



E - NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2009, ISSUE 9

WELCOME

This edition of the quarterly e-newsletter is packed with information from various groups who braved the cold, wet winter and unseasonal sunshine of early spring to tidy, plant and improve access to their community woodlands. We are also pleased to present information on successful land acquisitions and various other points of interest out with the CWA that may be relevant to your group.

Information used in this newsletter has been provided by CWA members directly, from their websites or newsletters, we will not knowingly publish information without the permission from the group or member.



We would like to invite any news / stories / photographs from members and readers for the Summer edition of the CWA e-newsletter, due to be circulated in early August. If you have any news you would like to share, or comments / ideas relevant to the new format of the e-newsletter please contact: rosslyn@communitywoods.org

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CWA NEWS

CWA HOST RIDDOCH QUESTIONS

At the start of the year CWA hosted a very successful debate for the popular BBC Radio Scotland show Riddoch Questions. The debate, aired on Friday 23rd January focused on the draft Climate Change Bill and the controversial plans which may have led to a quarter of Forestry Commission land in Scotland being leased to a single private investment institution to raise money to support the delivery of the governments climate change targets.

A sixty strong audience of community group members and land owners voiced concerns and quizzed the invited panel members on the draft Bills proposals. The panel included Mike Russell MSP (then Environment Minister), Sarah Boyack MSP, Simon Milne *CEO of Scottish Wildlife Trust*, Stuart Goodall *CEO of the Confederation of Forest Industries* and CWA's Jon Hollingdale.

In responding to audience questions Mike Russell MSP repeatedly pledged that any arrangements put in place would fully protect community interests, including access and recreation, and boost potential for communities to manage local assets through leasing agreements.

Since the debate was aired there has been a parliamentary shuffle, which saw Mike Russell change role to Minister for Culture, External Affairs and the Constitution and Roseanna Cunningham MSP has taken on the role as Minister for Environment.

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The new minister will develop and explore a number of options which will ensure that Scotland's national forests make a bigger impact on tackling climate change. These options will include developing joint ventures on renewable energy projects and making the Scotland Rural Development Programme (SRDP) more effective in stimulating woodland creation.

The Minister has also written to the Conveners of the relevant Parliamentary Committees, to inform them that the proposal of leasing parts of Scotland's national forests to private companies will not be taken forward.

CWA now hope that the NFLS option for leasing land to communities which is currently prevented by the Forestry Acts will be permitted through the Public Services Reform Bill due into parliament later this year.

NEW CWA STAFF MEMBER

Rosslyn Mills joined CWA on 16th March as Community Woodland Advisor for West Central Scotland. A qualified Land Manager, Rosslyn is able to offer support, woodland advice, guidance on woodland development plans and advice on funding to groups that are based in the west and central regions of Scotland. Rosslyn will take the lead in promotion of the CWA and community woodlands to the wider public.

She will also facilitate training in forestry and other relevant skills. Over the next few weeks Rosslyn will be making contact with members in her area to introduce herself and gain a better understanding of their individual needs and the various sites. She is keen to be a visible presence in west central Scotland and will be attending a number of events throughout the summer please introduce yourself if you see Rosslyn out and about.



JAKE WILLIS, HIGHLAND WOODLAND ADVISOR, GOES PART TIME

Jake will be working half-time for CWA from 1st May in order to develop a new sawmilling and forestry business in Morvern. Jake remains available as before to provide advice to CWA members in Highland, the Islands and Argyll.

Jake will be available at his home office number of 01967 400030 on Thursdays and Fridays. At other times, members should email jake@communitywoods.org or leave a message on the mobile number 07875752264.



We hope this new arrangement does not inconvenience any members accessing our advisory service. If you need to speak to a staff member on a day Jake is not working contact Diane on 01854 613737.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

16th May 2009

Woodland Management Planning - Falkland Centre for Stewardship, Fife

29th to 31st May 2009

Woodland Deer Management—Knoydart, Inverie

For more information on these training events and booking forms please visit:

<http://www.communitywoods.org/index.php/events>

MEMBERS NEWS

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE (April 2009)

Currently CWA has 137 members which include; 9 Associates, 18 Individuals, 4 Umbrella, 41 Standard and 65 Full memberships. All new member groups will be added to the website member map in due course.

