



E-NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2009, ISSUE 10(a)

WELCOME

Our members have been very busy since our last newsletter, with award winning woodlands, successful grant applications, new developments, woodland dramatics and well attended training sessions. We would like to offer our thanks to everyone who contributed to the summer e-newsletter.

We have been overwhelmed with the reaction to the Spring newsletter, and have had to split this months into two separate publications to accommodate all the stories we have been sent - the second summer newsletter will be available at the end of August.

Due to the increased interest and volume of articles being received the Newsletter will be sent out every two months rather than a quarterly publication. We would like to invite any news / stories / photographs from members and readers for the Autumn edition of the CWA e-newsletter, due to be circulated in October.

Ros Mills West Central Scotland Woodland Advisor



CONTENTS

CWA NEWS

Directors Nominations
Arts Feasibility Study
Big Lottery Visit
Seminar & Conference 2009 (Info)
Skill Development Workshops
National Vegetation Classification Training

MEMBERS NEWS

Falkland Estate
Wooplaw Community Woodland
Blarbuie Community Woodland
Achnaha Community Woodland
Anagach Woods Trust
Kingsburgh Forest Trust
Culag Community Woodlands Trust
Scolty Woodland Park
South West Woodlands Trust

OTHER INTEREST

Save Scotland's Wee Bees
Moray and Aberdeenshire Forest District
River Cottage Landshare

STAFF CONTACTS

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

CWA NEWS

CWA DIRECTORS NOMINATIONS

CWA's Annual General Meeting will be held on Sunday 8th November following the annual conference. Each year we ask our voting members if they would like to nominate someone to become a CWA director. This person might be a member of your group or someone who you think would be suitable to help take CWA into the future. CWA Directors are likeminded individuals who actively contribute to the expansion of the community woodlands movement through serving on the CWA board. Nomination papers have now been distributed to members with the Conference Invitations.

ARTS FEASIBILITY STUDY

CWA have commissioned a Scotland wide Arts Feasibility Study appointing a team from BuyDesign Gallery Ltd, to conduct the study. To this end Eoin Cox and Louise Butler will be contacting some of you shortly to establish the level of interest amongst members for creative and cultural activities. Then take it a bit further and carry out some face to face time with some members. The contribution of the group and individual membership is crucial in this first stage of the study. This is an opportunity to relate past events you may have had in your woodlands (good and bad) and to contribute to the what could happen in the future.

BIG LOTTERY VISIT

ALVA AND MENSTRIE HOST BIG VISIT IN JUNE

In early June, CWA organised a visit from four of the Big Lottery staff members to meet some of our member groups in their woodlands. The visit was to introduce CWA's BIG case worker, Nicola Brown, to the work that we do and how our groups operate. Members, Alva Glen Heritage Group and Menstrie Community Woodland, provided excellent guided tours of their individual woodlands, chatting with the lottery staff and promoting their work. The day was a great success with Big Lottery Staff very impressed with the work of both groups as well as the support offered by the Community Woodlands Association.

2009 SEMINAR AND CONFERENCE

This year CWA are celebrating the 10th Annual Community Woodland Conference in Drumadrochit, by the banks of beautiful Loch Ness.

Returning to Roots the 2009 CWA Conference will take place on Saturday 7th and Sunday 8th November. The weekend activities will aid attendees in the development of their woodland, for biodiversity, recreation, non timber products and forestry. Topics over the weekend will include presentations from established member groups on how they transformed their wood and increased community benefits through active woodland management, how life long learning and forest school education works in a community woodland, managing woodland for maximum wildlife benefit, squirrels, moths, bumblebees and much, much more. The schedule also allows for various site visits to several of the community woodlands in the area.

The conference will be the usual social affair with plenty of opportunities to network with member groups from across Scotland, as well as the dinner and Ceilidh on the Saturday night. The conference is free to CWA members, with subsidies for travel and accommodation. Members invites have been posted out, please ensure to return your booking forms as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.

Roots to Health the 2009 CWA Seminar will take place on Friday 6th November, prior to the conference. The day will focus on the links a woodland can have with improved health of a community - *suitable for professionals and decision makers / policy influencers.*

SKILL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

FROM IDEAS TO ACTION, Thursday 27th & Friday 28th August 2009

Funding and Project Management training and networking event, delivered in partnership with the Development Trust Association Scotland. The two day event will take place in the West Park Centre in Dundee and accommodation and meals are provided. **booking essential forms from CWA website*

PROMOTING YOUR COMMUNITY WOODLAND, Thursday 11th September 2009

A overview of the best methods to promote the work of community woodland groups, training will be provided by promotional expert Catriona Ross. The one day event will be hosted by Drumchapel Community Woodland group. **booking essential— forms from CWA website*

Further information and booking forms for both of these events can be found at www.communitywoods.org

NATIONAL VEGETATION CLASSIFICATION TRAINING Tayside

CWA staff member Jake Willis recently attended a NVC weekend training event in Tayside Woods. Jake attended the event to learn more about species selection for native tree planting. NVC courses come highly recommended and can be beneficial for beginners and experts!

