do more not come to meetings?* SM finds timing difficult. LB pointed out that Perth location difficult for Highland Perthshire. LB suggested a push to attract core members, should we phone around? Could we have a Rep in each area?

Question of charging for membership fee arose. Other groups that charge include Edinburgh (large group = lots of admin) and Dunbarton (charge for use of tool store). PM suggested we do brief analysis to plot locations, roles etc of members. We agreed to revisit this issue to consider if there is a need to provide more regionalised meetings/support or push harder to get people involved in core activities.

*Actions: AAW to update and analyse members list & share findings for review at next meeting.*

**c) Treasurers update:**   
PM circulated latest accounts (April 2014 to date). In summary: current balance is £1485.84 (needs to be confirmed against next statement). BM confirmed we still need to claim £500 for admin. PM still needs to get accounts (2013/14) audited with PKAVS (£50 fee) and pass on to BM.

*Actions:   
AAW & PM to submit £500 admin grant application  
PM to get accounts audited.*

Account is in current office bearers names. Rather than switch names on the existing account it was agreed we open a new account in the name Tayside OWL group. AAW suggested we switch to another bank that has better access – e.g. co-op which can be managed online and in any Post Office

*Actions:   
PM to look into options and get forms for a new account for next meeting*

**d) OWLS funding streams**

* BM confirmed the following grants are available:  
  £500 admin (AW & PM to complete £500 admin form for this)
* CPD grant – £300 per CD event. This should be a day long event that at least 12 attend. Multiple applications accepted. (£300 total assumes £200 per day plus £100 preparation time)
* Launch event grant - £500 for a launch event to take place before end of March 2015. This can be applied to once only.
* Scots Pine - £150 per school for a Scots Pine project. Multiple applications allowed.

**e) Future plans**

1. CPD Programme partnership

Dave Girling (PKC Outdoor Learning Officer) and AAW have been discussing possible partnership CPD project in which DG would administrate & market programme and OWLS would cover some leader fees. Concern that a start date of Jan 2015 is too soon was voiced. BM also expressed that the OWLS CPD grant was intended more for daytime events not short twilights, this will need further discussion.

*AAW to feedback to DG and discuss eligibility for OWLS funding with BM*

LS is also running CPD through Tay Landscape Partnership and looking for partners. She has funding available to match fund CPD and must deliver a certain quota of activity. This only applies to activities in her region which for us means Kinnoull Hill or Perth based locations. LS will coordinate and deliver 2 CPD sessions (e.g. one Saturday or 2 twilights) and could provide match funding. BM explained she can also deliver CPD within her post. SM offered First Aid training and Leave No Trace course (accredited) AAW will continue conversations with DG to see how all this could be pulled together into a coherent programme, though it may require paid time from someone to do this which BM said could be covered by the OWLS grant.

*Actions: AAW to explore possibilities for putting a programme of CPD events together in collaboration with LS, BM & DG.*

***2*. Launch event.**The group agreed an event in early 2015 (Feb or March) would be good.AAW offered to coordinate this provided some of her time could be paid from the £500 OWLS launch event grant.A meeting to discuss the event in depth will take place in January (see below). LS suggested we make this a fun event with a wassailing theme (Wassailing day is Jan 17th)

*Actions: AAW to circulate information about the meeting to the group including call out to those willing to run activities*

**f) Geodome:**  
AAW explained she has heard nothing about this since February and thinks it may still be with Johnny Morris in the Borders, BM seems to think it was returned to Clive at Community Treecycle.

*Actions: AAW to check with Clive & if not chase Johnny Morris again*

**g) Storage & shared resources.**   
BM now has some storage space in a locked store by her new office in Inver. This will be enough room to store the Geodome, publications, PM’s Forest School resources (including tools) plus the wooden games, tarps etc that are currently in BMs shed. The waterproofs seem to still be missing, possibly with Cath Latham, this needs chasing up. BM raised the need for a policy & rota to be in place to manage loan of resources.  
  
*Actions: SH will work on policy & rota with BM. AAW to chase Cath for waterproofs*

**3. Review / appointment of Office bearers**

Discussion over office bearers lead to the following decisions:

Alison Wilson will continue as chair with support from Jillian Ritchie as vice chair, until end March 2015 when they will swap

Alice Warren will continue as Secretary until end of Feb during which time she will look into available funding and options to create paid contracts to take on some of the work of the secretary and treasurer to lessen the load of these posts.

Penny Martin will continue as treasurer to end March 2015 possibly longer and may be interested in taking on some paid administrative work should this become available. SH also interested in paid admin work and potentially taking on the secretarial role.

A new secretary will be required for March 2015 onwards.

The new office bearers will adopt the OWLS constitution and the group will formally be known as Tayside OWL Group. All of the above proposed by LB and seconded by AMRW.  
  
*Actions: AAW to bring new constitution and forms to next meeting to get signed off.*

**Proposal for a paid administrator**

AAW circulated a rough proposal for a paid contract post to take on administrative duties to allow the group to continue to deliver CPD & Launch activities throughout 2015. This would be an administrative post up to 30 days over the year at roughly £4K to support the team with coordination of events and meetings and take on some of the roles of the treasurer and secretary. The exact level of work required is undetermined and could be less than previously thought now that LS & BM have offered some time to coordinate and deliver events and AAW can lead on the launch event. BM raised that this would need to be drawn up and put out as a contract to tender. BM also explained that there should eventually be representatives from the ENFOR directorate (Sepa, SNH, FCS &RBG) that should be allocated supporting roles to OWL local groups, though this may take a while to get established.

The proposal needs further in light of issues raised at this AGM and reconsidered at next meeting.   
  
*Actions: AAW to present amended proposal to the group at next meeting and continue researching possible sources of funding.*

**4. Dates & times for next meetings**

**A business meeting to focus on planning a launch event will take place as follows:**

4pm, Thursday 15th January  
Robert Douglas Memorial School

**5. Any other Business**

PM has renewed the group’s insurance with TCV September 2014.

LB shared some printed resources that may be of value to the group, including Kinnoull Hill specific resources. BM took these to scan and digitise. *Actions: BM to digitise resources*