

Mapa Scotland
Minutes of 6th Annual General Meeting
Sunday 1st May 2016, 14.00 Barony Castle Hotel, Eddleston

Present: Nick Macdonald, Keith Burns, Gordon Cameron, David Cameron, Jim Barton, Bob Johnson, Kirsty Loudon, Cate MacLean, Ainslie Thin, Eppie Thin, Terry Wiles, Graham Little, Hamish Brown, Tish Chalmers, Jim Chalmers, Ina Cruik, Czeslaw Cruik, Catherine Ellaker, Elizabeth Douglas, Robert Hodgart, ANO?

1. Apologies: Roger Kelly, Dave Peck, Lyn Barr

2. Minutes of AGM 19th April 2015: Approved without change. Proposed: Graham Little; seconded, Bob Johnson.

3. Matters arising: none

4. Chairman's Report (Nick Macdonald)

The Chairman noted the sad loss of Kim Traynor who died last autumn. Kim made a major investigation of the map's history, on which the information panels were based. He has been commemorated by a bench alongside the map, installed in March 2016. The map has undergone wide exposure on TV, has been discussed in the Scottish Parliament and attracts continuing support from the Polish Consulate. Visitor numbers are reaching 100 or more per day over weekends, with a Polish-American family travelling from New York to see the map. Cleaning and restoration work continues, limited only by the numbers of volunteers.

5. Treasurer's Report (Gordon Cameron)

A breakdown of income and expenditure was circulated. GC noted that the largest expenditure (over £15k) was on groundworks but no major items of equipment had been purchased. Overall income (£20,513.55) slightly exceeded total spending (£19,095.13). Particularly gratifying is the collection of £540 from the donation box situated at the map since October last year. GC thanked Tish Chalmers for regularly emptying the box and banking the donations.

The final donation agreed by Barony Castle Hotel LLP has now been received and will be included in the 2016-17 accounts. KB noted that the value of work in kind (voluntary labour and project management) had originally been estimated at approximately £100k, but in practice is likely to be at least twice this amount.

Accounts approval proposed (David Cameron), seconded (Kirsty Loudon).

6. Secretary and Project Manager's Report (Keith Burns)

KB summarised the Progress Report to 31st March 2016. The water distribution system has taken more effort and resources than originally planned, but we now have the sea flooded and the SEPA licences required for abstraction and return of water from and back to the burn. There has been much 'invisible' underground work as well as map cleaning and repair.

Growth of algae has been troublesome as mechanical removal is labour-intensive. We are investigating copper sulphate as an inhibitor of algal growth, and also barley straw floated in bags. Hamish Brown reported that the latter had been successful in cleaning up Kinghorn Loch in Fife; the straw needs replacement in around 2 years.

The next major task is a replacement viewing platform. Tender submissions are being received for a steel viewing platform 2.5m high with suitable steps and guard rails, located as before at the Borders end of the map. In the longer term, installing water supply pipes to feed the rivers from the heads of selected glens will be planned.

There is no management succession plan in place, yet, to manage the inevitable need for long term maintenance. More local and Polish involvement is vital for the long term health of the project. We have made contact with the Polish Scouts who have undertaken to help.

7. Membership Secretary's Report (Nigel Rose)

Mapa Scotland currently has 47 Individual members, 24 Family members, 2 Voluntary Group members, 1 Honorary member and 1 Donor member.

The Voluntary Group members are Scottish Polish Cultural Association and Tweeddale U3A plus a representative member of Scottish Archaeology.

We received donations to a total value of £897.50 plus the donations of £555.40 towards the memorial bench for Kim Traynor.

8. Election of Officers

The existing office bearers were willing to continue and were re-elected without dissent. They are: Nick Macdonald (Chairman), Roger Kelly (Vice-Chairman), Gordon Cameron (Treasurer), Keith Burns (Secretary and Project Manager), Nigel Rose (Membership Secretary).

Proposed: Bob Johnson, seconded: Hamish Brown

9. Any Other Business

Kirsty Loudon raised the question of access to the map by wheelchair users and parents with pushchairs. The gravel surface of the drive round to the map is difficult to negotiate. Letters to Barony Castle Hotel's General Manager (copies to MSPs) would be the best way forward in raising this.

We discussed the desirability of an Open Day to attract more helpers. KL offered to place a notice in the bus shelter at Eddleston for this purpose. KB noted that May 3rd is Polish National day and that would be a good date to aim for next year. We shall be hosting a corporate 'away day' for RBS staff to work on the map next week; other opportunities arise for school party visits, though we have already contacted all the local primary and secondary schools.

Meeting closed at 1450