

E-NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 16, SUMMER 2011



WWW.COMMUNITYWOODS.ORG

WELCOME

Here is a happy snap! CWA staff and directors gathered in Inverness in April, we took the opportunity to show off our brand new fleeces, sporting the newly launched CWA logo. The fleeces are fantastic, warm and cosy and we hope you agree that they look very smart.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this newsletter, information has come from various newsletters, websites and direct contact.



CWA NEWS

Date for diary - Conference 2011

All change... Again!

CWA Website Launch

Ros visits Buy Design Gallery

Social Enterprise Groups

MEMBERS NEWS

Ardrihaig Community Trust

Balloch Community Council

Bothwell Organic Growers

Bute Community Land Company

Dunbar Community Woodland

Knoydart Forest Trust

Laide and Aultbea Community Woodland

Mayfield and Easthouses Dev Trust

North West Mull Community Woodland

Sleat Community Trust

Wooplaw Community Woodland

OTHER INTEREST

Facebook

Corporate Tree Planting

CWA NEWS

CWA CONFERENCE 2011 – Cairngorms here we come!

We are pleased to announce that the CWA conference will be held on the 12th and 13th November in Kingussie. The conference will be returning to its original 2nd weekend in November slot due to a number of clashes with holidays, conferences and spooky goings on in October. We realise that this weekend will bring us back to hosting on Remembrance Sunday, however we aim to respect this and honour it with the traditional 2 minute silence. It has been 5 years since the CWA conference was held in the Cairngorms National Park and a lot has happened in our absence. We are delighted to be hosting a return visit, and look forward to seeing you at what is sure to be an insightful, inspirational and fun weekend!

Further information regarding the schedule and venue for the conference will be advertised on the CWA website in the coming weeks.

www.communitywoods.org

ALL CHANGE! – again...

CWA (like most organisations at the moment) has been undergoing funding changes and with the end of the financial year bringing the end of certain short term funding streams, we have been making a few staff changes too. The main one is that John Paterson, CWE Business Development Manager moved on from the association when his contract came to an end in April; CWA is continuing to develop CWE and will be taking forward the business plan.

In order to ensure continued high level of service from CWA, remaining staff members Jon, Ros and Diane have looked at their roles and strengths and will be working closer as a team in the coming months. As a result:-

Diane Oliver and the CWA Employability Services Project:-

Diane has reduced her working hours to 4 days per week – these will generally be Mon – Thurs. Diane will continue to be the main point of contact and lead on the project. Ros will be picking up on the work involved in organising and running the training programme. Ros will also be developing the CWA Growing Woodlands Project and is likely to take forward links with the Ness Soap Volunteering Cluster Project (for which Ness Soap has successfully secured the funding). Diane and Ros are really looking forward to working closer and exploring the skills and knowledge their partnership will bring to the Project.

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Jon Hollingdale CEO:-

Jon has reduced his work hours to 4 days per week – specific days will fluctuate depending on commitments. Jon will continue his role and duties as CEO for CWA, and will act as lead on the future development of CWE. Jon will take responsibility for CWE consultancy work, and will work with Ros and a series of external consultants in the delivery of this.

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Ros Mills, Woodland Advisor:-

Ros will continue to work full time as Woodland Advisor for CWA from her base in Stirling; she will remain the first point of contact for community woodland enquiries. As mentioned above, Ros will be working closely with Diane Oliver in delivering a training programme for the project groups, this work will coincide with the development of the 2011-2013 Knowledge and Skills Exchange Programme (funding permitting), and the Growing Woodlands Project. Ros will also spend time exploring and mapping the “unknown” sector, establishing partnerships with community support agencies (such as Countryside Ranger Service) allowing CWA to identify and fill gaps in support brought about by a wide range of funding cuts.

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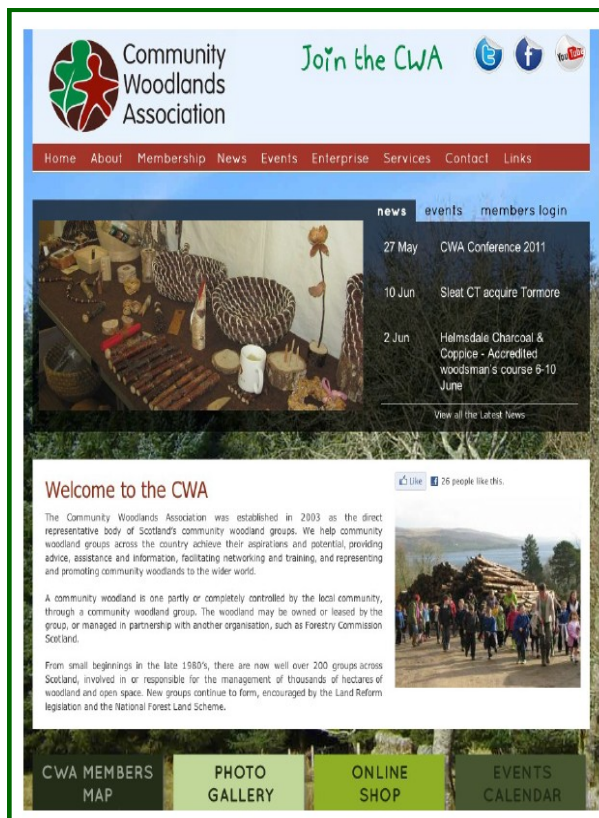
The team will continue to be supported by Administrative Officer Caroline Derbyshire.