For more information about National Vegetation Classification please visit: www.jncc.gov.uk/page-2656 where you can also download a free NVC Field Guide PDF.

MEMBERS NEWS

FALKLAND CENTRE FOR STEWARDSHIP Fife

On Saturday 16th May volunteers from community groups around Scotland gathered at Falkland Centre for Stewardship to gain the knowledge and experience to help them to successfully plan the sustainable management and development of their community woodland.



Course leader Donald McPhillimy with attendees examine a soil pit at Falkland Estate in May

This one day course was geared towards complete beginners and enthusiasts who were keen to find out more about how a wood works. The day provided attendees the confidence and knowledge to know that they can walk into any woodland anywhere and begin to understand what makes it tick. Practical demonstrations were given on digging soil pits, carrying out habitat assessments and forestry techniques. The group were shown the importance of understanding how to move a woodland forward, through management to a better condition which is able to provide multiple benefits

This course is was hosted by the Centre for Stewardship and managed by CWA as part of a Scotland wide 'Skills Development and Knowledge Share Project' that will deliver 10 events each year, supporting community groups to run a variety of woodland management skill building courses locally. The project has been funded by Robertson Trust, Hugh Fraser Foundation and the Scottish Government's Skills Development Scheme.

For more information on the Falkland Centre for Stewardship please visit: www.centreforstewardship.org.uk

WOOP LAW COMMUNITY WOODLAND, Borders

LOTHIAN CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERS VISIT

Lothian Conservation Volunteers went down to Wooplaw for a good day laying path edging in April. A bus full with 12 and all their tools. The day was very productive with miles of edging laid in Big Wood and around the disabled loop. The group were serenaded by chiff chaff and curlews calling and even a woodpecker. The woods were a haven of activity, a perfect time of year for getting out and active.

Contribution by Bob Fleet

BLARBUIE WOODLAND ENTERPRISE Argyll

BLARBUIE WIN SCOTLAND'S FINEST WOOD AWARD



Ian Edwards of Reforesting Scotland, Blarbuie Woodland Coordinator Hugh Fife, Jim McColl, Patrick Harvey of NHS Highland and Blarbuie Woodland, Simon Macgillivray and Andy Neustein of Scotland's Finest Wood Awards

CWA member Blarbuie Woodland Enterprise, at Argyll and Bute Hospital is this year's Winner of Scotland's Finest Wood Award and the Tim Stead Trophy. The Trophy was presented to the Blarbuie Woodland Partners at Scotland's Garden Show in Edinburgh on May 29, by Jim McColl of Beechgrove Garden fame on behalf the Scotland's Finest Wood Awards and the Institute of Chartered Foresters.

The judges who visited the Wood at Lochgilphead earlier this year made the Award in recognition of its beauty, diversity, accessibility, and its active inclusion of users of mental health services, disabled people, schools and the wider public. Blarbuie Woodland is an innovative partnership of Reforesting Scotland, NHS Highland, Argyll Green Woodworkers Association, Scottish Association for Mental Health and Lochgilphead Community Council. Receiving the Award from Jim McColl, Hugh Fife, Blarbuie Woodland Coordinator, said: 'Getting to this important point in our evolution is thanks to many funding and supporting bodies over the last few years, and to many individuals who have been working hard on the ground to restore and enhance this local asset of great environmental and health and community importance.'

One of many factors that contributed to the Award was that Blarbuie Woodland is a member of the Community Woodland Association (and doubly so, with CWA member Argyll Green Woodworkers Association being a Partner), and another was the publication of the approved Health Research carried out in the Woods during 2008. With a Research Team including users of mental health services, interviews were carried out in the Woods, recording the views of staff and patients and members of the general public. The findings have been produced in printed and electronic form, but Blarbuie Woodland has also produced an accessible multi-media presentation, with images and sounds of the woodland, the voices of the interviewees, and music by the Argyll and Bute Hospital Band. The twenty-minute film has been shown locally, and it is hoped that it will travel the country in the months to come, including a showing at the CWA conference in November.

