

## MoLRS WORKING GROUP

Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday 17th June 2004 at 2pm in RCAHMS Offices, Bernard Terrace, Edinburgh.

Present: Steve Boyle (RCAHMS)  
Chris Dalglish (GUARD)  
Althea Davies (UoS)  
Lesley Macinnes (HS)  
Rod McCullagh (HS)  
Alex Morrison (GUAD)  
Donna Stewart (HS, Minutes)  
Jack Stevenson (RCAHMS)  
Richard Tipping (UoS)  
Robin Turner (NTS, Acting Chair)  
John Wood

### **1. Apologies:**

Derek Alexander (NTS)  
John Atkinson (GUARD)  
Malcolm Bangor-Jones (HS)  
Peter Corser (HS)  
Donald Davidson (UoS)  
Piers Dixon (RCAHMS)  
Sarah Govan (HS)  
Jill Harden (NTS)  
Aonghus MacKechnie (HS)  
Chris McGregor (HS)  
Ross Noble (Former HFM)  
Bob Powell (HFM)  
John Shaw (NMS)  
Ian Shepherd (AC)  
Chris Smout  
Jim Souness (HS)  
Tam Ward (BMT)  
Tim Yarnell (FC)

### **2. Minutes of Previous Meeting (30th March 2004)**

The minutes were approved subject to the following amendments:

- Under 'Present', AM's organisation should read (GUAD) not (GUARD).
- John Wood should be added to the list of apologies.
- Item 2, line 2, insert 'hear' between 'to' and 'from'.

### **3. Matters Arising**

In JA's absence, RTu agreed to chair the meeting and spoke to his agenda items first, however, I have maintained the original agenda order in this minute to reflect priority. It was also agreed that actions points should be drawn out from the main minute in future to enable ease of reference.

#### 4. Historic Rural Settlement Trust Constitution (RTu)

- RTu explained that the WG was required to adopt a constitution if it was to attract even small sums of money from the major funding bodies, including the HLF, for projects like SRP. JA had taken the current constitution format from an off-the-peg model on the SCVO website. The Constitution was a stepping stone towards securing Stage One HLF funding, but a lead body with a track record would have to be found if the Group decided to press on with a Stage Two bid. He further stressed that a decision had to be reached that afternoon in order that everything could be finalised before the next HLF meeting on 1st July 2004.
- It was acknowledged that not everyone in the WG would have the same status within the proposed Trust, for example, HS and RCAHMS employees could not become Trustees but could perhaps become members of the Trust with observer status. It was noted that JA would have a conflict of interest as a Trustee if GUARD secured the tender for SRP Planning Project, though it was agreed that this could be declared at the time and would not affect the Stage One bid. There was also concern that the Constitution in its current form did not define the required number of Trustees, length of term in office, mode of election or structure of AGM and, in fact, the Trustees in the draft had been self-appointed.
- It was noted that the role of the Trustees was principally to conduct financial matters and provide an audit trail. It was asserted by JW and others that membership of the Trust needed to be defined in the Constitution, with the suggestion that non-Trustee members of the MoLRS WG could form an enfranchised membership with the larger MoLRS DG adopting a 'Friends of the HRST' role. Concerns were raised that the wider membership of the Group would be 'written out' of the decision-making process and it was suggested that an interim tandem structure be adopted whereby the MoLRS WG would remain in existence for at least a year as an advisory body to the Trustees of the HRST, that is, the MoLRS WG would in effect become the HRST WG. The role of the WG would not change but financial liability would transfer to the Trust. RTu did not think that the HLF would have a difficulty with this set up, although the Stage One bid would have to be ratified by committee.
- JW was concerned that if proposed amendments were not adopted now then the only personnel who could change the Constitution at a later date would be the Trustees. It was agreed that the detailed workings of the Trust, as outlined above, still had to be thrashed out, but that this was not necessary in the short term given the tight timescale for the HLF bid. Charitable status for the Trust was an eventual option to be borne in mind. The MoLRS WG agreed to adopt the HRST Constitution as presented, and trusted the Trustees designate to adopt any future refinements to it in discussion with the WG under the auspices of clause 30, save for the following minor amendments:
  - a. Paragraph 2, sentence 1: erase second 'Richard Tipping'.
  - b. Item 1 (a), sentence 2: take out 'resource' and insert 'Historic Rural Settlement of Scotland'.
  - c. Item 21/22: Change 'renumerate' to 'remunerate'.
  - d. Item 24: Add 'e' to 'Trustes'.
  - e. Item 28: change 'of' to 'or'.
  - f. Item 30: Insert comma after 'impracticable' and replace capital 'O' of or with a small 'o'.
  - g. Item 32: Remove comma after 'purpose'.
- The Trustees would have to arrange for the finalised document to be signed within 2 weeks and would also have to decide who amongst them would fulfil the role of Secretary to the Trust and what the nature of this role would be. RTu suggested that an extraordinary, single agenda meeting of the MoLRS WG be held to focus on revising the constitution. It was noted that on adoption of the constitution JA would have to write formally to HS to amend the grant offer for the SRP Planning Project, including the BACS details, that is, the Trust would have to set up a new bank account.
- In response to a query from CD, RTu confirmed that upon transfer the MoLRS website would

become an asset of the HRST and therefore titles and domain names would have to be amended in the longer term. However, as HS funding would only run for website development another year, monies would continue to be paid into the existent MoLRS bank account. RTu also confirmed to RMc that the only money currently in the MoLRS bank account was NTS as HS only ever pay in arrears. It was agreed that CD would not have to be formerly appointed as voluntary website manager by the Trust.

