

Highland Clan Partnership Group
Wednesday 4th September 2013

1. Welcome and introductions

John Mackenzie (JMack) welcomed the group.

Those in attendance were:-

Malcolm Roughead (MR), Rossie Macrae (RM), Kevin Hanlon (KH), Stuart Black (SB), Jamie Steed (JS), Scott Armstrong (SA), Norman McPherson (NMcPh), Hector Munro (HM) & John Graham (JG)

Apologies were given from Lachlan Stewart (LS)

2. Notes from last meeting

The minute of the 29 May 2013 was agreed to be an accurate record.

3. Update on progress with delivery of agreed actions

A tracker capturing actions from the previous meeting along with progress updates on each was tabled. JMack invited each of the leads to speak to their relevant item and to provide additional update.

1) Draft questionnaire to gather relevant clan info to be signed off

NMcPH and JG confirmed sign off on the draft questionnaire.

2) Email all Clans alerting them that a questionnaire will be issued

JG confirmed an alert had been issued along with a strong request that clans engage in the process and provide the detail asked for.

3) Issue questionnaire to Clans following sign off

SA reported that questionnaires were issued on 15 August to 39 recipients and that six responses had been received to date.

Action – JG to chase up in two weeks

4) Confirm details of proposed HCPG representative for the Ancestral Steering Group

JG confirmed that Graeme Mackenzie had been nominated and that SA had shared the details with the VS AT Manager. Graeme is a Historian and member of the Association of Highland Clan Societies (AHCS).

5) VS to send out a template to Clans to quality assure the new content on www.ancestralscotland.com, provide updates and gather any additional information. Detail to be returned to SA.

Held up until questionnaire information received.

6) SA to agree with VS content manager options for how linking Clan Websites to www.ancestralscotland.com and the possibility of including an interactive clan map might be accommodated.

SA confirmed that www.ancestralscotland.com has been integrated with the VS website. The content gathered from the questionnaires will provide additional content.

Action – VS content team to create content following receipt of the completed questionnaires and HCPG to quality check prior to publication

7) Clan members to provide event information and SA to share information on consumer key word searches for clan activity.

Held up until questionnaire information received.

8) Approach VS content team about the inclusion of Clan information in the regional What to See & Do guides.

SA confirmed that briefing had been provided to the content team.

9) Revisit options around commercial sponsorship once content copy completed re questionnaires

Action – JG to progress cost neutral commercial option

10) Electronic copy of the draft ‘Scottish Clan Gathering Fund – Applications Guidelines to be circulated to all HCPG members

Completed. Picked up as separate agenda item.

11) VS to arrange for relevant staff to go on field visits with Clans to increase knowledge base

HCPG have identified six sites which they would like Edinburgh VIC staff to visit and that it would be possible to arrange for knowledgeable personnel to be available at each venue. The sites offered were:-

- Castle Leod, Strathpeffer
- Clan MacPherson Museum, Newtonmore
- Clan Munro Museum, Foulis Ferrt.
- Eileen Donan Castle, Kyle of Lochalsh
- Dunrobin Castle, Golspie.
- Armadale, Sleat, Skye

And three sites of interest which have relevant connections

- Highland Folk Museum, Newtonmore
- Culloden Battlefield Centre, Inverness
- Fort George Museum, Ardersier.

MR suggested that consideration be given to incorporate these sites into the Expo fam trails visits in April 2014. Planning for these will begin in January 2014; and they involve taking tour operators & journalists round the country to experience attractions. Approximately 60 North American Scots agents are part of that.

Action – SA to speak with AT manager about including these sites as part of the Expo planning process for 2014

12) Confirm representatives for the Clan finance sub group and arrange a meeting for July

Completed. Picked up as separate agenda item.

13) Comments to be provided to Scott Armstrong on Clan links with Highland Games

JG highlighted shared that in the last year he felt more clans had engaged with Highland Games. The Inverness Highland Games was a notable example. RM confirmed that Pipebands in Forress were also keen to get involved. SB suggested that Gerry Reynolds be used as a route into Highland Games as he had a strong established network of contacts. KH suggested revisiting the papers from 29 May tabled by Caroline Packman under agenda item 5 - Clan Links with Highland Games. Papers attached for ease of reference.