In this period we have collected a number of group contacts from the Umbrella memberships and these groups will now receive our members information direct from CWA rather than through the Umbrella member. For more information on our members, please visit our member map:

www.communitywoods.org/index.php/map/

ACHARACLE COMMUNITY COMPANY - ARGYLL

CWA woodland advisor Jake Willis and board member Jamie McIntyre recently helped Acharacle Community Company (ACC) to source and slab local oak felled as part of innovative management work in the Sunart Oakwoods Special Area of Conservation, undertaken in Duncan Henderson's wood at Ard Airigh.

ACC secretary Joanne Matheson plans to turn the oak into a sign for the Acharacle Community Company building, which includes the Post Office and Blue Parrot café and coffee shop.

For more information visit: www.initiative-at-the-edge.org.uk/ardnamurchan

Contribution from Joanne Matheson



ARDROSS COMMUNITY WOODLAND COMPANY - EASTER ROSS

Ardross Community Woodland Company in Easter Ross has just secured £10,000 Investing in Ideas funding for developing a comprehensive business plan for the purchase of 75 ha Inchlumpie Wood.

The funding will also enable the Company to draw up plans for a forest education building at Inchlumpie and explore the feasibility of a community-based wood fuel enterprise. The Company is in the process of preparing a National Forest Land Scheme application for the purchase. Last year, a community ballot voted 64 % in favour of the purchase.

Contribution from Matt Stevenson



CRAIGNISH COMMUNITY COMPANY (C3) - ARGYLL

Smoke signals and the jungle drums of Craignish have probably relayed the news to most of you - but just in case – I am glad to let you know that the Craignish community acquisition of Salachry Forest ballot papers were counted by the returning officer under the impatient glaze of a room full of spectators.

There were 216 ballots returned from a total of 325 eligible voters – that means 66.5% of the community participated in the postal ballot. 44 people voted NO and 172 voted YES. That means 53% of the entire eligible population (including those that did not return the papers) voted YES. A staggering 79.6% of the voters want the project to go ahead – a very decisive mandate for Craignish Community Company to proceed with the proposals.

A huge thanks to all involved for their hard work getting this far and for everyone for crossing the ballot paper and getting involved in shaping the future of this Community. 2/3rd of the community voted and that means we are not apathetic and we care and that counts for everything...

Next... submit proposals to the National Forest Land Scheme and wait for the Forestry's board members decision on whether community management will offer greater economic, environmental and social benefits than it does under state ownership.

For more information please visit www.craignish.net/C3/index.php

Contribution from Chrissie Sugden



KNOYDART 10th ANNIVERSARY

In the ten years since gaining community ownership, the Knoydart Foundation has been working on behalf of the community to improve accommodation, visitor facilities and environmental responsibilities. To celebrate their achievements and mark the ten year anniversary a fantastic selection of events and activities will be taking place throughout 2009 including Ceilidhs, a photographic competition and a music festival.

Knoydart Forest Trust will be hosting several events within the K10 festival, including carving events throughout the summer, resulting in the creation of a Celebration Pole. The trust will also be holding a Mega Rhodi Bash marking the final phase of 10 years of rhodi, 19th and 29th June (including celebratory Ceilidh and feast after the event)

The community of Knoydart are proud of what they have achieved and would like to welcome everyone to join them in their celebration. The K10 events are open to all.

For more information on all the events taking place as part of the K10 festival please visit:

www.knoydart-foundation.com/10th-anniversary/

Contribution from Grant Holroyd



NORTH WEST MULL COMMUNITY WOODLAND COMPANY

North-west Mull Community Woodland Company (NWMCWC) in partnership with Argyll and Bute Council and Forest Enterprise Scotland recently secured £0.75 million from the Scottish Government's Strategic Timber Transport Scheme towards the costs of a new haul route to access their 'landlocked' plantations. The haul route through Glen Bellart which includes reconstructing 3km of Public Road will create an essential link into the Mull forest road network to take timber from the Langamull and West Ardhru community forests and the Forest Enterprise Scotland Glen Bellart and Killiechronan forests to market. Construction is due to start in September 2009 to enable timber extraction to begin.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

In late February, NWMCWC hosted the first of a series of Skills Development Scheme Essential Forestry Skills' training courses. The weekend course on woodland thinning brought some 30 people together from Mull and other communities from Caithness to Argyll.



