



HOWTH SPECIAL AMENITY AREA MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Comhairle Contae
Fhine Gall
Fingal County
Council



Members/alternates of the Howth SAAO:

*Howth-Sutton Community Council: Nessa O'Brien
Cllrs. D. Healy, J. Hopkins, B. McDonagh, J. Guerin Dublin Naturalist Field Club: D. Doogue/C. Breen; Fingal
Tourism: Neil Kennedy/Elaine O'Sullivan Hillwatch: Jacqueline Feeley
Howth land owners: Fiona Bellingham Howth Pathways: Conn Redmond/Dougal Cousins Howth Peninsula
Heritage Society: Edgar McLoughlin Irish Uplands Forum: Mary Tubridy National Parks and Wildlife Service:
Mairéad Stack Howth Peninsula: Mary O'Connor/Sean Doran*

Fingal Co. Co. officers supporting Howth SAAO:

*Gemma Carr (SEO, Parks), Brian Murray (SEO, Planning) Fearghal McSweeney, (AO, Planning), Kevin
Halpenny (Snr. Parks Superintendent), Theresa Casey (EO, Parks), Carol Hurley (Exec. Planner), Hans
Visser/Deirdre O'Farrell (Biodiversity Officers), David Daly (Admin.)*

Draft Minutes of Meeting held Wednesday 13th March 2024, in Baldoyle Public Library

Present: Philip O'Connor, Deirdre O'Farrell, Cllr David Healy, Nessa O'Brien, Sorchá King, Mary Tubridy, Zer Barokas, Jacqueline Feeley, Dougal Cousins, Edgar McLoughlin, Mary O'Connor, Ifty Finn, Killian O'Sullivan, Fearghal McSweeney, Cllr Joan Hopkins

Apologies: Conn Redmond, Gemma Carr, Mairéad Stack, Hans Visser, Therese Casey

SAAO/2 Minutes of previous meeting: Minutes of meeting of 13/12/23 proposed (by Dougal Cousins), seconded (by Cllr. David Healy) and adopted. Mary Tubridy wanted to note that she made direct contact with the Forest School who spoke at the last meeting to thank them for their time, Cllr Joan Hopkins also thanked the Forest School. It was also noted that Cowbooter Lane has been cut back.

SAAO/3 Update on SAAO works being implemented by Fingal Co. Co.

- Deirdre O'Farrell spoke on matters arising and works being implemented.
- Gorse removal carried out at East Mountain and Ben of Howth.
- Rhododendron control works east of Bog of Frogs ongoing. works to continue towards back of Deer Park Hotel.
- Heathland Restoration at the Nose of Howth was discussed. Trial for the first 6 weeks and will check back then to see what is working and what could be tweaked.
- Rope fencing at Nose of Howth will be in place before the tourist season.
- Consultants appointed to undertake feasibility of Greenhollows rewetting project. Area becoming marshier already following blocking of drain. This will serve as another method of wildfire management.
- Melissa who is running the Goat Grazing project will be leaving her role in July. The Committee wished her well. An Apprentice will be brought in to shadow Melissa over the coming months.
- Main activities requiring SAAO budget are PR person and schools and events programmes for a two year period. The estimated costs for the PR person is €27k, the estimated cost for the schools program is €18k and the estimated cost for the events program is €3200. The events costs can be covered in the Biodiversity program. Total remaining cost for the PR person and schools program is €45k. The budget allocation for the preparation and implementation of the communication plan was agreed €40k. €1k has been spend on preparing the communication plan and that leaves €39k. The overspend is €6k ,. Cllr's Joan Hopkins and David Healy will ask at Area Committee about getting an increase to the SAAO budget. it was agreed that Deirdre will re-work the existing programmes and come back with suggested cuts spread across each action area, i.e. hours of new PR person and schools programmes.

SAAO/4 Report from the Conservation and Recreation Sub-Committee [report attached separately]

- Mary Tubridy introduced the Committee's report.
- Excellent goat grazing field trip was attended by the Committee.
- Fieldwork surveys in SAC impeded by private owners. NPWS should be asked to facilitate.
- Sub-Committee thanked Deirdre for her work and also Melissa for organising the goat field trip.
- This report will be circulated by David Daly to members.

SAAO/5 Report from the Planning and Communications Sub-Committee [report attached separately]

- Jackie introduced the Committee's report.
- PR work the main activity. Spec developed for PR person. This already discussed above in item 3.

- Signage needed to guide tourists at courthouse, to be checked with Fingal Tourism.
- Signage at entrance to Cooke's Quarry to be clarified.
- Finalised draft brochure will be circulated by Philip. Translation will be arranged when text finalised.
- Essential that conditions of planning permissions are followed up.

SAAO/6 Howth Pathways [report attached separately]

- Dougal Spoke introduced the Howth Pathways report.
- Vegetation was cut back in Red Rock to bypass the rare Bird's Foot located here.
- Contractors will install a suitable surface for the new path.
- A MS Teams meeting was held of Howth Pathways with the Operations and Biodiversity Sections of Fingal County Council to share information and co-ordinate works.
- More garden waste was dumped on a SAAO registered right of way, rendering it impassable.
- The Biodiversity section has plans to use CCTV at this site.
- An update on signage on the right of way from point BK to BJ was sought.

SAAO/7 Expenditure Report

- The expenditure report was covered under item 3. Updated figures when completed by Deirdre/Hans will be circulated to members.

SAAO/8 AOB

- Caroline Core-Grimes was suggested as willing to represent landowners on the SAAO. Dougal Cousins proposed and Mary Tubridy and Nessa O'Brien seconded. Unanimously agreed.
- SAAO formally thanked Deirdre O'Farrell for her outstanding work during her short time working with the Committee

Next meeting: Wednesday, 12 June 2024 [tbc]

Minutes signed:

Philip O'Connor, Chair, SAAO