

## **SOUTH PERTSHIRE DEER MANAGEMENT GROUP**

### **Minutes of the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting Held on Wednesday 30 April 2013 At Carroglen, Comrie**

<b>Present</b>	Martin Robb	Carroglen
	Michael Aldridge	Secretary
	James Duncan Millar	Remony
	Jimmy Anderson	Lochearnside
	Isla Crichton	Monzie
	Charmian Holcroft	Glenbeich
	John Murdock	Glenbeich
	Chris Gordon	Logiealmond
	Mark Duncan	Forestry Commission
	Jamie Hammond	S.N.H
	Anton Watson	S.N.H
	Alix Whitaker	Auchnafree
	Dominick Murray	SSE
	Kirsty Frost	SSE
	David Campbell	West Glenalmond
	Randal Wilson	Aberuchill
	Ian Fridge	Aberuchill
	Vincent Brigode	Eighton Estates
	Leif Brag	Griffin
	Finlay Clark	Bidwells
	Michael Baillie-Hamilton	Kinnell
<b>Apologies</b>	Ian Duncan Millar	Wester Tullich
	Alex Baillie-Hamilton	Kinnell
	Ron Smith	Dunira
	Richard Cooke	Chairman, ADMG

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting, including Finlay Clark, ADMG Secretary and Randal Wilson and Ian Fridge from Aberuchill.

#### **1. Minutes of 18<sup>th</sup> AGM**

The minutes of the 2012 meeting were accepted as a true record.

## **2. Accounts for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013**

The deficit for the current year is £234.58, but with subscriptions still due of £644.80. This will lead to a surplus of £410.22 ahead of budget. Current assets amount to £2,244.78, largely made up of a previous marketing levy which has not been expended.

ADMG subscriptions remain at £3 for stags £1.50, for hinds and £0.75 for other species. Group subscriptions remain at £4 for stags, £2.00 for hinds and £0.75 for other species (the other species levy will be collected for the first time in 2012).

Both the accounts and budget were approved.

## **3. Election of Office Bearers**

The Chairman enquired whether anyone would be interested in acting as Secretary. In the absence of any offers, Michael Aldridge agreed that Drummond Estates would continue to act as Secretary. The Chairman gave notice that he wished to stand down in 12 months' time and invited nominations.

## **4. ADMG matters**

The ADMG held a worthwhile seminar for Secretaries and Chairmen in March. The aim was to improve the running and management of D.M.G's. Various examples were presented. The common finding was that successful groups demonstrate good leadership, co-operation, participation and good communication.

Richard Cooke, Finlay Clark and Dick Playfair met with Paul Wheelhouse, the minister, along with Scottish Government officials last week. It was generally acknowledged that ADMG is making progress on deer management matters. The current land reform review, chaired by Dr Alison Elliot, is well underway with the first opportunity for submissions having taken place in January. The group reports in April 2014 but there will still be opportunities to comment on what is felt by many to be an extreme agenda.

The government long term aim is that all who shoot deer should be suitably qualified. Currently DMQ 1 is the minimum level of qualification. Level 2 status is the desired standard for quality assurance.

There will be a show of working hill ponies at the Scone Game Fair, competing for the Fred Taylor Memorial Trophy.

The online version of 'Heading for the Scottish Hills' has not made as much progress as was hoped due to a shortfall in funding.

Domestic sales of Scottish Venison increased by 25% last year. There is now a problem with supply which is being partly met by farmed deer. The Scottish Venison Partnership continues to be funded by a 1p per kilo levy. Members were urged to ensure that their game dealer is signed up to the scheme, and encouraged to become quality assured.

It was noted that a fire in a gamekeeper's house had been started by the malfunction of a spot light left on charge overnight. During this instant the issue of unsecured firearms had been raised. Stalkers were reminded that firearms must be secured properly at all time when not in use.

There are two consultations currently being scrutinised by ADMG:  
Deer management in the National Forest Estate and  
Wild Land, which identifies core areas of wild land character which need to be given significant protection from wind farm development under Scottish Planning Policy.

## **5. SNH matters**

Jamie Hammond noted that many of the items referred to in the ADMG report had already been covered. The general licence for controlling deer remains in place with no change to the conditions. SNH are examining the evidence of the impact on deer welfare of deer management being carried out by people who do not hold the necessary qualifications. The Best Practice initiative continues but is no longer supported as a full time post. The previously successful three day events will be replaced by more focused one day events.

It was proposed that a habitat impact assessment day should be arranged jointly with the Glenartney Deer Management Group. Jamie Hammond will offer some potential dates.

### **Deer counts and recommended culls**

The deer count took place on the second Tuesday of March. It was noted that one or two groups of 100 deer normally resident on the northern sub group were not counted. Stag culls were generally in line with the targets and expectations, although hind culls were below target due to difficult weather conditions.

There are no designated sites within the deer management group area, therefore SNH have no specific issues with the cull and count figures. It was generally felt by members the count understated the number of deer due to incomplete coverage and difficulty of assessing deer numbers in forestry.

Culls will be agreed within sub groups.

## **6. Deer Management Plans**

The northern sub group is well organised with a deer management plan. Both the eastern and western sub groups have no plan but the initiative on habitat impact assessments is a move in the right direction. In the eastern sub group, most estates concentrate on grouse and have a policy of minimising deer numbers. In the west most estates have mixed objectives including deer, grouse and sheep and the consensus among between estates had resulted in less pressure for a deer management plan.

### **Date of Next Meeting**

The next AGM will be held in 2014 in either the first or second week of May with the date to be confirmed.

The Western Sub Group will meet at the beginning of August with the date to be confirmed. The Northern Sub-group is due to meet in June.