

**Aigas Community Forest**  
**National Forest Land Scheme Application - September 2009**

**1.8 Please enclose a brief résumé of each of your committee or Board members**

**Graeme Scott B.Acc, CA (Chair)**

Graeme is a Chartered Accountant with his own practice based in Inverness. Graeme qualified in 1981 and has worked as a Senior Investment Manager with the Highlands & Islands Development Board (now Highlands & Islands Enterprise) in Inverness. He then moved to Angus MacKenzie & Co, Chartered Accountants (now MacKenzie Kerr) in 1986, where he was latterly a partner before setting up his own accountancy practice in 1996. Graeme has a typical CA's practice, offering accountancy and taxation services to private individuals, sole traders, partnerships, limited companies and charitable trusts. In addition Graeme has for many years specialised in preparing feasibility studies and business plans. His experience in this regard is wide-ranging and covers the following market sectors: Arts and Heritage, Tourism and Leisure, Manufacturing, Housing, Gaelic Education, and Community Land Buy Outs. In particular Graeme, worked with associates to prepare feasibility studies / business plans for the successful pioneering land buy outs at Assynt (for The Assynt Crofters Trust), Eigg, Knoydart, North Harris and the Glencanisp and Drumrunie Estates (for the Assynt Foundation). Graeme also has considerable experience of working with a range of charitable organisations and this experience includes: preparation of charitable accounts; advising re charitable group structures where trading activities are involved; and attending charity board meetings either as advisor or as a director.

**Lara McDonald (Vice-Chair)**

Lara is a self employed Event Organiser and Project Administrator working with such groups as the Community Woodland Association, the Highland Environmental Network, Blazin in Beaully and the Blas Festival. Lara has for the past 20 years worked primarily in the music and theatre industries as an administrator and event co-ordinator doing everything from event planning to budget management. In the last few years Lara has moved into the woodland and environmental sectors. From 2005 to 2008 she was the Project Officer for the Forestry and Environment Programme which was Forestry Commission Scotland's year-long programme of events celebrating forestry and wood as part of the Highland Year of Culture 2007.

**Andrew Leaver (Secretary)**

Andrew has a Masters degree in marketing and has worked in the Business Development department of Inverness College UHI for the past 8½ years. He is currently Funding Manager and has responsibility for supporting project development and funding across the College. Andrew has recently secured in excess of £300,000 over 3 years to support the establishment of the Centre for Sustainable Energy at the College. He was also staff representative on the College Board from 2006 – 2008. Prior to Inverness College, Andrew was for 6 years fundraiser for Highland Hospice where his accomplishments include raising £1m from lottery, charitable trust and community sources for the Hospice's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Appeal. At the Hospice he was also responsible for all press and PR including production of newsletters, annual reports and other literature. Andrew continues to organize fundraising events, including a mountain bike event, for the Hospice as a volunteer and is also on the Board of the Council for Voluntary Service Inverness.

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### **John Graham (Treasurer)**

John is a Company Director who ran a fresh and frozen food distribution and retail company in the Midlands for nearly forty years. A fishmonger and game dealer by training he grew the company over the years to a sizeable entity employing some forty staff. Always innovative, he took on board many products that changed the face of the hotel and restaurant world. John also started a telecommunications company and a marine company. He is a board member of the National Federation of Fishmongers and a Churchill Fellow who spent time in the USA studying marketing and distribution of seafoods; John served for many years as a committee member of the East Midlands Association of Churchill Fellows. For thirty years he has been a member of the Leicester Host Lions Club, holding many posts including President and Zone Chairman and driving forward many charitable activities that have stood the test of time. In 2003 John took the opportunity to move, divested himself of his interests in the Midlands and purchased Cluanie Farm which abuts the eastern border of Aigas Forest. He breeds a fold of high pedigree Highland Cattle, grazes sheep and manages some 83 acres of broadleaf woodland. Since moving to the Highlands he ran the 2007 Loch Ness Canoe Clan Challenge and has edited the Clan Mackenzie Magazine as well as involving himself in other local organisations.

### **Steve Byford**

Steve is Managing Director of three successful companies all of which operate in and around the Beaulieu / Kilmorack area and support local employment. Originally from the South East of England Steve studied mechanical engineering and joined the family business thirty years ago. Having spent many a happy time holidaying in the Highlands including Aigas he fell in love with the area and moved here just over eight years ago. Since moving to the area he was invited to join the Kilmorack Community Council of which he has recently become Chair. Steve is also on the board of the Beaulieu Business Group and is a member of a liaison group for the local quarry at Wester Balblair. Steve is keen to promote sustainable job opportunities and public access in the Kilmorack area and enjoys renovating historic buildings, wildlife, landscape photography and walking.

### **Gavin Cormack**

Gavin is a class teacher at Teanassie Primary School within the Aigas Forest community area. He has an honours degree in Sociology and post-graduate diploma in Education. Gavin has 5 years teaching experience, is responsible for the schools eco-committee and is the lead teacher in their bid to gain a Green Flag as part of the Eco-School programme. Outdoor learning has become significantly more prominent in the development of the Scottish curriculum and Gavin has been involved in incorporating this into the school's planning. He is responsible for the development of the school's organic garden and the growing of vegetables by the school's pupils. He is passionate about providing a community resource which enables outdoor learning for all.