Action – HCPG to encourage engagement of Clans in Highland Games activities through AHCS

14) Discuss with Ancestral Tourism Manager about securing advertising support from VS in Clan publications

SA informed the group that VS receives a high volume of requests per year for advertising support. Advertising support is public money and therefore is carefully selected and segmented. MR suggested that the Clan Event fund might offer opportunities to access advertising costs which could also be used to sign post the VS website.

15) Supply a one page synopsis of 2014 activities to HCPG

Completed

4. Clan Event Funding – paper – Kevin Hanlon

KH thanked JG, HM, SA plus Stuart Turner (ST) and Jeannie Graham for their contribution to the work of the Clan Fund sub group. The draft application form and

guidelines, which ES had created, were tabled for discussion. KH expressed his thanks to ES for their involvement.

HCPG confirmed that they were content to support the application process, subject to some minor amends which were noted. JMack commented that he felt the application form was well put together. Suggested amends included further explanation of meaning behind unique visitors; clarification of the application submission processes and some of the scoring methodology descriptors; and a definition of the city boundaries of Glasgow and Edinburgh.

Action – JS to progress amends to application/guidance with ES

It was also agreed that membership of the assessment panel should comprise a representative from SG, ES/VS, Highland Council and two members of the HCPG. SB confirmed that Highland Council would represent the interests of the local authorities relevant to HCPG (Moray, Argyll & Bute, Western Isles, Orkney & Shetland). It was also agreed that there would be a pool of members from the HCPG and that as applications would be known in advance, the HCPG representatives would select their representatives to avoid any conflicts of interest.

KH confirmed that Mr Ewing is meeting with Clans and Families from the rest of Scotland on 24 September 2013, at which point they will also be made aware of the fund; and that following this meeting the application process would be opened with a closing date of end November. In early December ES will gather all of the applications and distribute them to the assessment panel for scoring. The panel will then meet to discuss each application and decide on those who meet the criteria for support.

A paper from Colin Simpson, Highland Council was also circulated to the group, containing recommendations about how the impact of local Clan Events might be measured. An electronic copy is attached

5. Trainee Placements – paper - John Graham

Following a suggestion by EventScotland that HCPG should contact universities that run events management courses to explore placement opportunities for students to support the planning and delivery of clan events, JG presented a paper setting out the perceived benefits from both a Clan and student perspective and provided an update on the progress made.

Action – JG to speak to AHCS to explore whether they would consider leading on this proposed approach and ensure the University of the Highlands and Islands were included in the prospective list, given their locality.

6. Clan Forum – Kevin Hanlon

KH confirmed that Mr Ewing was keen to explore the feasibility of creating a Scotland wide strategic forum for Clans and families, building on the “regional” structure that was now being developed both in the Highland and across the rest of Scotland. Once proposals began to take shape, he committed to ensuring the HCPG

were afforded the opportunity to feed into that process. The intention of a Forum would be to consider clan tourism from a pan Scotland perspective whilst clearly remaining sensitive to regional variations. Membership would be drawn from the rest of Scotland groups as well as HCPG and also include VS, SG & the Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs (SCSC). Whilst there was general support for the concept, a plea was made for meetings to be held out-with the central belt.

Action – KH to ensure HCPG consulted on developing thinking around the creation of a Clan Forum

7. AOB

a) Bannockburn Live update – Norman McPherson

NMcPH updated the group by confirming that 33 clans had requested tables at the Bannockburn Live event. Highland Clans are not well represented. Those that have signed up so far are were confirmed as – MacPherson, Munro, Fraser, Cameron, MacLennan & MacMillan. He also reported that the Sgian-Dubh ban at the event had been lifted.

b) HCPG Website

JG updated the group that he had created a website to communicate the work of the HCPG. It is not yet available publicly and VS/SG were invited to review content before a decision was reached on next steps.

Action – HCPG secretariat to ensure SG/VS review content and agree next steps.

c) VS Highland Game engagement

MR confirmed that VS were currently reviewing their Highland Games engagement strategy for next year, given the positive experience in 2013, which was likely to mean moving activity up to another level next year.

Action – VS to circulate the evaluation report on engagement with Highland Games in 2013 to the group and ensure they remain updated on proposed activity in 2014.

d) Press releases for group

Action – SG/VS to consider a communication strategy for the group once the planned Rest of Scotland Clan group had met

8. Date of next Meeting

The date of next meeting agreed for 12 December. Venue to be Inverness. Further detail to follow

Action – HCPG Secretariat to circulate details