



Community
Woodlands
Association

“Making the Connections”

CWA Annual Conference Report

**Bleachingfield Centre, Dunbar, East Lothian
23rd & 24th August 2014**



Introduction

The 15th annual CWA conference took place on 23rd & 24th August 2014 at the Bleachingfield Centre, Dunbar, East Lothian, and attracted 77 delegates from across Scotland. 2014 marks the centenary of the death of John Muir, who was born in Dunbar, and his life and work provided one of the touchstones of the weekend. As ever, the CWA conference offered delegates plenty of opportunities to network, share experiences and be inspired by a diverse line up of speakers, workshops and site visits.

The conference theme was “Making the connections”, and the programme focussed on how community woodlands connect with different sections of the communities they serve, and how they link up the economic, social and environmental benefits they produce. Most of all, of course, the conference was about connecting up those who manage Scotland’s community woods.

The conference was held at the Bleachingfield Centre with visits to the nearby Lochend Woods, managed by the Dunbar Community Woodland Group, and the John Muir Birthplace tour in the centre of town. As a new addition to this years’ programme, delegates were invited back to the Bleachingfield Centre after their site visits to participate in informal discussion sessions. This proved to be extremely popular as well as providing delegates with another platform to network and discuss a diverse range of topics. Throughout the weekend Diane Oliver tweeted about the weekend’s events, quotes, questions etc., as well as updating Facebook with photos of the event as it was happening.

Quotes from the feedback received:

“Very good for networking / knowledge gain / ideas and enthusiasm”

“To hear of others experience, inspire, share, re-charge burnt out batteries, learn more, be part of CWA activities”

“Highly informative & insight into other groups and potential problems and solutions”

“I find CWA events inspiring and invigorating”

“Networking, ideas, positive energy, enthusiasm knowledge”

“Different ways to improve our woodlands and engagement with the community”

“Friendship, enthusiasm, heartening of the human race and a project to take home - "Log drums””

“A greater understanding of Scottish Rural Parliament. A bit more knowledge about forest gardens”

*CWA gratefully acknowledges the support of our funders:
Forestry Commission Scotland and Highlands & Islands Enterprise.*



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Photographs from the weekend, including the informal sessions and site visits to Lochend Woods and the John Muir Birthplace tour, can be viewed at CWA's online photo bank:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/communitywoods/>



Event Programme

Saturday 23rd August 2014

- 09.15 Registration
10.00 Chair's introduction and update on CWA work – Jon Hollingdale
10.15 Welcome from Dunbar CW – Isobel Knox
10.25 Sustaining Dunbar – Philip Revell
10.55 The Legacy of John Muir – Jo Moulin
11.25 Coffee break
11.50 Workshops:
Forestry Finance and Funding – Amanda Bryan & Andrew Leaver
Experiences of growing a Forest Garden – Ludwig Appeltans
Woodland weddings and Green Burials – Isobel Knox, Eva Hurley & Jonathan Caddy
Plant health: current threats and implications – Amanda Calvert
13.00 Lunch
13.50 Site Visits:
Lochend Woods, Dunbar (3 separate themed walks)
John Muir Birthplace tour
16.00 Informal Sessions:
Community Shares - Kelly McIntyre
Hutting in Community Woodlands – Ninian Stuart
Donor fundraising – Diane Campbell
Sustaining paid educational posts in community woods – Gavin Mitchell
16.00 Practical Session Green woodworking: come and try it – Dave Crosbie
19.00 Conference Dinner and Ceilidh

Sunday 24th August 2014

- 09.30 Registration
10.00 Chair's Welcome – Ian Hepburn
10.05 Engaging communities in native woodland restoration – Dr. Jane Rosegrant
10.30 Health & happiness in Dunnet Forest - Katie Webster
11.00 Coffee break
11.20 Scottish Rural Parliament: Workshop on key themes - Emma Cooper
12:50 Conference Summary and close of conference
13.00 Lunch
13.45 CWA Annual General Meeting
15.00 Close

Saturday 24th August 2013

Chair's Welcome
Jon Hollingdale, CWA CEO

Jon Hollingdale welcomed delegates and expressed his hope that, whether they were attending for the first time or have been to many previous CWA Conferences, they find it an educational, inspirational and above all, enjoyable experience.



2014 CWA Annual
Conference held at
Dunbar.
23rd & 24th August.



Jon also provided a brief update on CWA work and projects.

We have been very engaged with a number of Scottish Government policy developments, most notably the Community Empowerment Bill, recently presented to Parliament, which contains improvements to the Land Reform Act and provisions that will give community bodies new rights to initiate asset transfers from all Scottish public authorities. We await the introduction of the new Scotland Rural Development Programme, the key source of funding for forest management and many other activities, and will keep members up to date with progress.

Last year we announced that we were investigating a new model of woodland creation based around partnership working between communities and landowners; we subsequently employed Sophie Deas as a Research Intern for 6 months, to conduct a survey of community groups and other stakeholders. The survey had a positive response, Sophie's final report will be published shortly and we hope that we will be in a position to start some pilot projects next year.

Delegates from Highland and Argyll will know that Di Oliver has been supporting social enterprise development in those area for a couple of years now and CWA are now looking at ways on how to roll out that support throughout Scotland. This may be achieved through a UK-wide lottery funded project in which we are partners along with Hill Holt wood and Shared Assets who are also at the conference: we are confident of first stage approval next month and will keep members informed of progress.

Welcome to Dunbar Community Woodlands
Isobel Knox

Isobel Knox is the Secretary of the Dunbar Community Woodland Group and a CWA Director. She welcomed new and old members to the Dunbar and also passed on a welcome from the Royal Burgh of Dunbar Community Council. The theme of this years' conference is connections, something that we do rather well in our own community groups connecting woodlands and people.

Throughout 2014 Dunbar has been celebrating the Centenary of John Muir, the father of conservation, who was a naturalist, author, and early advocate of preservation of wilderness in the

United States. John Muir died on 24th December 1914. Celebrations started in Dunbar in April with the launch of the John Muir way which connects Scotland from East to West, it also connects Dunbar to Helensburgh, symbolically it connects Scotland to California and this was marked in Dunbar by planting a Sequoia tree, during Dunbar Woodland's own celebration day on Sunday 20th April.

Dunbar Community Woodland was established in 2000, a couple of years after planning permission was given for a significant expansion of the town close to the woods. A large area of land had been sold for development by the farmer, and it was a condition of planning that the woodland be conserved for the benefit of the community. Ownership was passed to the community in 2007 after many years of negotiations. FCS introduced WIAT funding, which targets woodlands in and around towns, which was perfect for Dunbar so they went for it. They had a 4 year work programme, which included thinning, clear felling a spruce plantation, upgrading 7kms of paths networking and rhododendron clearance.

Delegates would have the opportunity to see this for themselves during the afternoon's site visits, which consisted of 3 different themed walks following a common thread of community connection to the woodland, whether that is the relationship with their 500 neighbours, the wildlife that shares the space in the woodland or the use of the forest for education. Dunbar Community Woodland enjoys further connections with the Dunbar John Muir Association with their shared interest of looking after the environment.