Contribution by Hugh Fife

ACHNAHA COMMUNITY WOODLAND Morvern

"LOVE, LORDS AND BURNING BOATS"

"Before we tell the story, we will do a game. I need a group of adults and a group of children", said Aoife O'Callaghan of te POOKa when all the spectators arrived in the car park of Achnaha Community Woods in Morvern on the 25th of April. From the faces of the adults in the audience you could tell that they thought: "Whoa, this is definitely a different kind of performance...." They were right.

After the icebreaking game, which was based on rock, scissors, paper, but involved giants, fairies and wizards, the audience of more than 100 people were guided through the story and subsequently through the woods. The story was loosely based on the Highland tale of the Spanish Princess (who - it is believed - was buried in Kiel Church graveyard) and wove in other Morvern stories and myths. It gave great scope for audience participation and very funny interventions.



The event was put together by local people using local resources. With the help of a few press ganged 'actors' and many willing volunteers, largely from Lochaline Primary School, the evening was a great success. .



Lochaline Primary students brought the woodland to life in April

The weather was great, the story compelling, but the icing on the cake came at the end, when we walked to the beach where an almost lifesized ship started to burn after some magic from three witches. The sun was setting in the Sound of Mull, there was dynamic pipemusic from Robin Smart and firespinners were showing off their talents. It was a truly mesmerizing end to a fantastic and inspirational performance.

The burning ship became a bonfire to roast marshmallows on and more than a few people stayed on the beach till 1am in the morning! After a cold dark winter it was good to get together again.

Achnaha Community Woodland would like to thank Kenn Musso, Aoife O'Callaghan and Beck Phipps of te POOKa and Awards for All and the Highland Council Culture Programme who funded the event. For more information on Achnaha Community Woodland please visit:

www.morverncommunitywoods.org.uk

ANAGACH WOODS TRUST Grantown

NEW ALL ABILITY PATH OPENS IN GRANTOWN ON SPEY

The Anagach Woods Trust has generated a lot of positive feedback from the community in Grantown with the completion of a new all-ability path through part of the Anagach Woods, connecting to a neighbouring park. A new access ramp off the road into Grantown and opposite the Craiglynne Hotel allows better access onto improved paths through Kylantra Meadow. These connect via an attractive corner of pine forest to the main path to the River Spey. It opens up an area of woodland that was well used by walkers, but involved fording the burn to connect to the rest of the Anagach Woods.

The new path improves access through a meadow full of wild flowers, with scattered trees, past areas of wet meadow, forest bog, under 250 year-old pine trees and over a new bridge on the Kylantra Burn. The existing path beside Kylantra Burn was upgraded by the Trust 2 years ago and the new paths create an optional loop convenient to residential and tourist areas. The scope for all-ability paths in and around



Rolling paths earlier in the year

Grantown has in the past been limited, partly due to the terrain, but also due to the lack of commitment. Improving all-ability access into the woods has been a priority for the Trust, not just for wheel chair users, but for anyone not so confident at walking on rough terrain and for parents with children in push chairs.

Aided by their charitable status and stimulated by Grantown Community Council, the Anagach Woods Trust took the opportunity to deliver the project by working with the landowners of Kylantra Meadow (Seafield Estate) and with Highland Council who manage the meadow, but who lack the capital for path improvements. Funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Forestry Commission Scotland and from Cairngorms LEADER enabled the Trust to complete the paths and undertake some environmental improvements. This included three new interpretational panels and removal of invasive Spyrea and Snowberry from beside the Kylantra Burn.

For more information, contact anagachwoods@btconnect.com

Contribution by Piers Voysey

KINGSBURGH FOREST TRUST, Skye

WOODLAND DEER MANAGEMENT TRAINING

Kingsburgh Forest Trust, represented by Neal Stephenson and Joe Curran, attended a CWA skills development event on the subject of Woodland Deer Management. This event was hosted by Knoydart Forest Trust. Kingsburgh Forest Trust may not have a deer problem on the scale of KFT (Knoydart) but we do have deer in the forest and it was most interesting to hear how others deal with the problem, with particular reference to control without erecting expensive deer fences.

The event also provided great opportunities to network with other groups and learn about their problems and solutions. Both the Forestry Commission and Deer Commission Scotland were represented to give best practice guidelines. KFT (Knoydart) was most hospitable and over the three days the weather was fantastic. We did bring back a few Knoydart ticks, though!

For more information on Kingsburgh Forest Trust visit www.kft-skye.org.uk or Knoydart Forest Trust visit: www.knoydart-foundation.com/home/knoydart-forest-trust

Contribution by Joe Curran

Information on how to host a Skills Development event in partnership with CWA can be provided by your regional CWA advisor.