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CWA WEBSITE LAUNCH

Eagle eyed members will have noticed that CWA has been going through some visual changes in the past few months too. We launched our new logo at the start of the year (see front of this newsletter) and have recently launched our new look, super dooper website.

The website is designed to be a platform for CWA members to advertise, promote and share news, products and knowledge. It has a fantastic online photo gallery with lots of familiar faces from the last 8 years and an online shop, events calendar and member login area, that CWA members can take advantage of. We hope to keep this up to date and relevant, therefore if you have content you wish to be added, please contact :-
admin@communitywoods.org



ROS VISITS BUY DESIGN GALLERY

In April Ros travelled down to Jedburgh to catch up with Eoin Cox, and to have a nosy at his workplace, Buy Design Gallery. The visit was a real treat; the immaculate gallery was stocked with a wealth of quality craft from Scotland, including beautiful hand crafted furniture, pottery, paintings, felts and tweeds - with several pieces originating from community woodlands.

Eoin's passion for quality Scottish craft was evident as he guided Ros through the gallery, pointing out key pieces by high profile makers such as Thomas Roebuck sitting side by side with products from community groups including the Galgael. No matter whom the supplier is, the quality of produce is obvious – even to an untrained eye, and the gallery client list is testimony to the beautiful works on offer. We would encourage CWA members to take the time to visit in person, or via the website, we are confident you will like what you find there and you may find inspiration for products that could come from your community woodland. Buy Design website – www.buydesigngallery.com



SOCIAL ENTERPRISE GROUPS

Thanks to Culag Woods and everyone at the Assynt Foundation for hosting a wonderful joint meeting for Di's social enterprise groups in early June. The visit included; a tour of Culag Woods, complete with timber extraction demonstration from Jimmy, a tour of the walled garden and woodchip boiler room on the Assynt Estate, as well as a sit down meeting to discuss funding and training opportunities.

A very worthwhile gathering with interesting people, in spectacular surroundings... Well done! For more information on the SE project, please contact Diane Oliver:- di.oliver@communitywoods.org

CWA MEMBER NEWS

ARDRISHAIG COMMUNITY TRUST, Argyll – Employment Opportunities

The Trust is working to promote and set up small scale businesses that will provide local employment opportunities so that these businesses can generate profits that can be re-invested within the Ardrishaig community. The Trust held an Information Day on Tuesday 8th March; a full report on the day will be published on the trust website in due course. www.ardrishaigcommunitytrust.org

BALLOCH COMMUNITY COUNCIL, Inverness – Hedges Project

The aim of the Hedges Project is to install carved wooden features along the "Hedges" road which will provide an incentive for walking there and enhance the experience. Carved benches will allow less-able walkers to stop for a rest and provide a pleasant sitting area on a sunny day. The project will involve local children about deciding which animals to include and where the carvings are to be sited. The project will improve the amenity of this local greenspace and encourage people of all ages and abilities to walk there and appreciate it more fully. Examples of the benches/sculptures can be found at www.chainsawcreations.co.uk

BOTHWELL ORGANIC GROWERS, Lanarkshire — Community Garden Opening

After 15 months of planning, one year of initial growing and a lot of hard work from committee members Bothwell Community Garden celebrated its official opening on the 11th June.

The garden was opened by Dr Ken Chisholm (pictured opposite) to an impressive crowd who braved the rain to enjoy the home baking, entertainment and tours of the community garden. Highlights included listening to the sap rising through the trees on the woodland walk, and learning how to handle a scythe. Thanks to everyone for a great day, and well done on creating a wonderful, productive community garden.



BUTE COMMUNITY LAND COMPANY, Argyll – MTB trail progress

Under the direction of Forest Project Manager Reeni Kennedy-Boyle, BCLC have moved a few steps closer to turning one community vision into reality. Mountain Bike Trails was one of many good ideas to come out of the consultation with the Bute community, and BCLC are excited to be moving forward with it.