- LM affirmed that the Trust would focus solely on the SRP, advised by the WG but that the WG would not be disbanded in the short term and would retain all other functions at present. As with the BEFS, the HSRT would be driven by its membership and not by the Executives. RTu suggested that parts of the BEFS could possibly be used to revise the HRST Constitution in this regard. RMc informed the Group that there may be difficulty in supplying a minute-taker for Trust meetings if HS were not formally part of the Trust. It was noted that Trust meetings would be few and WG meetings be in the majority so it may not be a major obstacle. LM reminded the WG on SG's behalf that it had been hoped that the secretariat for the WG would revolve between the participating organisations.

## **5. Transfer to Historic Rural Settlement Trust – Practical Implications**

This was covered by Item 4 above.

## **6. Scotland's Rural Past Project – Report on Progress (RTu)**

RTu reported that a tender had been produced for the planning project based on the previously circulated Project Outline with additional information for tenderers. Given the short timescale involved, potential tenderers were approached informally, advised that the tenders would be issued in advance of HLF funding approval and asked to note their interest before tender documents were issued. The returned bids were eventually narrowed down to a shortlist of six. The SRP Sub-Group had invited Eila McQueen (Director, CSA) to sit on the Group to assess the tenders. Following close of tendering on 11 June, this had been further pared down to four tenderers who will be interviewed on 23 June at the University of Stirling. The shortlist will shortly be advised that they have been unsuccessful and the final tender will be chosen following the interviews.

In answer to JS's query, RTu confirmed that the HLF would make their decision about awarding a Stage One grant on 01 July 2004. Work could proceed at this time, however, it was uncertain when grant monies would be released. LM stated that HS had made a formal offer in support of the project via RTu. The WG were reminded that if the HLF bid was unsuccessful there would have to be a major rethink about the direction and future of the proposal. The Group remained hopeful that the HLF had provided the steer thus far and had expressed no major concerns with the bid. However, more legwork was required to determine the likelihood and suitability of making a Stage Two bid. JS warned that a current delay on clearing large HLF grant awards of between six months to one year could create a hiatus between Stage One and Stage Two of the project. RTu acknowledged that the HLF were trying to re-orientate their funding towards community schemes and advised that the WG may have to consider investigating more than one HLF funding route.

## **7. Report on Discussion Group Meeting Spring 2004 (SB)**

35 people had attended the Discussion Group meeting in April at Inveraray. SB reported that John MacDonald had given the DG the background to the museum, Murdo MacDonald had spoken about different examples of archives and CD had discussed settlements in Kintyre. The afternoon saw AM guide the group around a wet Auchindrain. SB had gauged opinion about holding a weekend event in the future but this had not met with a positive response. A discussion ensued about possible

venues for the next meeting and the general consensus was that the meetings should be spread geographically across the country where there is local group support. SB agreed to sound out possible venues and local group support in Renfrewshire (contact Bruce Henry from ACFA) and Aberdeenshire (contact Charlie Murray) with a view to making a decision before the September meeting. Dougie Macinnes of ACFA would be asked if he wanted to present a talk on his findings at Glenloch.

Timing was deemed to be a problem given that, for example, both NoSAS and ACFA conducted field surveys in April. It was finally agreed that the most suitable dates would be 14/15 May 2005. RTu stated that by all accounts it had been a good spirited and successful meeting and recorded his thanks to SB and all external helpers for their invaluable input.

### **8. Plans for Training Day - 11 and 12 September 2004 (SB)**

SB reported that the initial intention to hold the training day at Marr Lodge due to it being owned by the NTS and having been extensively surveyed by RCAHMS had been rejected because a field inspection by SB and JA revealed that there were access problems to the estate and the MoLRS remains were too complicated to be easily surveyed. It was decided to return to Loch Tay and hold a two day event around Kiltyrie. SB presented maps and slides of the area to the WG to illustrate the proposals, including Farqharson's 1867 plan of the steading. The steading was straightforward and featured many common MoLRS elements like gable, hearth, midden, terrace, post holes, cruck slots and barn. There were other farmsteads surrounding the site which could also be sketched by the Group.