CULAG COMMUNITY WOODLAND TRUST, Lochinver

EASTER FUN AND GAMES!

A wet Saturday afternoon in March did nothing to deter a group of families taking part in a treasure hunt with a difference at the Trust's All Abilities path. They were looking for Gaelic words, hidden along the route and attached to objects. The kids made a drawing of what the words meant, creating their very own Gaelic Pictionary. Tea and marshmallows and sunshine were a perfect end to an enjoyable event.

A more traditional treasure hunt took place at Easter in Culag Wood along Anna's and Billy's paths. Families set off in search of elusive Easter eggs. And with at least 1000 eggs to search for it was great that all but about 30 were found.

CULAG ENTERPRISES

A new company, Culag Enterprises, has been established to manage the employment and training associated with the new 4.5km Loop Path at Little Assynt. Construction progress has been excellent despite severe winter weather and the team members have, successfully passed each stage of their training.

A fine example of the training programme is the dry stone dyking course, lead by Dave Goulder, which resulted in restoration of the churchyard walls at Inchnadamph. We hope this first Culag Enterprises project will be followed by others which gradually expand employment and training opportunities for local people.

Anyone who has looked at the emerging path will have seen that it is going to set hearts pumping. It follows an undulating route to some of the most striking loch and mountain views in the North Highlands. Culag CWT are currently working on proposals to further enhance the landscape and biodiversity of Little Assynt with planting and management of native-species trees. This will create an additional focus for employment and training. The path will also access remains of pre- and post-Clearance settlements. The Trust is working with Historic Assynt to survey, research and preserve these heritage features, creating a further employment and training opportunity.

Contributions by Hilary Macdonald

SCOLTY WOODLAND PARK ASSOCIATION, Banchory

The Scolty Woodland Park Association (SWPA) are planning to create a red squirrel feeding area near the main forest road not far from the forestry commission car park. The choice of area will allow easy access for the public but still remain relatively secluded for wildlife. It is intended that there will be an all-ability path to the area with a viewing hide made of willow and an interpretation board for the public.



Proposed site for willow shelter

The intentions are also to have feeders fixed to the trees so the public can watch red squirrel feeding. SWPA have also made contact with local community youth groups informing them of the project and inviting the groups to become involved. SWPA are currently about to apply for their first funding application. Anyone wishing to find out more about the project or the Scolty Woodland Park Association please contact Elsa Brown 01224 735210.

Contribution By Elsa Brown

SOUTH WEST COMMUNITY WOODLANDS TRUST, Dumfries and Galloway ORCHARDS AND WILD HARVEST PROJECT

The 'Orchards and Wild Harvest Project' was launched recently by the planting of fruit trees at Kirkcudbright Academy and at Castle Douglas 'Activity and Resource Centre'. The orchard project is managed by South West Community Woodlands Trust and works closely with the Crichton Carbon Centre to facilitate the planting of a minimum of 1000 fruit and nut trees in Dumfries and Galloway over the next two years.

The aim of the project is to encourage the people of Dumfries and Galloway to plant and eat locally grown fruit and nuts in order to promote health and wellbeing, enhance local biodiversity and reduce carbon emissions.

With the assistance of landowners, Forestry Commission and community groups it is envisaged that trees and shrubs bearing edible fruits such as Elder, Rowan, Hazel, Crabapple, Damson and traditional local orchard varieties will be planted in school grounds, community orchards, in hedgerows - particularly along footpaths to enhance the walking experience, and along the national cycle route to enhance the local cycling experience. Reducing the carbon footprint of the region is fundamental to the project and can be achieved by encouraging walking, cycling, planting trees as a leisure activity, and eating locally produced fruit rather than imported varieties.

The project coordinator Jools Cox said, 'We want to celebrate the seasons by holding local blossom and fruit events throughout the region at food town events, farmers markets and country fairs, run orchard tours, juicing and tasting, storytelling, apple bobbing, cookery demonstrations and link up with local jam and wine producers.

The taste of a fresh crisp sweet apple in season is something many people have forgotten, I want kids to experience walking through trees laden with blossom and humming bees, and the pleasure of gathering and eating locally grown fresh fruit. We are collaborating with the Scottish Children's and Commonwealth Orchard projects to establish orchards for future generations of children'.

The Orchard and Wild Harvest project will also facilitate the mapping of existing fruit trees and orchards and collect information on varieties that do well in Dumfries and Galloway in order to help others choose trees for specific locations. This information will be collated for the Local Biodiversity Action Plan database of orchard trees.