Working with groups and organisations that share the same interests is vital with what they do today and what they hope to achieve for the future of the woodlands. Isobel uses her connections to promote woodland involvement. She works with students from Dunbar Grammar School and as a John Muir Award Provider takes her groups of 14 year olds down to the woodlands to carry out conservation work. Each student is taken to the John Muir Birthplace to learn about John Muir's childhood in Dunbar in the hope that they are inspired take a collective responsibility to continue to take care of the woods today and in the future.

Isobel gave thanks to Dunbar committee members for all their hard work and preparation for the conference, from cutting grass to making key rings, a real team effort. Isobel hoped that everyone makes the most out of the connections over the weekend and learns more about John Muir.

Sustaining Dunbar ***Philip Revell***

Philip Revell spoke about Sustaining Dunbar, which brings people together to support new initiatives which create local jobs, help people cut their fuel bills and grow more food. This will reduce dependence on fossil fuels, reduce CO₂ emissions and make it easier for us to cope with future extreme weather and challenging economic times.

Dunbar has a population of about 8500. In 2007 members from the community woodland, Eco-congregation, John Muir Birthplace, Crunchy Carrot (local fruit and veg suppliers), schools, community councils and many others got together to face up to the challenge of weaning Dunbar away from its dependence on fossil fuels. Sustaining Dunbar was established to plan and start creating a vibrant and resilient locality much less reliant on fossil fuels.

The transition movement grew out of permaculture, which links back to John Muir's understanding that everything is connected: the essence of permaculture is taking the time to observe, understand and work with complex systems with minimum intervention and effort. The other

component of transition is the concept of Peak Oil: the recognition that all major oil fields are now at or past their peak production and that future reserves are going to be difficult to extract, which unfortunately means that more energy is needed to get more energy out.

We need to learn how to operate with less energy and take the opportunity to create a better place to live in. Individually and collectively we have become totally independent on oil, which has driven our economy and encouraged globalisation and the concentration of power. There is still a huge amount of oil left in the ground but we can only use a small percentage of these reserves. Unfortunately we are already seeing the signs of climate change: in the retreat of glaciers and closer to home. Recently Dunbar witnessed extreme weather conditions which included flash floods, significant soil erosion, and extreme storms with hurricane winds damaging the local school.

The biggest crisis we face is the crisis of imagination at the prospect of living without fossil fuels. Forty years ago Philip's eye was caught by a bright yellow book called "Living on the Sun" by Godfrey Boyle: that book was the reason he became involved in solar energy and renewables. Renewables have very different characteristics to oil, they are diffuse and should enable us to imagine a very different future around decentralisation and community empowerment to create locally adapted solutions. In Dunbar they have been trying to re-imagine a low carbon future: what that means to Dunbar, and how it will look like in 15 years' time.

One of Sustaining Dunbar's first funded projects (from the Climate Challenge Fund) was a 2 year community engagement process to consider, where they got their food from and where they wanted to be in 10 years. They contracted 21 people to go from door to door to gather information, and found that maps were a great tool in engaging people so they tried to map what natural and human resources they already had and how resources flowed through the area. Unsurprisingly, they found that society was not carbon-efficient, they imported food and the vast majority of people in Dunbar commuted to work.

The study showed that it is possible to have a greater self-reliant economy and greater opportunities for improving people's well-being and creation of meaningful local employment. They found that people did want to change, but were not able to because the support or the physical and policy infrastructure was not there.

Sustaining Dunbar worked with East Lothian Council and East Lothian Community Planning Partnership to try and encourage and enable change. This led to the production of the East Lothian Environmental Strategy, an excellent document that fed into a single outcome agreement. They went on to run a resilience planning workshop and came up with some strategic ideas to make Dunbar more resilient, however, there has subsequently been a change of administration and cutbacks and this has meant that very little has come from it.

Sustaining Dunbar's aim is to set up a supportive structure that helps enable and encourage lots of local projects to get off the ground and hopefully go off to be completely independent projects. Some projects have fulfilled their purpose then withered away, some did not succeed and some became embedded within local charitable work. Some projects have moved forward, e.g. the Dunbar Community Bakery which is now completely independent; 770 people have invested and it now runs a very successful shop on the High Street.

Belhaven Community Garden is a Sustaining Dunbar project to transform an area of land adjacent to Belhaven Hospital in Dunbar into gardens where local residents, community groups, staff and patients can grow together. They are community gardens promoting health, community, and environmental sustainability; they are not comprised of individual allotments, and there is a real sense of community and a shared love of growing food, herbs, flowers. The site has been made

available to Sustaining Dunbar, initially on a five year agreement, to October 2017 by NHS Lothian, which sees this as an experiment that could be scaled up if successful. There are many more Sustaining Dunbar projects which can be found at sustainingdunbar.org

They also have 3 other support teams: [Energy Advice](#), [Connecting Dunbar](#) (local sustainable transport), [Incredibly Edible Dunbar](#) (local food growing) and [Worms Work](#) (food waste composting) all working with households and schools to reduce carbon emissions, and to measure and record how they have done this, so that what is learned can be shared around the country. Sustaining Dunbar has also just won the tender for Scotland first Zero Waste Town which will bring a whole raft of projects.

Sustaining Dunbar has tried to work with the council to get them to understand the benefits of local small scale employment, which could have a huge effect on the local economy. One of the ways that they are taking that forward is a project in East Linton, where they are putting together a feasibility study to turn a "B" listed auction mart into a community-owned green enterprise park with flexible affordable spaces which would allow local people to start up their own enterprises.

At present Sustaining Dunbar, like many charities, are totally dependent on grant funding. They were hoping that by now the community wind farm would be in place to create an investment fund providing funding for new projects investing in local low carbon infrastructure, but this project was not given the go-ahead by East Lothian Council.

It has not been plain sailing for Sustaining Dunbar and they have seen opposition locally; some organisations felt threatened by what they were doing, fund raising etc, but they are trying to create a resilient community so that if they do receive a shock they will be able to bounce back to use that shock as a stimulus to create change. Sustaining Dunbar has not just sat around and waited for government to do something, they have just got out there and done it. On their own they are limited on what they can do but if they get together as a community they can create a ground swell for creative change.

The Legacy of John Muir Jo Moulin

Jo Moulin has been the manager of the John Muir Birthplace for 10 years but with local government changes she is now also the Museum's Officer East which means she also responsible for 6 museums in East Lothian, but John Muir has been very much her passion having grown up herself in Dunbar. Jo gave an overview of John Muir - the following quote really sets the scene for who he was and why his childhood in Dunbar was so important to him:

"When I was a boy in Scotland I was fond of everything that was wild, and all my life I've been growing fonder and fonder of wild places and wild creatures. Fortunately around my native town of Dunbar, by the stormy North Sea, there was no lack of wildness, though most of the land lay in smooth cultivation. With red-blooded playmates, wild as myself, I loved to wander in the fields to hear the birds sing, and along the seashore to gaze and wonder at the shells and seaweeds, eels and crabs in the pools among the rocks when the tide was low; and best of all to watch the waves in awful storms thundering on the black headlands and craggy ruins of the old Dunbar Castle when the sea and the sky, the waves and the clouds, were mingled together as one." The Story of My Boyhood & Youth (1913)

John Muir was born in Dunbar in 1838. The building that is now John Muir's Birthplace was his home as an infant. The Muir family lived on the ground floor behind the meal dealership that Muir's father ran as a very successful business, selling oats, grain and flour. In total 19 people lived in the building in the late 1830s. As the family and business grew more space was needed and they

moved to the house which later became the Lorne Hotel. John started school at the age of 3 first attending the Davel Brae School and then moving on to the Grammar School at the age of 7.