Dr Jens Haufe, Grant Holroyd and Jake Willis led a number of theoretical and practical sessions to introduce concepts of continuous cover forest management, mensuration techniques, planning thinning operations and appropriate extraction and primary processing, in this case using NWMCWC cooperatively owned Woodmizer bandmill operated by Matthew Reade. Participants from out with Mull had the opportunity to learn from development manager Ian Hepburn about NWMCWC projects. *These events are supported by the Scottish Government Skills Development Scheme, Robertson Trust, Hugh Fraser Foundation, and HIE Community Land Unit.*

For more information about NWMCWC visit: www.nwmullwoodland.co.uk/

Contribution from Ian Hepburn

ALVA GLEN HERITAGE TRUST - CLACKMANNANSHIRE

With the sun shining, parents and children turned up for an afternoon of fun activities in Alva Glen. This year local children took part in a "cooking for birds" activity where they enjoyed learning how to attract birds to their gardens with the correct kind of food. They created their own bird food recipes using fruit, nuts and suet!

Other children's activities included egg and spoon races and the popular Easter egg hunt around the Glen while the adults enjoyed sampling the home baking. The duck race entertained both adults and children - 150 plastic ducks were launched from the top of the waterfall and caught downstream just past the Rose Bridge.

This year the main focus for the Trust is to find the desperately needed funds to repair and improve the pathways in the upper glen to ensure Alva Glen continues to provide a relatively safe route of access to the Ochil Hills. The money raised from this event will really help efforts to ensure that Alva Glen continues to be an attractive route into the Ochil range.

For more information about Alva Glen and AGHT please see www.alvaglen.org.uk

Contribution from Nathan Critchlow-Watton

WOOP LAW COMMUNITY WOODLAND - BORDERS

Schools working to obtain or retain their 'green' accreditation, in part by pursuing the John Muir Award status, may be able to do so at Wooplaw in the future. The John Muir Award is open to all, and aims to encourage environmental awareness and responsibility for our wild places. There are three levels to the Award— Discovery, Explorer, and Conserver. And all three levels involve meeting the same four challenges of Discover, Explore, Conserve, and Share, with an emphasis on fun, adventure and exploration.

Anna and Diane from Borders Forest Trust took pupils from Stow Primary to Wooplaw every Friday for six weeks, and recently made a willow dome at Stow Primary School. It is hoped that more local schools will tackle their John Muir Award soon, and that Wooplaw can be instrumental in helping them to achieve the award. Complimentary membership for one year is to be offered to the parents of primary school groups who visit the woods with their school to help supervise the classes.

Ever fancied having a go at green woodworking?

If so, why not head to the Green Woodworking Weekend at Wooplaw Community Woodlands on 23rd and 24th May and make a pole-lathe and/ or shaving horse for yourself. For more information on this event, or to book your place please contact: info@wooplaw.org

Contribution from Bob Fleet

ANGUS COUNCIL

Angus Millennium Forest (an Angus wide community woodland project) is alive and cutting, with a harvest of 500 willow rods from one of its 3 coppice willow stands in Carnoustie.

One of the local schools, Woodlands Primary School needed willow rods for an outdoor willow tunnel project within their new school grounds in Carnoustie. Richard Bramhall contacted the local Council Tree Officer for help.

On the 3rd of February in sleet, drizzle and mud, twenty eight pupils and four teachers walked down the road to their local community woodland to meet Fred Conacher the Angus council Tree Officer, to harvest their



requirements. After a quick introduction and demonstration the work began, cutting, selecting rods and clearing the coppice stools of other unwanted shoots. The waste wood and pruning's were left back in the wood around the stools to break down and help stabilise the wet bank, another job the willow coppice stand is doing on this site.

Contribution from Fred Conacher (Tree Officer)

FORRES COMMUNITY WOODLAND TRUST - MORAY

Members of the public attended a special group consultation day organised by the Transition Towns Forres Group and Forres Community Woodlands Trust. The event held in mid March was aimed at gauging the public's opinion of the future sustainable projects of the town.

The event was a huge success, providing the opportunity for local groups to showcase their individual projects and forge a plan to work together for the good of the town and the local community. Children were entertained with face painting, soft play and sticking planet caring messages onto a tree, while adults were invited to fill in consultation forms from Forres Community Woodland Trust about proposals for the development of their local woodland.

Contribution CWA staff

CLEAR BUCKHAVEN - FIFE

Planting of trees at Buckhaven's first community woodland began on Sunday 14th December involving 20 volunteers from local voluntary groups, CLEAR (Community-led Environmental Action for Regeneration) and Kinetic youth programme, and expert guidance and volunteer input from Fife Air Cadets Conservation Team.