Accompanied by David Kilpatrick of The Bike Shed, Reeni has been mapping out possible routes for trails, and hopes that a Mountain Bike Trail will promote fitness, and meet the communities need for more outdoor play for young people. The plan is to have two routes, utilising the existing forest tracks and the natural environment with minimum intervention. One route will be suitable for families, whilst the other will be appealing to the more adventurous. It is hoped that the installation of these trails will prove beneficial for local tourism and in turn boost the local economy. Further information on BCLC can be found at: www.buteforest.com

DUNBAR COMMUNITY WOODLAND GROUP, Lothian – Beltane Day 2011

Dunbar Community Woodlands' Beltane day was a great success. The Celtic Gods were smiling down on the woodland and the good weather made for a very relaxed and happy day (as you will see in the photos below!) Isobel's Wild garlic and Nettle Soup was well received, and between that and the themed tombola, the group raised £150 (the theme was Nature, Regeneration and Sustainability). The Fairy trail for the wee folk was magical - with stories and music. One of the story tellers wrote a story especially for Beltane, featuring the Green Man. The event had a real 'Green Man' in shape of Gavin Mitchell who joined us for the day to give Bushcraft Skills taster sessions. Kenny Grieve - 'Brotus Rural Skills' - the 'main man' at such events, brought games and gadgets which went down well with the kids.

The day featured crafters, musicians and poets. Susie showed her dyed fleeces, created with dyes sourced from the woods, while Ruth shared her needle-felting expertise and Yasmin and Sonia demonstrated their skills in spinning wool – everyone was encouraged to have a go.

Sustaining Dunbar had an information and advice stall and they were delighted to find that many had travelled by bike to the event. Even Sonia's spinning wheel arrived in a bike trailer! Community choir, 'Dunbar Sings' were in fine voice and sang some topical songs. Dunbar Writers enlightened the crowd with their writings and renditions, and Rita's harp sounded lovely in the woods, complimenting the birdsong beautifully. Drums and didgeridoos were laid out in the middle of the circle for all to enjoy.

The local produce stall was very popular, and sold loads of eggs, cheese, Belhaven smoked fish, as well as locally made jams and chutneys. Marie, a 'Zero Waste Volunteer' was on hand to give advice on composting and cutting down on food waste, and was kept very busy. Was there a bonfire? - Of course! DCWG convenor Simon Bell took charge, saying 'You can't have Beltane without a fire!' - not that you could see or feel it with such a strong sun beaming down, happily the kettle was constantly on to keep the committee supplied with tea. Simon brought along a visitor from Denmark who is a researcher in urban woodlands, and is looking into community approaches to managing public green spaces. She could not have been anything but impressed. Well done Dunbar!

For more information on Dunbar Community Woodland, please visit:- www.dunbarwoods.org



KNOYDART FOREST TRUST – Proposed Sculpture Trail

Following ongoing consultations KFT are looking into the installation of a sculpture trail in Inverie Woods. This project is in the very early stages and dependent on funding, but what is being proposed is a trail of 12 – 18 sculptures in the main woods surrounding the village, using established informal and core paths with occasional sculptures near to paths in natural clearings.

KFT would like to use local, natural materials as much as possible to minimise their carbon footprint and costs. Using the theme 'Wildlife and Nature' they are aiming at all ages with some sculptures being interactive to engage children and families.

Whilst some sculptures would be carved by professional sculptors, KFT would like to encourage locals to be involved – following the success of the totem pole we all know the peninsula has talent! KFT plan to have some hands on carving/crafting projects throughout spring/summer next year; and also some projects for the children to become involved in – possibly with their parents. If you have any ideas or questions please get in touch with Karen - karen@knoydart.org

**LAIDE & AULTBEA
COMMUNITY WOODLAND,
NW Highlands - Successful Exhibition**

The history Laide Wood exhibition took place at the Gairloch museum between the 4th and 9th April. The display told the history of Laide Wood, since it was purchased by the community in 2003. The group also took the opportunity to show off some of last year's painting competition entries.

Getting involved in this type of display allowed the group to advertise the wood and educate the public. The aim is to give people a green space to enjoy nature and the outdoors so that more people will realise what an attractive amenity they have on their doorstep.

For more information about Laide & Aultbea Community Woodland please visit:

www.laidewood.org.uk

**MAYFIELD AND EASTHOUSES
DEVELOPMENT TRUST,
Lothian – BIG funding**

MAEDT have received funding to transform an area of local woodland in Mayfield and Easthouses into a usable community space. The Big Lottery Funding is the first stage in transforming Cushat and Cohooley Woods in Mayfield. As part of the funding, a feasibility study will take place to explore the possibilities for the woodland. This process will include a community consultation to ensure that the local community are involved in the project from the very start.