In February 1849 the family emigrated. In America there was no more time for the young children to go to school. In amongst the hard labour John was determined to continue to learn but the only book his father had in the house was a bible so neighbours gave him books to read. His father finally gave in and he was allowed to read in his own time so he started getting up at 1.00am to read but it was too cold so instead he started inventing things, including an early rising machine that tipped him from vertical to horizontal in the morning. In his free time, John read eagerly and his inventions, whittled from wood, helped him secure a place at Wisconsin University.

It didn't take long for John to get itchy feet and in 1867 he set out on a 1000 mile walk from Indiana to the Gulf of Mexico. People thought John looked like a tramp and it was said that he once got mugged, but the mugger felt so sorry for him because he had so little that the mugger gave back his possessions. He always kept a journal on his travels and these formed the basis of the books he wrote in later life. The inscription in his first journal that he kept during his 1000 mile walk read "John Muir, Earth-Planet, Universe".

"This grand show is eternal. It is always sunrise somewhere; the dew is never all dried at once; a shower is forever falling; vapor ever rising. Eternal sunrise, eternal sunset, eternal dawn and gloaming, on seas and continents and islands, each in its turn, as the round earth rolls." John of the Mountains (1938).

It is said that when John Muir arrived in San Francisco in 1868, he asked for the quickest way out of town to anywhere that is wild. He headed south towards the Yosemite. Overwhelmed by nature's beauty there, he said *"here I could stay tethered forever on just bread and water"*. In 1880 John married Louie Strenzel whose family owned a fruit ranch at Martinez in the Alhambra Valley. For several years he managed the ranch, working long hard hours. He was also a loving father to his 2 daughters, Helen and Wanda. However, a return trip to Yosemite in the 1880s left John outraged as loggers had started to fell the trees and overgrazing by sheep was destroying the flower meadows. The enemy had been advancing while he slept and he described the sheep as an uncontrollable swarm of hooved locusts that devoured everything in their path.

In 1890 2 articles: *'Treasures of the Yosemite'* and *'Features of the proposed Yosemite National Park'* were published in the Century magazine, and Yosemite became a National Park that year. John helped to form the Sierra Club in 1892. Its aim was to preserve the forests and natural features of the Sierra Nevada: he was its first President. He was also the natural choice as guide for many of the early trips made by club members to the Yosemite, and realised the importance of passing on his passion for wild places to others and the benefit this could bring to his campaigns to protect wild places.

Throughout his life, John produced over 300 articles and several books. In his later life, Muir devoted most of his time to the preservation of the Western forests. Because of the spiritual quality and enthusiasm toward nature expressed in his writings, he was able to inspire readers, including presidents and congressmen, to take action to help preserve large nature areas.

"Any fool can destroy trees. They cannot run away; and if they could, they would still be destroyed - chased and hunted down as long as fun or a dollar could be got out of their bark hides. Branching horns, or magnificent bole backbones. Few that fell trees plant them; nor would planting avail much towards getting back anything like the noble primeval forests. It took more than three thousand years to make some of the trees in these Western woods - trees that are still standing in perfect strength and beauty, waving and singing in the mighty forests of the Sierra. Through all the wonderful, eventful centuries God has cared for these trees, saved them from drought, disease, avalanches, and a thousand straining, levelling tempests and floods; but he cannot save them from fools - only Uncle Sam can do that." Our National Parks 1901

In 1903 John spent 3 days camping in Yosemite with President Roosevelt, convincing him of the need to protect the wilderness. In 1916, two years after his death, a Bill was passed to create the National Park Service, and he is today referred to as the "Father of the National Parks".

John Muir has a wide legacy. As a wilderness explorer, he is renowned for his exciting adventures in California's Sierra Nevada, among Alaska's glaciers, and world-wide travels in search of nature's beauty. As a writer, he taught the people of his time and the importance of experiencing and protecting natural heritage. His writings contributed greatly to the creation of Yosemite, Sequoia, Mount Rainier, Petrified Forest, and Grand Canyon National Parks. Dozens of places are named after John Muir, including the Muir Woods National Monument, the John Muir Trail, Muir College (UCSD), and many schools. In 1893 he returned to Scotland and followed a fairly typical route around Scotland, which has been used to follow his legacy around Scotland. His centenary celebrations during 2014 have focussed on a number of elements of that legacy:

John Muir's formative years: In Scotland John Muir developed his love of everything wild the importance of a childhood and being able to explore the outdoors.

His emigration journey from Glasgow 1849

His homecoming journey 1893

The connection between John Muir & Robert Burns, he always carried one of Robert Burns books with him on his travels as well as a bible;

The protection of wild places;

Celebrations of his life and achievements

The John Muir Birthplace reopened in August 2013 and tells the story of his whole life. At the Birthplace they run a series of education programmes. The longest running one is the Citizenship Project which gives all P5 students in East Lothian the opportunity to learn about John Muir. The project is delivered in partnership with the Arts Service and the Ranger Service and as a part of the project they work towards the John Muir Award and to achieve it they must complete 4 challenges: discover a wild place; explore it; do something to conserve it and share what they found with others. They do this via 2 drama sessions with visiting artists and the rangers work with the children and do something with the conserve element of the project. Dunbar school children tend to go out into the community wood in and explore. Last year in the region of 800 children nationally achieved the award;

The John Muir Trust is a conservation charity dedicated to protecting wild places. Founded in 1983, the Trust takes its inspiration from John Muir (1838-1914), the Scots-born founder of the modern conservation movement. Like Muir, the Trust believes in protecting wild land for its own sake, and because they believe wild places are essential for people and wildlife. They own and care for some of the UK's finest landscapes including Ben Nevis, Schiehallion, Sandwood Bay, Quinag in Assynt, part of the Cuillin on Skye and 3,000 acres on the Knoydart peninsula.