If anyone wants to be involved in the project, or would like to donate or purchase a gift tree for the project please contact Jools Cox 100A Queen Street, Castle Douglas DG7 1EH 01556 503649 joolscox@tiscali.co.uk



Pupils from Kirkcudbright Academy at the launch of the Orchards and Wild Harvest Project

OTHER GROUP NEWS

- A new ten hectare community woodland will be created on the edge of **Broxburn** by West Lothian Council using a £30,000 grant from Rural Priorities. Local residents will see enhanced recreation opportunities, and the woodland creation will contribute to the Scottish Government's targets, which will in turn help mitigate climate change. For more information on please visit: www.scotland.gov.uk/topics/rural/SRDP
- **Falkland Heritage Trust** secured £66k in funds from Third Sector Enterprise Fund—Well done! More information on the fund is available from www.senscot.net/view_news
- Woodland homes, **Ardgeal by Kincaig**, 4 houses in Phase I built on land bought under the NFLS, developed by Highlands Small Communities Housing Trust in partnership with Kincaig Community Council. Sold at £157,000. The Trust takes a 35% equity share in the property. Rural Home Ownership grants also available so that buyers paid between £91,000 and £117,000 for the houses. Buyers have to be local residents or working in the area, but also a family connection gives them eligibility. If the new owners want to sell, the Trust has first call on buying the property at 65% of the market value set by the district valuer. If the owners want to sell within 10 years they have to pay back all of the rural home owners grant. The houses are well insulated, fitted with solar hot water and wood burning stoves.
- In May **Rosneath Community Woodland** were awarded a £27,000 WIAT grant assisted by the management plan prepared by CWA staff. Well done!
- **Alva Glen Heritage Trust** hosted a successful Path Maintenance and Survey training session in early June, participants were given a superb presentation from Paths for All followed by a tour of the glen and the problem areas of such a steep and narrow path network.

OTHER NEWS

SAVE SCOTLANDS WEE BEES!

Central Scotland Forest Trust (CSFT) has launched its 'Save The Wee Bees' campaign to raise awareness of the massive decline in the number of bumblebees and their importance within the human food chain. The number of bumblebees in Britain has dropped by a significant 50% in under 60 years due to changes in the way that our countryside is now farmed. At least three species of bumblebee have been lost to extinction with a fourth's existence currently in doubt.



Simon Rennie, chief executive of CSFT, said: "Bumblebees are the most endearing and familiar of our insects and play a pivotal part in our eco system. A summer's day wouldn't be the same without the sight and sound of bees buzzing from flower to flower. However, changes to farming practices and the management of our countryside have meant that there are fewer wildflowers in Scottish green space. Fewer flowers have meant that there is less pollen and nectar for bumblebees to feed on, which is why their numbers are falling." The main aim of the campaign is to draw attention to the interdependency of human society and the natural environment, and the fact that small changes in human behaviour can have big impacts, both positive and negative. For more information please visit:

www.csft.org.uk/savethewebees

Contribution by Eleanor Marshall

MORAY AND ABERDEENSHIRE FOREST DISTRICT

PROPOSED REMOVAL OF WAY-MARKING—FETTERESSO, GLENFARQUHAR AND DRUMTOCHTY

With the advent of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 and the Scottish Outdoor Access Code, which re-enforce the responsible "right to roam" in Scotland, FCS feel that formally way-marking the forest road-based trail network adds limited value to our predominantly local users and is therefore no longer necessary. You will still be most welcome to enjoy these woods for riding, walking or biking. In turn Forestry Commission Scotland will reinvest the resources normally used to maintain these trails in other local projects, where formal trail guidance is felt more appropriate. This suggestion forms part of a number of proposed changes to way-marking across the Forest District from 2009, where we will focus our investment in formal facilities in our smaller forests, leaving the larger ones like Fetteresso, Glenfarquhar and Drumtochty to the more adventurous visitors who have the appropriate navigation skills, and local residents who already know their way around.

Contribution by M&A FD staff

RIVER COTTAGE LANDSHARE

Chanel 4's River Cottage have teamed up with Landshare to create a UK wide initiative that aims to make our land more productive, and local produce more easily available. The aim is to bring together people who want to use land with those who have spare land for use.

The scheme is becoming very successful, however demand for land outweighs the amount available, Landshare are asking for people who do have productive land to spare to come forward and join the network. If you would like to know more about the Landshare scheme, please visit: www.rivercottage.net/landshare

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

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