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### **Calum Fraser**

Calum has lived in the community of Kilmorack on the family croft for most of his life. He is a time served construction plant engineer working all over the North of Scotland on the maintenance of construction and forestry equipment. Calum is a keen walker and mountain bike enthusiast. He has organised charity mountain bike events and assisted with others. He is interested in old and historical paths and rights of way and in maintaining and promoting public access throughout the area. He is currently involved in preparing a feasibility study for a path between Kilmorack Hall and Teanassie School to the East of Aigas on behalf of Kilmorack Community Hall. Calum is also a director of the Kilmorack Community Hall committee and a member of the 10 Glens Mountain Bike Group.

### **Mark Hedderwick**

Mark is Director of Hitrak Ltd, a small plant hire and environmental contracting company based in Kilmorack. He is a contractor to Forestry Commission Scotland, Scottish Woodlands Ltd, various community forest trusts including Abriachan and Forres, National Trust for Scotland, SNH, Cairngorm National Park and The Highland Council. Mark has wide experience in designing, constructing and maintaining footpaths, car parks, roads, mountain bike trails and other recreational forestry works, often in environmentally sensitive areas. He also instructs groups of trainees and volunteers in footpath / mountain bike trail construction and maintenance. Mark is interested in maintaining and promoting public access for horses, walkers and cyclists and in small scale renewable energy projects. He is chairman of the 10 Glens Mountain Bike Group, which encourages and promotes mountain biking from Fort Augustus to Strathpeffer. This includes organisation of the 3G Challenge, a mountain bike event based around the community of Cannich, which raises money for various charities.

### **Philip Knott**

Phil is the Staff Naturalist at Aigas Field Centre and is a relative newcomer to the Highlands, moving to Aigas from his native Bristol in 2006. He organises and leads wildlife tours throughout the Highlands and Islands and is an expert on eco-tourism. Phil's main skills are in the identification and surveying of wildlife, as well as managing habitats (especially woodland) for the benefit of access, recreation and wildlife. He is in charge of the management of 300 acres of mixed native woodland and moorland that share nearly 2 miles of boundary with the Aigas Forest. In his work at the Field Centre he also takes charge of designing, creating and maintaining the extensive nature trails, wildlife watching hides and interpretative maps and leaflets that accompany them.

### **Sir John Lister-Kaye OBE**

Sir John lives at Aigas, near Beaulay, where he is director of the internationally acclaimed Aigas Field Centre, which he founded in 1970. Sir John is one of Scotland's best-known naturalists and conservationists as well as being a professional lecturer of international repute. He is a *Times* columnist and the author of eight books on nature and wildlife. In a 30 year career he was the first Chairman of Scottish Natural Heritage for the Highlands & Islands, President of the Scottish Wildlife Trust and Chairman of the government's Environmental Training Organisation and is a Vice President of RSPB. In 1986 he won the World Wilderness Foundation's gold award for environmental education; he has received honorary doctorates from St Andrew's and Stirling Universities and in 2003 he was awarded an OBE for services to nature conservation.

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#### **Peter Masheter**

Peter is the owner of the 420 acre livestock farm Mains of Aigas which shares a mutual boundary with Aigas Forest on 3 sides. Peter moved into the farm in 1960 and ran a commercial herd of beef cattle and a flock of cheviot sheep. During the 1970's Peter converted part of the farm buildings into a successful holiday accommodation business and in 1993 he diversified further into tourism and recreation by creating Aigas Golf Course, which has been running successfully ever since. Peter is past President of the Inverness Branch of the NFU, has served as Chair of Kilmorack Community Council, on which he is still a member and also sits on the Board of Kilmorack Community Hall.

#### **Mia Scott**

Mia is a Chartered Town Planner and has been Project Director and sole employee of the Highland Buildings Preservation Trust for the past 12 years. During this time she has built up Trust activities to ensure that it is self supporting, with management fee income derived from a rolling programme of projects; some on the traditional revolving fund basis, others, increasingly, as agents for other trusts, community groups or local councils. In her time with HBPT Mia has completed seven projects to consolidate or repair and reuse redundant historic buildings across the Highlands and Islands and Morayshire. This has been a varied portfolio of work, ranging from the £1.7m conversion of the category A listed sail loft in Stornoway for residential use and sale on the open market, to the consolidation of the ruined medieval Chapel of the Sand of Udrigil in Wester Ross. Mia's role includes all aspects of project management, starting with initial assessment of viability, feasibility studies, tender appointment and management of design teams, fundraising, risk assessments, financial management, overseeing the works on site to completion, ensuring implementation of snagging works right through to sale of the completed building.

#### **Alisdair Stewart**

Alisdair is a resident in the Crask of Aigas. His forestry career started in the late 1970s where he worked for the New Zealand Forest Service in Canterbury; the South Esk Estate, Brechin; Atholl Forest, Dunkeld and the Forestry Commission in Speyside. He attended the Scottish School of Forestry in Balloch and gained a Diploma in Forestry. In the mid 80's he joined the Metropolitan Police where he later transferred to Northern Constabulary based in Stornoway then subsequently in Inverness. He now works in the criminal justice system, monitoring offenders in the community. He played first team rugby for London Scottish, and is now a keen golfer and Level 1 coach for junior golfers at Aigas Golf Club. Alisdair is also a member of Kilmorack Community Council.