The John Muir Trust has been left a legacy to be used to promote John Muir's work and take it to a different audience. As a part of the Centenary the John Muir Way, a route between Dunbar and Helensburgh was opened in April 2014. Since it opened Dunbar has seen a 25% rise in tourism and a boost to the economy. John left delegates with a final quote from John Muir: "*All the wild world is beautiful, and it matters but little where we go....The spot where we chance to be always seems the best...*"

Workshops:

Forestry, Finance and Funding (aka Therapy Session for Current and Aspiring Community Forest Owners)

Amanda Bryan and Andrew Leaver

Two presentations were made during the workshop which was then followed by discussion. During the session the following points were made:

1. Most forestry purchases are taking place through Forestry Commission Scotland's National Forest Land Scheme which commenced in 2005 with a leasing option introduced in 2011. To date there have been 25 successful purchases through the scheme but not all of these are community purchases as there are strands for affordable housing open to housing associations and also to NGOs. There are a number of strands under NFLS including renewable energy, community purchase, NGO purchase, affordable housing, woodland crofts and also surplus land sales. Surplus land is where an NFLS purchase by communities or NGOs is triggered by the FCS selling off land that it deems to be surplus at which time stricter timescales come into force. NFLS follows a CRtB style process requiring DVS setting of a value and a community ballot with an 'independent' arm's length committee making recommendations. An important issue is that there have been no successful sales in 2013/14.
2. A key factor to be aware of in relation to purchase of forestry through the NFLS is that FCS is bound by the Scottish Public Finance Manual which is often referred to as 'Treasury Rules'. This 'guidance' states that a full open market value must be obtained when disposing of publicly held assets. This is a full commercial valuation and does not take into account any of the public benefits that might be delivered by a community group including those that they have had to stipulate to delivering as part of their case for community ownership and which may reduce their scope to achieve full commercial income from the forest. However a recommendation has been made in the recent LRRG Report which asks for this to be changed to enable below market valuations to be accepted.
3. The open market valuation of forestry is particularly problematic as it does not just reflect the value of the timber that could be extracted from the site. The valuation comprises two parts – the land and the trees. The 'tree' value comprises two parts the first relating to timber which will depend on the tree species, age, growth rate (Yield Class), quality, proximity to market and accessibility. The second element of the 'tree' bit of the valuation is the 'investment value' associated with forestry which relates to a wide range of tax benefits that can be achieved by the private sector (not necessarily by the community sector), forestry land's financial performance in contrast with that of other investments, a status element and also the fact there is limited supply which increases demand. The valuation undertaken for Raasay provides a really good example of these points where 290 Ha of forestry land around half of which was recently felled has been valued at £410,000. In comparison the Carloway Estate which is in the region of 4500 Ha recently was bought by the community there for less than £210,000. Numerous examples from forestry management advisers promoting the investment angle of forestry in 2013 and 2014 were shared with the group.
4. A further issue that seems to relate specifically to forestry is the application of State Aids rules as timber is a product that is traded across member states and any public support could potentially skew the market. This has caused significant problems for many groups within NFLS and has accounted for the stalemate to date as a maximum grant of 200,000 Euros is all that was available to groups under '*de minimis*'. It appears however that a solution to this may have been found and this was discussed at some length during the workshop. All affected groups now need to seek a ruling on whether their individual case may fall outwith the scope of state

aids. This assessment will be undertaken by HIE but must be specifically requested by the community group.

5. A specific case study was supplied by Aigas Community Forest:

At the CLS conference earlier this year CLS Chair, David Cameron identified 4 factors that if they all come together can lead to successful community land ownership: **Desire, Support, Funding** and **Policy**. The ACF case study was presented in the context of these factors.

Desire – definitely present in the community from the turnout at the first public meeting and the unanimous support for progressing the purchase, through formation of a Board for Aigas Community Forest and the 97% ‘Yes’ vote in the community ballot. Even as the project struggled through difficulties securing funding over the next 5 years turn out at ‘Forest Open Days’ and attendance by the Board remained healthy.

Support – Aigas was fortunate enough to have a Chair with direct experience of community buy-outs as well as a number of other Board members with valuable skills. But we also received vital financial support for feasibility studies, business plans and expert support from The Highland Council, FCS, LEADER and HIE. The support given by the public agencies to develop plans was without fault. CLS and Community Woodlands Association also provided advice and helped with lobbying for changes in policy. At no time did the Board feel isolated despite the problems it faced.

Funding – Aigas started at just the wrong time. The SLF had closed with no schedule for being re-started, Growing Community Assets wouldn’t fund purchase from the public sector. There was no substantial purchase funding available but we remembered the advice of seasoned campaigner Cllr Margaret Davidson at our first public meeting. Just do it anyway – maybe things will change in the future. So we hung in there and in 2012 the land fund was re-launched. The funding landscape for ACF was poor to start but has greatly improved due to changes in factor 4.

Policy – In 2009 Scottish Government policy seemed to be ignoring community ownership of land. Gradually this changed and different mechanisms were suggested to facilitate ours and similar projects. Perhaps we could lease the forest from FCS – not financially viable under either lease scheme suggested to date. The policy is fine, the practice is unworkable. Perhaps we could buy the forest using the new Land Fund – not enough money on offer when State Aid rules were applied to funding of forestry purchase. Ministers seemed to be issuing the right instruction but somehow implementation by bodies like FCS, HIE and BIG Lottery wasn’t making it work. We continued to lobby for change direct to these bodies, through CLS and by attending and participating in Scottish Affairs Select Committee investigations. Ultimately ACF secured a grant below the State Aid restriction to purchase part of Aigas Forest. More recently it has been confirmed that purchase of the whole forest would be deemed non-State Aid and so we are going back to SLF for more money.

Experiences of growing a Forest Garden

Ludwig Appeltans

Ludwig’s workshop explored basic principles of Forest Garden design with some practical examples. Permaculture design, forest gardening, ethical tree care, invasive species control and organic growing principles can help you to design and create vibrant, thriving, highly productive natural ecosystems and edible landscape and transform conventional landscapes into rich, self-regulating habitats – natural havens that nurture and sustain people and wildlife alike.

Green Burials at Wilkies Wood, Findhorn
The Establishing and Running of this Community Resource
By Jonathan Caddy, Findhorn Hinterland Group

The Findhorn Hinterland Group is a community group open to all, engaged in practical conservation and educational work on the Findhorn peninsula. Six years ago they established the first green burial site in Moray in a quiet, sheltered position in the middle of Wilkies Wood, a 30 acre mixed pine plantation adjacent to the Findhorn Foundation.

Jonathan began the workshop with a picture of a green burial that happened in June 2014. The image was of a group pulling the coffin on a cart to the resting place within Wilkies Wood. The funeral party didn't wear dark clothing or look sombre, in fact the very opposite. Everyone was wearing bright coloured clothing and the coffin was painted green. It gave the funeral a look of more of a celebration of life rather than the loss of a life. The simplicity and beauty of a green burial can be combined with whatever type of arrangements preferred which reflect the wishes and character of the deceased loved one.



Jonathan was the driving force behind the creation of what is one of only two green burial sites in the Moray region of Scotland. The death of his mother Eileen in 2006 spotlighted the need for a more caring and Earth-friendly way for local community members to exit the material world. His dream of a nearby green burial ground was finally manifested and consecrated the following year and is evolving into a nature reserve that will be enjoyed by future generations.