CWA Director Isobel Knox, of Dunbar Community Woodland presented at a community meeting on the 16th May in Mayfield, where the results of the feasibility study were discussed.

Find more information about MAEDT at:
www.maedt.org.uk

**NORTH WEST MULL COMMUNITY WOODLAND COMPANY
Mull – Micro Hydro Scheme**

A full feasibility study has been commissioned for a Micro Hydro scheme using the Ardhu Burn. If the results of the feasibility study are favourable, a planning application will be put to Argyll and Bute Council. This project could play an important role in providing income to cover overhead costs when the Community Company's Lottery funding comes to an end. The proposed scheme would have virtually no visual or environmental impact once it was up and running, and would supply 'green' electricity to the National Grid. For more information on NWMCC and the hydro scheme please visit:
www.nwmullwoodland.co.uk

SLEAT COMMUNITY TRUST, Skye - Double Celebration!

Sleat Community Trust have double cause for celebration. On the 1st June they took over the ownership of 1,000 acre of Forestry Commission woodland in south Skye, and on the 2nd June the Trust was awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.

The Trust has been discussing potential joint projects with the Forestry Commission in Tormore Forest for many years including the development of native woodland, trails for walkers and bikers and education facilities for local children. When the forest was officially put on the open market, Sleat Community Trust registered an interest and then had 18 months to raise the funds.

Just after the official purchase of the woods, Sleat Community Trust were officially notified of the receipt of The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. This is the highest award given to volunteer groups across the UK for outstanding work done in their local communities.

Duncan MacInnes, who recently stepped down from the Board as Chair and Vice-chair, said "We are delighted with, and honoured by, this award. It is a big thank you to everyone in Sleat who has been active in the Trust and supported it in many ways. The Trust has developed a close working relationship with local landlords, our Community Council, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig Gaelic College and other community groups. Collectively this is creating a bright sustainable future for Sleat."

For more information on Sleat Community Trust visit:- www.sleatcommunitytrust.co.uk

WOOPLAW COMMUNITY WOODLAND, Borders – Ethnobotanist Walk

The weather was spectacular on the 24th April, for a walk through Axehead, Bigwood and Easterpark, with Ethnobotanist Ian Edwards (Google it... it's a fascinating job!). Those attending discovered that with woodland near you, you'll never go hungry!

Attendees learned what to do with rosebay willow herb (an asparagus substitute), blackthorn's flowers with a flavour of almonds and sloes in the autumn, elm. Salads included hawthorn leaves, dandelion leaves, wood sorrel, ground elder and elm seeds. A dozen uses for birch sap, bark, leaves and of course the wood.

As the walk progressed Ian was like a magician producing things from his knapsack; spruce needle jelly and bread made from conifer bark. Tiny shoes from Birch bark and a beautiful birch kuksa (drinking cup). He had an amazing wee coopered tub made from juniper, with juniper berries in it. The group persuaded him to put the items on the table at the end, to get some good pictures - how he managed to find the cocoa tree on Easter Sunday in the Borders we'll never know...

Check out the pictures at www.wooplaw.org.uk

OTHER INTEREST

CWA PRESENCE ON FACEBOOK – do you “like” us?

CWA has established a Facebook “Page” to complement our Facebook Group. From what we understand about social media, Facebook is the way forward and is already one of best ways of promoting projects and people. One of the best things about a Facebook Page is that you can link with other users and groups by using the “like” button. Diane and Ros spent some time following the launch of the Page finding other groups to “like” – this has resulted in a list of relevant projects/forums/groups being displayed on the CWA page.

www.facebook.com/pages/Community-Woodlands-Association-CWA/152665358133685

Our friends at Borders Forest Trust and Central Scotland Forest Trust have had pages up and running on Facebook for a while now and we are seriously lagging on our “likes” in comparison... but in the spirit of “healthy competition”... we want more friends than them! So we are encouraging our members to get online and show us some love, and we are appealing them to set up their own Facebook Pages, so we can “like” them back!

Ros will be circulating a “how to” guide to setting up a Facebook Page to CWA members following the release of this newsletter. However should you not receive a copy, please email rosslyn@communitywoods.org and she will send it to you.

CORPORATE TREE PLANTING OPPORTUNITY

CWA has recently been approached by companies who are looking to undertake their corporate social responsibility, where they support employee volunteering and cover costs incurred – i.e. the company would purchase trees and send along some volunteers to plant them.

CWA are looking to develop a package for companies that wish to do this – ideally this would include the cost of trees, your time to host, train and supervise the planting, tool provision if required and CWA organising time. This could help with delivering your management plan objectives too.

If you are interested in involvement with this, could you please make contact with Diane Oliver, di.oliver@communitywoods.org. CWA are particularly interested in groups who will be planting next winter and those who have tree nurseries that may be able to supply trees for planting events.