

**Highland Clan Partnership Group**  
**Friday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2014**

**1. Welcome and introductions**

John Mackenzie (JMack) welcomed the group. Those in attendance were:-

John Graham (JG), Rossie Macrae (RM), Scott Armstrong (SA), Stuart Black (SB), Kevin Hanlon (KH), Jamie Steed (JS), Hector Munro (HM) and Lachlan Stewart (LS)

Apologies were given from Malcolm Roughead (MR) and Norman McPherson (NMcPh)

**2. Notes of the last meeting**

The minute of the 4 September 2013 was agreed to be an accurate record.

**3. Update on progress with delivery of agreed actions**

**1) Chase up Clans response to the questionnaire that was issued by VS**

SA confirmed that 9 out of the 39 questionnaire recipients have responded. Those received to date are Mattheson, Urquart, McKenzie, Davidson, Gregor, McPherson, Donald Macrae and Maclean.

JG said that others are in hand and will respond. NMcPh to also raise at the next meeting of the Association of Highland Clan Societies (AHCS).

**Action – NMcPh to prompt outstanding Clan Societies at the next AHCS meeting**

**2) VS to send out a template to Clans to quality assure the new content on [www.ancestralscotland.com](http://www.ancestralscotland.com)**

Covered by above.

**3) VS content team to create content following receipt of the completed questionnaires and HCPG to quality check prior to publication**

Covered by above.

**4) Clan members to provide event information and SA to share information on consumer searches for clan activity**

SA passed round papers to the group which detailed information about the key word searches being used by those accessing the ancestry section of the VisitScotland website. It was noted that on the USA facing website there was a quarter of a million searches in a single month for genealogy and 1.5 million searches for ancestry. On

the UK facing website in a single month Gordon was the most searched for Clan. Copies of the full analytics data was provided for HCPG member information

**5) Progress cost neutral commercial option once content copy completed re questionnaires**

JG updated the group that Catch PR are putting together a proposal that will act as a regional tour guide capturing multi-clan information. There will be no cost to the Scottish Clans, SG or VS.

**6) Speak to AT manager about including the sites suggested by HCPG as part of the Expo planning process for 2014**

SA confirmed that he has updated the AT manager and they are aware of the offer.

**7) Encourage engagement of Clans in Highland Games activities through AHCS**

Currently in between seasons. It was noted that clans were more involved in games throughout 2013. The AHCS intends to have a presence at various games in 2014.

**8) Take forward the suggested amendments to the Clan Event Fund application/guidance with ES**

JS confirmed that amendments were passed to EventScotland (ES) and incorporated into the final application form and guidelines.

**9) Speak to AHCS to explore whether they would consider leading on the proposed approach around providing placement opportunities for event management students and ensure the University of the Highlands and Islands were included in the prospective list given the locality**

JG confirmed that AHCS does not want to lead on this as they are not a secretariat group but they will make the information available should it be required and then it will be reliant on each clan to make their own contact and arrangements, there will also be an opportunity for assistance with marketing. JG has met with University of the Highlands and Islands and Professor Joe Goldblatt. It was felt the first example of shared activity will form a template for other clans to replicate. When planning an event clans should meet with the relevant University to discuss their needs.

**10) Ensure HCPG consulted on developing thinking around the creation of a Clan Forum**

KH confirmed that Mr Ewing was due to meet with clan representatives from across the rest of Scotland on 24 September 2013 to explore the relevance or otherwise of the initial 11 asks raised by the HCPG. The Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs (SCSC) wrote out to members and invited reps from the Lowlands, Borders and North East of Scotland. The feedback provided confirmed the HCPG issues had little relevance to the rest of Scotland and there was little appetite for a meeting to take place. KH also confirmed that both SG and Mr Ewing remained committed to

the creation of a Clan Forum that afforded a national perspective on Clan Tourism if there was a level of interest in and demand for this approach; and reiterated previous commitments that HCPG would be represented on it. JG said that a genealogy group in Dumfries might be interested in getting involved and agreed to share contact details with KH.

**Action – JG to arrange for contact details to be shared**

**Action – KH to ensure the HCPG remained fully sighted and were afforded the opportunity to inform emerging plans for creation of a national Clan Forum**

**11) Ensure SG/VS review content and agree next steps for the HCPG website**

JS confirmed that himself and a colleague from VS had reviewed the HCPG website and provided feedback to JG who had made some amends. JG said that the website is basically an information portal and is already getting quite a few hits.

**12) Circulate the evaluation report on engagement with Highland Games in 2013 to HCPG and ensure they remain updated on proposed activity in 2014**

SA passed out a Highland Games Attendance 2013 document to the group. He noted that there was a three tier approach for Highland Games attendance. A number of games were attended by VS as part of the tier one approach. The attendance involved having a stand/tent and distributing VS, Homecoming Scotland 2014 and Ancestral Research information along with an on-stand competition with IcelandAir. Tier two and three were carried out by SCOTSAgents and tour operators that VS have trained, marketing materials were also provided. Total attendance across the games estimated at 500,000.

**13) Consider a communication strategy for the group around the SCEF**

A press release was issued announcing the launch of the fund. Information was also circulated via Clan networks.

#### **4. AOB**

i) JG raised a point from NMcPh, who was unable to attend the meeting. This related to the VisitScotland website and when searching for information on any clan being redirected to the commercial site of Scotclans. He feels this approach is wrong and is concerned that information given in the completed questionnaires will be handed over to this site, likely causing offense.

**Action – SA to pick up this issue with AT Manager and update the group accordingly**

ii) KH raised the intention for SG to step back from HCPG now that the 11 keys asks had largely been delivered and that ongoing activity was largely regional focussed..

**Action – SA and JG to meet to discuss the secretariat function as SG had provided this up until now**

SG's focus will now be at a national level with the creation of the proposed pan Scotland Clan Forum. KH reiterated that he and Mr Ewing remained committed to the HCPG being involved in the creation of the panel and expressed his thanks to the group for its work.

**Date of the next meeting**

The date of the next meeting agreed for 23 April and will be hosted again by Highland Council. Further details to follow.