Approval was a lengthy process and they have been learning on the job since then. In April 2010 they engaged a funeral co-ordinator, who gets 10% of the costs, because they needed someone would make sure that everyone involved is informed, met and gets the right information. The co-ordinator deals with friends and relations of the deceased and it is extremely important that, at this very emotional and stressful time, everything is documented and goes as smoothly as possible on the day.

When Jonathan started this project he didn't want it to be something people did just because it is cheap, so they have brought the costs in-line with other burials. The invitation to 'pay now, die later' caused considerable amusement within the Findhorn Ecovillage community but it has achieved twin goals by creating awareness for the concept of Earth-friendly green burials and encouraging people to consciously consider how they wish to depart this life. Already more than a dozen much-loved locals have been consigned to the Earth in simple and moving ceremonies, their remains transported by a horse-drawn cart or guided by a procession of pallbearers.

Only cloth shrouds or biodegradable coffins fashioned from recycled wood have been used, and there are no headstones or plaques to identify each lair, although their positions are faithfully recorded on a site map. Digital markers are used as the law requires that you they know where bodies are buried and be able to locate them if necessary. After burial the graves will become an integral part of the woodland. Choosing a simple, natural, green burial offers a return to Nature's cycle and will provide a living memorial for future generations in the form of beautiful woodland.

Coffins are heavy and they have used horse and cart, a tractor or a simple carriage that can be pulled along by the funeral congregation. It's important to be clear what you are offering as a green burial site, that you have the right infrastructure (roads, tracks etc) and to be aware of the wishes of the deceased. For the Findhorn Hinterland Group it is also about the consideration for other residents.

Green burials are about the whole environment and not just the burial so it's important to explain this fully to the family of the bereaved. Graves don't need to be dug too deep and this information is set out and can be gained from the council. You need to think about which position the body is laid to rest in and vital as the land changes over time. Health and safety needs to be taken into account, what type of coffins, which are made locally. They have a local farmer who comes in to dig the grave and that also incurs a charge.

Anyone considering establishing a green burial site needs to consider the long term management of the area: at Findhorn this means keeping the gorse at bay and managing the trees. You need a funeral co-ordinator and an understudy just in case. Make sure that the procedures are clearly set out so that everyone is aware of what happens next. Jonathan has a history book on the deceased, a part of the burial agreement, so relatives and friends need to put something into the book, photos etc. so that there is something written down about that individual. The also celebrate people too by having memorial services.

Think about what you need to do to start a green burial site: what charges you will incur; what insurance do you need; do you have access to a digger; a shed; where do you get the coffins and the trees from or how do you transport the coffins to its resting place. Most importantly make sure the procedures are in place before you start. For Findhorn the funeral coordinator was vital to its success. You need to review what you're doing, things change, you learn as you go along. For Jonathan it has been fascinating and has introduced him to another part of life.

Binning Memorial Wood Memorial ***By Isobel Knox, Dunbar Community Woodland Group***

Isobel gave a presentation about Binning Memorial Wood, a wonderfully peaceful and idyllic green burial site in the historic and much loved historic 300 acre Binning Wood in East Lothian. The magnificent beech trees offer the bereaved and incredibly tranquil place to reflect and remember. Binning Memorial Wood was developed to satisfy the needs of those who care deeply about their natural environment and wish to minimise the impact of their passing.

The Woodland was originally planted in 1707 by the 6th Earl of Haddington. The majority was felled to help the war effort between 1942 -45, with much of the timber bring used to make the airframes for mosquito fighter bombers. It was replanted after the war and at just 60 years old the wood is still relatively young. However, the 10 acre beech stand selected for the memorial wood is already showing signs of developing a magnificent cathedral of tall stems and arching green crowns.

The original wood stood for 235 years, so the Memorial lies in an already well-established setting of real beauty and tranquillity that will be maintained by discrete and sensitive woodland management. Binning Wood's long history means it is a fitting final place for those who wish to continue their responsibility to the earth's conservation after their passing.



Sarah Gray is the manager of the memorial wood and it is her husband's family who own the woodland and surrounding farmland which they continue to farm today. Initially Sarah looked at who was using the woods and after some discreet inquiries with visitors she started the process for a pet cemetery. She then started looking at the possibility of a green burial site which led to lengthy process from the planning application being submitted in 2004 to the first burial 6 years later. SEPA took a year to finalise their report. Scientific research was needed on the soil and through the checks they found that low lying land wasn't suitable for graves. They also needed to find out what the traffic impact would have on the environment. Once approval was granted their first task was to thin the trees in preparation for the burials: now on a beautiful sunny day the sun streams through the canopy making it a truly tranquil place.

Since the green burials began in 2010 they now have just over 100 burials; 80% are buried in coffins and the other 20% are ashes. To begin, graves are dug by hand to check the soil and then finished by using a small digger. The whole burial process takes about 45 minutes. Lairs are mostly double depth and some side by side. They average about 4 burials a month and because the burial process is so extremely sensitive and emotional they will only allow one burial per day.

All burial plots, as at Findhorn, are tagged to allow grave identification. As the burial area is a non-religious site they were not keen to have the whole area consecrated but are happy for individuals to have graves consecrated. Burial plots need to be 3 meters from trees and only one meter for ashes. There are no headstones only small inscribed stones to mark the internment and all the stones come from the quarry on their farmland. There is probably room for another 100 burials on the 5 acres of land set aside for burials and have recently put in a planning application for a log cabin close by for shelter on rainy days and a composting toilet.

Woodland Weddings *By Eva Hurley, Dunbar Community Woodland Group*

Eva Hurley talked about the Dunbar group's first woodland wedding in Lochend Wood in May 2014: the reasons for doing it, the experience of the wedding and what they learned.

Ian and Heather both have a very strong love for nature and woodlands so to them the idea of having a wedding in such a unique setting was very appropriate. They approached the members to discuss the idea, which was greeted with huge enthusiasm. The wedding was in May 2014 just as the woods were coming into leaf and the ceremony took place in the "Gathering Area". A harpist played as guests arrived which made it a truly beautiful setting and created a magical atmosphere. The couple chose a humanist wedding and the celebrant was very excited by the experience. It was a very personal moment that was about the simplicity and sincerity of the ceremony.



All the members of DCWG are involved in the management of the woodlands because they are a part of their community. They want to create awareness and use for the community and they want people to want to be in the woods and in turn the community want to support and maintain the woods. But above all they want a visit to the woods to be a positive experience. Many who live near the woods have never set foot in them and a wedding is a great way of giving them that positive experience. People were captivated by the ceremony in the woods which means they will return.

Most people claim that their wedding day was the happiest day of their life, but it can also be the most stressful with a huge amount of pressure and expectation to get it right. If woodland weddings are something that your woodland group would like to get involved in then you need to look at the role of the woodland and ask yourselves how much do you want to do; are you just hosting?; participating in the event itself? or taking on the organisation? This all needs to be ironed out from the very beginning if it is to be a success. This was DCWG's first wedding and they know that you must establish the parameters from the outset; you need to know what you can or can't do. What is the capacity of your woodlands, what insurance so you need, established the impact on the woodland, who will return the woodland to its original state. Get it written down!!