SB stated that the group would divide into four groups of three and spend the morning looking at the steading layout, sketching plans, field systems and taking measurements. The RCAHMS Drawing Office would provide guidance in the afternoon on what to look for in a building with an element of plane tabling. JS noted that RCAHMS had to supply plane tables at the previous training day as none of the groups owned one. The remainder of the day would be filled by JA who would talk about the background to survey work and also the Ben Lawers excavations.

Day two would comprise a visit to the GUARD excavations on Ben Lawers ranging from 18th Century head dykes, rigs, peat stack bunkers and a bow sided dwelling to a three compartment building. The trip would end at 3pm.

It was not intended to book accommodation for the Group, though a list of local accommodation would be supplied. Once the farmer's permission had been given, SB would draft a flyer for SG's attention for issue through HS. SB would pass on mailing list amendments to DS for updating. LM requested that Dougie Macinnes (ACFA) be added to the list. The RCAHMS landrover would be used to ferry people to the sites and it was also agreed that the cost for the weekend would be £15. The numbers would be maintained at 12 and priority would be given to those who did not secure a place last year as long as they were not all from the same society, as a spread of groups was preferable. LM suggested that, given the demand and if funding was available from HLF or elsewhere, the number of training days could be increased to two per annum, even if a dedicated trainer had to be employed.

RTi suggested that training could be provided on archival research. AD agreed and further suggested that RTi could give a talk on cartographic resources focussing on geomorphology, perhaps joining the DG in the field. The Scottish Local History Forum may want to help with the provision of any documentation.

SB confirmed that the programme would be formalised and placed on the web in two weeks. RTu thanked RCAHMS for organising and providing resources for the event.

### **9. Website Update (CD)**

CD confirmed that 2004-5 was the final year of HS funding for the development phase of the website. The Website Subgroup had met at the end of March and he could report the following progress:

- The bibliography had been reformatted and was now held as a separate database rather than embedded code enabling swifter updating and powerful performance. The author/keyword search was demonstrated for the benefit of the WG. It was noted that the keys words searched all fields but this was not a serious issue. It would be possible to develop a search by date or a Boolean search if necessary. It was also suggested that a browser button be added to allow perusal of the 750 entries.
- 'Sites to Visit' and 'Resources' needed to be fleshed out. It was hoped to develop the existing themed slide show into a database in the future. A Discussion Group page would be added to the site.
- The site would be relaunched to coincide with the birth of the new Trust, though no date had yet been set.
- The Message Board currently had four entries revolving around two discussions.
- A few more projects had to be added to the projects page. CD had been approached for the first time by a non-professional, Dave Hutchison, to include his database of house carpenters in Sutherland in the 19th Century.
- The website had been given a part technical and part design revamp.

In response to a query by LM, CD explained that the majority of costs were associated with the development of the site as he undertook editing and updating on a voluntary basis. Once HS funding had finished it would not be costly to keep the site updated but it would require time. CBA charged a hosting fee of £125 per annum and JS suggested that it may be worthwhile to compare rates with the BIAB. It was suggested that these monies could be raised via the training days.

-SG's edited MoLRS Conference Proceedings was available in PDF format and could be put on the website with a link to the Ben Lawers site. It was suggested that the MoLRS Policy Paper could also be posted, though it would be easier to download if it was saved chapter by chapter. CD confirmed that CBA had no restrictions on server space.

RTu acknowledged that the site would be a key tool in the SRP Project and extended his thanks to CD, KS and HS for their good work.

### **10. Roundtable Points of Interest**

Due to time constraints, this item was dropped from the Agenda.

### **11. AOB**

There was no other business.

### **12. Date of Next Meeting**

The next MoLRS WG meeting will take place on Thursday 26th August 2004 at 1pm in Room 4U5, University of Stirling.

### **ACTION POINTS**

1. RTu/JA to amend the proposed constitution as detailed under item 4 and arrange for signature by all Trustees before 01 July 2004. Trustees to nominate a Secretary.
2. WG to focus on re-drafting the HRST Constitution at the next meeting.
3. RTu/JA to set up a separate bank account for the HRST and write formally to HS to amend BACS and offer details.
4. WG to discuss revolving secretariat duties between Agencies.
5. SB to sound out possible DG venues and local group support in Renfrewshire (Bruce Henry, ACFA) and Aberdeenshire (Charlie Murray) and report back to WG. SB to ask Dougie Macinnes to present a talk on Glenlochry.
6. SB to obtain farmer's permission to hold training day at Kiltyrie and formalise the programme. Programme to be posted on the website within two weeks and flyers issued to SG for review before issuing via HS. SB to send mailing list amendments to DS. DS to add Dougie Macinnes to list.
7. RTi to consider doing a field walk/talk on geomorphology at the training day.
8. CD to liaise with BIAB regarding the hosting of the website.
9. SG to arrange for web-posting of MoLRS Conference Proceedings and MoLRS Policy Paper in PDF format (separate chapters).