230 tree seedlings, funded by Woodland Trust and Fife Council, were planted on the lower Ness Braes. This is significant because Buckhaven lies in the Levenmouth Regeneration Area with many zones among 10% most deprived in Scotland and limited voluntary sector engagement.

The tree planting programme complements other modest joint efforts to improve the amenity of the town through bulb and shrub planting.



For more information please visit:

www.clearfife.org.uk *Contribution from Allen Armstrong*

OTHER GROUP NEWS

- Anagach Woods has been busy making a new all ability footpath in Grantown-on-Spey, linking through a park not in the Trust's ownership. The group hope to open the path officially in the next couple of weeks.
- Forest Schools are taking place across the CWA network including Drumchapel Community Woodland and Anagach Woods... Let us know if your wood is hosting a Forest School or Kindergarten.
- Dunbar Community Woodland are having problems with a Rogue Operator who is felling illegally in their woodland. We would like to discuss this further with our members, let us know if you have had problems with rogue operators - How did you overcome this issue?

Thank you to all the members who provided the information for this newsletter, should you wish to publicise an activity or share your news please contact

rosslyn@communitywoods.org

OTHER NEWS

COMMONWEALTH ORCHARD PROJECT

The Commonwealth Orchard project was conceived following the successful bid from the City of Glasgow to host the Commonwealth Games in 2014. The project aims to develop a Scotland wide network of community orchards in schools, parks, sport facilities, woodlands and public buildings. The Commonwealth Orchard is a legacy of the games that will offer rewards for communities across Scotland, for many years to come.

Over 30,000 trees have been sent out in the past year, to be planted by communities in various locations. It is anticipated that the trees planted in early 2009 will be producing significant amounts of fruit in 2014.

As well as recording where the new orchards are the project aims to provide the skills required to grow a successful orchard that everyone in the community can gain from, such as planting, pruning, grafting and most importantly preserving the fruit.



The Commonwealth Orchard project is featured in the next edition of Woodland Voice, CWA's member magazine. Should you wish further information about becoming part of the Commonwealth Orchard legacy please visit: www.commonwealthorchard.com

Contribution from John Hancox

THE SCOTTISH COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT ACTION PLAN

The Scottish Government published the Scottish Community Empowerment Action Plan in March 2009, the publication encourages people in both rural and urban areas to participate in the running of their neighbourhoods.

The action plan, which was jointly launched with COSLA, aims to provide clarity on what community empowerment is, how communities can get involved and why it is important to community development. There are a range of best practice examples from across Scotland, information on the various grants that may be accessible to community groups, providing a potential investment of £180 million from a range of government sources. The action plan is available from: www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/03/20155113/0

CWA has contributed to the Action Plan through involvement with Local People Leading, an informal alliance of community sector networks. While we broadly welcome the publication of the Action Plan, we and our colleagues in LPL have some reservations as to whether there is sufficient commitment and resources, particularly from local govt to follow through and deliver the level of change that the Plan implies is going to be required.

For more information on LPL's comments and thoughts on this plan, please visit the LPL website: www.localpeopleleading.co.uk/policy-talk/policy-articles/602/

Contribution Angus Hardie

HOMECOMING SCOTLAND

Marking the 250th Anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns, Homecoming Scotland 2009 is a series of activities and events celebrating the scenery, people and industry of Scotland. We are eager to receive information from members who have hosted or are hosting an event in connection with Homecoming Scotland to publicise in this section of the CWA e-newsletter.

FOREST HERITAGE SCOTLAND - "a call to arms"

A partnership between Forestry Commission Scotland and the Royal Commission on the Ancient Historic Monuments in Scotland has been established to support the Year of the Homecoming. Forest Heritage Scotland is an initiative designed to highlight and make accessible the hidden history of Scotland's natural forest estate.

The initiative concentrates on the history and archaeology of the last two hundred and fifty years, presenting the stories and experiences of the people who lived and worked on various sites, including abandoned highland townships, landscapes of early industry, stop lines and pillboxes of WWII defence. The FCS hope that by presenting these stories on the designated website that people will be encouraged to visit and enjoy the forests, perhaps exploring their family connections with the land as well as providing space for sharing experiences and photography online.



Sixty fascinating archaeological and historical monuments on the national forest estates are featured on the website. www.forestheritagescotland.com FCS are asking for your help in raising the profile of the heritage in the national forest estate by visiting these sites in the coming months, taking photographs and sharing experiences via the website.

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