There are so many positives for going down the woodland wedding route: weddings are great for local businesses and there are financial benefits. Groups want to be self-sufficient and woodland wedding or burials are a great way of achieving this and to get the local community into your woodland you need to make sure that there is awareness, and that each visit is a memorable one.

A woodland wedding is an amazing experience and the start of a couple's new life. DCWG's first woodland wedding experience was a success and would they recommend it, but it is so important to make sure that you have everything in place from the start.

Tree health: current threats and implications

Amanda Calvert & Jon Hollingdale

This workshop was in three parts: Jon gave an overview, Amanda detailed five current threats, and then there was an open session of questions and discussion. Both Jon and Amanda were at pains to make clear that they are not experts in the field: unfortunately no-one was available from Forest Research or Forestry Commission Scotland to lead this workshop, however FCS kindly provided considerable material and information which formed the basis of Amanda's presentation.

Background

Trees have been around a very long time, and there are a great many species that regard them as home, and lunch, this is part of why trees are so important for biodiversity. However organisms that may be benign in their native habitats can be virulent, fast-spreading and unstable in new environments.

We have experienced virulent threats before: e.g. Dutch Elm Disease, and we can't be sure that dramatic fluctuations in the distributions of trees in the more distant past weren't driven by some new pest or disease, but the current combination of threats to major tree species seems unprecedented. Global trade is the prime suspect: insect pests can enter as larvae or live adults in freight containers or on vehicles, whilst the increasing demand for live trees and shrubs, often from overseas suppliers, allows pathogens to enter the country in the soil of potted trees, plants and shrubs.

Climate change may also be having an impact, allowing pests from overseas to survive at more northerly latitudes, whilst "natural" routes are possible: some pests and diseases can reach us through wind dispersal, e.g. Chalara dieback of ash, is thought to have entered Britain in the form of wind-blown spores as well as in infected ash plants for planting.

Defending our forests against these various threats has become an increasing priority for policy, research and funding. The strategy with respect to an emerging threat is as follows:

1. keep it out if we can;
2. if it does get in, eradicate it before it spreads and becomes endemic; and
3. if eradication proves impossible, control and manage it to keep it below epidemiologically significant levels.

The situation has serious implications for forest management, with moratoria on planting several important species limiting managers' options for restocking. There is also a renewed awareness of the importance of ensuring species are well-suited to environmental and site conditions, and of diversification of species and stand structure wherever possible: monocultures may be more vulnerable and will be more thoroughly damaged by losses.

Five current threats

Dothistroma needle blight

Dothistroma Needle Blight is caused by the fungus *Dothistroma septosporum*. It has been found on a range of conifer species, but pine are by far the most common hosts, with Corsican, Lodgepole and Scots pine all now affected. Defoliation can continue year on year and gradually weaken the tree, significantly reducing timber yields and eventually leading to mortality.

Pine-tree lappet moth

The pine tree lappet moth (*Dendrolimus pini*) is a native of continental Europe, Russia and Asia, where it causes periodic, large-scale damage to pine plantations across thousands of hectares,

Defoliation by caterpillars can impair tree growth and tree health, making trees more susceptible to other organisms such as bark beetles and wood-boring insects, the effects of which could ultimately lead to tree deaths.

Phytophthora austrocedrae

Phytophthora austrocedrae is a fungus-like plant pathogen which causes an often fatal disease of its host plant, notably Juniper. Above-ground symptoms on infected trees include dieback of the foliage, stem and collar lesions. Later the foliage withers, turns bronze, and finally, light brown, concurrent with drying and darkening of the inner bark.

Phytophthora ramorum

Phytophthora ramorum is a fungus-like pathogen which causes extensive damage and mortality to a wide range of trees and other plants. In the USA it is known as 'sudden oak death' however, the strains of *P. ramorum* found in Britain have largely affected Larch trees, requiring felling of infected stands, but having little effect on British native oak species.

Chalara fraxinea

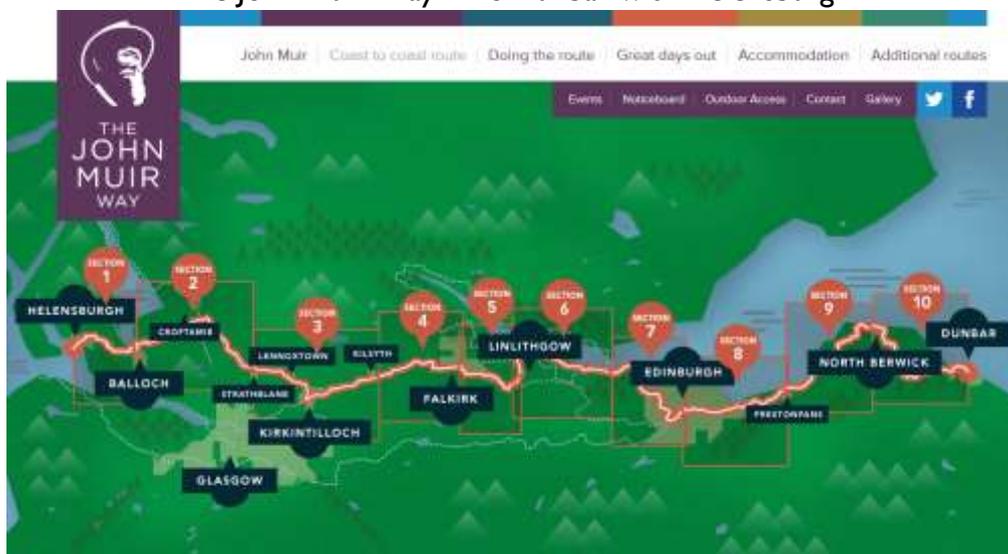
Chalara dieback is a serious disease of ash trees caused by a fungus called *Chalara fraxinea*. The disease causes leaf loss and crown dieback in affected trees, and has caused widespread damage to ash populations in continental Europe, including estimated losses of between 60 and 90 per cent of Denmark's ash trees.

There is a growing recognition of the importance of public awareness & engagement. People managing or working with trees or in woods and forests can help minimise accidental spread of pests and disease by adopting 'biosecurity' and hygiene measures in daily routines. Likewise, the public can be vigilant: being alert for plant health problems inspecting the trees that you are responsible for, and reporting unexplained symptoms to FCS/Forest Research, who have developed an online reporting form, which can be found at: www.forestry.gov.uk/treealert An App for reporting pests and diseases is available and can be downloaded from the same page.

Forestry Commission Plant Health team can be contacted at: T: 0131 314 6414;

E: planthealth@forestry.gsi.gov.uk. More information on tree pests and diseases can be found at: www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-6ABL5V

The John Muir Way links Dunbar with Helensburgh



Site Visits

Lochend Woods

Dunbar Community Woodland members led three separate groups to Lochend Woods. Each group, of about 20 delegates, walked to Lochend Woods which was situated about 15 minutes' walk away. Isobel Knox and Ute Penny focused their walk and topic on how Dunbar Community Woodland Group are managing community relations in a woodland while being surrounded by 100's of houses; Craig Stebbing and Nick Parker discussed Forest Education and Curriculum for Excellence while Eva Hurley and Ian Young Flora and Fauna walk talked about tracking, and what to look for. Afterwards, the 3 groups headed to Lochend's 'Gathering Area' where they discussed their experiences and enjoyed a warm welcome cup of tea or coffee offered by the group.



The “managing community relations” walk was led by Isobel Knox and Ute Penny. As delegates made their way to Lochend Woods Isobel mentioned an example of partnership with other organisations within the town. A blue container near the sports ground, is owned by Sustaining Dunbar but shared between Dunbar Community Woods and another local organisation. DCWG use the container to store equipment they use in the woods. Although not as near to the woods as they would like, it is secure. Isobel pointed out the huge housing development right next to the woods and explained the history of the how the woods came into the hands and care of DCWG. The wood was probably originally established as a Sitka spruce plantation, a timber crop, but then with no particular use for the woodland by the farmer it was just left to rot.

After funding from FCS, radical thinning of the Sitka began, but it didn't take long before local residents became quiet worried that the group were destroying their woodland and not protecting it as previously thought. What the residents didn't realise was that the trees were rotten and needed to be removed for safety but also to allow re-planting. Although Isobel thought she had done enough to make sure residents were aware of why the work was happening it was only after she saw a child's picture saying “*please stop destroying our trees*” that she realised she hadn't told the children, so she visited the local primary schools and explained about what they were doing and why. In hindsight that is probably where they should have started...

A few years after the thinning, the group began to replant the learning wood, which was suggested by Scottish Native Woods. They planted about 20 different native species and it's fair to say that some are doing much better than others. Unfortunately local roe deer population have decided to nibble on some of the young saplings, yet another job that needs to be done. The group looked at the pump track, which caused a lot of controversy. Some local people saw it as wasting public funds, that it would be dangerous and uninsurable, and DCWG were told that it wouldn't be popular, in fact it has proven to be the very opposite. The group have recently purchased a big grass cutting machine that cuts the brambles back, which at least keeps the local population happy as it is hugely important to try and keep relations good.

DCWG have put up posters throughout the woods, because as with so other woodlands, dog owners need to be constantly reminded to, not only pick up their dog poo, but take it with them. The other new sign that the group have displayed is a notice to say that the removal of timber is now prohibited and that it has become necessary to impose a ban on the extraction of timber for firewood from Lochend Woods. The timber is a resource, which is much needed to raise funds for ongoing maintenance in the woods. The services of tree surgeons and contractors come at a considerable cost and are a huge drain on their every dwindling financial resource. Visitors are reminded that fallen timber provides a valuable habitat for insects, birds and mammals. The group are also developing green woodworking courses on site which will also enable them to make value added products which they can sell to raise funds. The better quality wood will be used for that purpose and firewood, poorer timber, will be for sale, again raise much needed funds.

The Forest Education and Curriculum for Excellence walking tour was led by Craig Stebbings and Nick Parker, both members of the Dunbar Community Woodland Group. The group paused outside the large local primary school and Craig began to explain how the Curriculum of Excellence and its outdoor learning policies affected the local school children. Traditional ideas about classroom-only teaching were changing, all local children were encouraged to walk or cycle to school and poultry was kept and cared for by the local primary school for a hands-on experience; East Lothian Council encouraged the woodland visits and helped with funding.

On reaching Lochend, Craig (who teaches at North Berwick) explained how the woodland was used for forest school education. Small groups of pupils were taken for two hour sessions over a set number of weeks; they carried out tree planting, conservation and specimen care and worked towards a John Muir award.

The Curriculum of Excellence offers opportunities for all children to enjoy first-hand experience out of doors, whether within the school grounds (don't forget the local primary schools poultry!), in the countryside or Scotland's wilder environment. Such experiences improve social and physical skills, communication and self-esteem through hands-on experience and disruptive classroom behaviour is often a thing of the past.

John Muir Birth Place Tour *Will Colin*

The John Muir Birthplace Tour was an introduction to Dunbar's history and put Muir and his family into a historical context. The tour visited the current exhibition in the Town House, 'Nature's Beloved Son' which brings together prints of Muir's plant specimens, drawings and journal notes before crossing the High Street to John Muir's Birthplace where there was a further part of 'Nature's Beloved Son'.



From there they explored John Muir's Dunbar, the part of the town that John would have known as a boy and learned something of the town's long history. The tour included the Castle ruins, Lauderdale House, the Victoria and Cromwell Harbours, the Battery, and the streets, vennels and closes of the oldest parts of Dunbar. The tour finished back at the Birthplace where some spent more time learning of Muir's life and legacy.

Informal Sessions

The informal sessions took place in the main hall and outside the Bleachingfield Centre between 4 and 5pm on Saturday afternoon. Delegates were invited to visit one or all of the sessions.

Kelly McIntyre Community Shares Scotland

Kelly from Community Shares Scotland was on hand to answer any questions about community shares, discuss opportunities to utilise community shares within the community woodland context, offer insight into the ways community shares have been applied to wider community benefit, and discuss areas of support the new Community Shares Scotland programme can offer community groups. This proved to be a very popular session with about 12 delegates attending. More details on Community Shares Scotland can be found on their website: www.communitysharesscotland.org.uk

A Hutting in Community Woodlands Ninian Stuart

Simple, rustic buildings have long been central to Scotland's cultural heritage. From shielings to mountain bothies and shepherds' huts, they have played a crucial role as lively, temporary containers for music, poetry, learning, celebration, retreat, work and family time in Scotland's countryside. The history of hutting in Scotland is also largely associated with a working class movement that developed early in the 20th century when small holiday huts began to be built on land close to Scotland's main industrial cities.

Recent years have seen a resurgence of interest in hutting, as more and more people feel a need to connect with the land in a sustainable way. Until now, planning rules and land access have formed barriers which prevent many people having the chance to spend time in huts in the countryside. However, that is beginning to change.

The aim of the Thousand Huts campaign is to promote huts and hutting – the building and enjoyment of simple structures (usually wooden) for living, working and recreation in the

countryside. They want to achieve this by securing a change of culture and attitude and reform of the law so that those who wish to build huts and pursue hutting can do so freely and within the law.

Donor Funding **Diane Campbell**

This popular informal session saw about 12 delegates discuss donor funding with Diane Campbell. The discussion was about: Where else is money available? Do you approach your community and other individuals for cash to help you deliver your aims? This session was aimed to help delegates to think through how they might approach individual donors, develop innovative fundraising ideas and generate unrestricted income to use on your projects and core costs.

Diane based her session on the publication: ***Beyond the Usual Suspects: An introduction to a range of alternative approaches to raising finance and fundraising***: Funding for the development and ongoing management of community assets will be a key part of early planning. If you haven't done it before it can seem daunting. This guide aims to help you establish a funding package which encourages the inclusion and involvement of your community and develops a sense of local ownership. The publication can be found at:

www.dtascommunityownership.org.uk/content/publications/btus

Sustaining Paid Educational Posts in the Community **Gavin Mitchell**

Gavin asked the question “How to create a sustainable income (an income which does not come from short term one-off grants) for educational work in community woodlands .le for running a weekly-monthly bushcraft-forest school, plant observation, nature art group in community woodlands?

Green Woodworking “come and try it” **Dave Crosbie**

Dave Crosbie brought some of his greenwood working tools to the Bleachingfield Centre to allow easy access for delegates to have a go and it was very obvious that this was an extremely popular with delegates as they enjoyed the opportunity to get their hands on some wood and had a go at using the shave horse.

With green woodworking and coppice crafts you work with the same tools and natural local materials which not so long ago would have been used throughout the country. These provide us with day-to-day household articles and kitchen utensils such as spoons and spatulas, chairs, stools, tables, bowls. In fact most things that were made of wood would be created using these tools and techniques providing us with simple everyday things.



Sunday 24th August 2014

Engaging Communities in Native Woodland Restoration
Dr Jane Rosegrant

Borders Forest Trust is a regional environmental charity established in 1996. They conserve and restore native woodland and associated habitats across the south of Scotland and engage local people in woodlands. Their vision for the South of Scotland is for a place where a rich tapestry of native woodlands and wild places flourish, cared for by the local communities. BFT support and work with community woodlands, habitat restoration, education and arts projects and are involved in the sustainable use of hardwood timber. As well as working in partnership with other land owners and other community groups they have purchased 3 properties within the southern uplands: Corehead Farm, Carrifran Wildwood and Talla and Gameshope Estate.

Jane's presentation focused on the first 2 projects, Corehead and Wildwood and the ways in which the restoration on those sites have engaged with communities. These sites are rather different to many other community woodlands as before being owned by BFT they were both upland sheep farms and without a connection to local communities; they were not places that you took your family to walk and there was no significant woodland on either site.

The Carrifran Wildwood project seeks to re-create a valley of wooded wilderness in the Southern Uplands with the rich diversity of native species that existed here thousands of years ago, before human activities became dominant. The 1500 acre valley in the Moffat Hills was bought through the hard work of a dedicated team of volunteers and with generous donations of over 600 people and a number of charitable trusts. The Carrifran purchase was completed on 1st January 2000, entry to the land was gained and the first tree planted. Since then over 500,000 native trees, all from local provenance stock, have been planted in the valley. The first ecological restoration project of its kind, the Carrifran Wildwood is hoped to be an inspiration and an educational resource to many over the next millennium.

What does this project have to do with the community? The project could not have happened without its community volunteers. It was evident throughout that there has been a deep connection with the people of Moffat and the land, some may say a community of passion. In every sense this is community that socialises together works together and from the positive energy and ethos that came from this project it is difficult to say if the restoration created the community or the community created the restoration.

Corehead is a 1,580 acre (640 hectare) sheep hill farm in the Southern Uplands, Dumfries & Galloway. The Devil's Beef Tub, Hart Fell Shoulder and the source of the River Annan sit within its boundaries. The Devil's Beef Tub, a cavernous hollow in the hills where the notorious Border Reivers once hid their stolen cattle, is one of the most iconic landmarks in the South of Scotland. The vision for Corehead Farm is a community-engaged, sustainable project integrating the restoration of native woodlands, wetlands and heathlands with a farm operating on organic principles. It will become an important educational resource in the South of Scotland demonstrating how biodiversity, ecosystem services and farming can thrive together.

Some people think it's a bit odd that an organisation mainly devoted to trees also has sheep, but they feel this is extremely important for educational reasons. Having sheep says that it doesn't have to be one thing or the other it says you can combine uses. From the very start Corehead developed quite differently from Wildwood, which was appropriate. When BFT had the opportunity to purchase the site and they went ahead with full focus on fundraising but like wildwood there was no history of community involvement on the site but unlike Wildwood there

wasn't a group to take on the project and they hoped that the local community would want to be central. Early planting days were supportive but they couldn't maintain the level of volunteers. They have continued to have successful planting days but had more standalone events rather than a group of people with a passion for the site and a long term vision for being involved. There have been lots of successful public events that have ranged from botany courses, recording days and music, but this has not led to a core of people to regular volunteer. There are several reasons why a real sense of community here has been challenging. The reason is probably due to the layout of the land, the first valley to be planted was reasonably accessible, the second one was a 2 hour walk in and unfortunately this didn't call out to families to give a couple of hours planting trees. BFT didn't put enough emphasis on volunteer recruitment and retention right from the start, there was a handful of volunteers unfortunately the numbers were not large enough to take on a momentum of their own and they underestimated the work that needed to be done.

BFT have now taken on 2 new staff members who are focusing on bringing community back into the centre of their focus and have already made some important progress by focusing on events and timings that the locals really value. They are working hard to have a more welcoming volunteer experiences on a regular weekday, working with existing volunteer groups and planning events for 3 months ahead which has helped attendance and regularity.

They are building a simple shelter and the other change is to refocus their participation on schools by looking at it as a central way of getting involved with the local community of Moffat. They hope by offering learning opportunities the Curriculum for Excellence will make it easier for schools to work on site. The local school have so far adopted an orchard, taken part on a scarecrow competition, worked hard on their pond and got involved in the John Muir Award. They are hoping that the children will build a connection with the site and that it will become that place that they want to return to and be a vibrant community 20 years from now.

Corehead and Wildwood are strong examples of early woodland restoration and offer high quality volunteering and education opportunities but they haven't yet achieved a full and vibrant community engagement. Both Corehead and Wildwood are works in progress, it is unlikely that they will ever say they are finished, even when they reach a point that human intervention isn't required in the direct ecology of the sites, still decades away at least, there will still be a great deal of learning to be had from both these sites. For Jane what these projects demonstrate that native woodland restoration can be a really powerful generator of community spirit, it is an incredible expression of optimism and can engender a really strong sense of community cohesion, however there are other factors that need to be in place such as caretakers to ensure time and effort are dedicated to community input and creation.

BFT have entered into an exciting new phase of their development with the recent acquisition of the Talla and Gameshope Estate in the central Southern Upland. This includes the stunning valley of the Gameshope burn. The site is particularly special because it offers a rare opportunity to restore a large area of hills and valleys to their natural state providing habitats extensive enough to be truly sustainable in contrast to isolated areas of conservation found elsewhere. At its southern end the property borders both the Carrifran Wildwood, and the National Trust for Scotland's Grey Mare's Tail.

Health and Happiness in Dunnet Forest
Katie Webster, Community Connector for Health & Happiness

Health & Happiness in the Highlands began in 1999 when a group of people from different parts of the community (known as "partners") got together to talk about how to make life healthier and

happier for adults with a learning disability (known as “experts”) living in the Highlands. Their plan was to make a Healthy Living Centre for experts, and their ideas became a bid to the New Opportunities Fund, which was successful and the first conference took place in October 2002. Today they are an independent organisation and registered charity, their aim is to continue to ensure that experts are seen as valuable resources within communities.

Katie discussed her inspirations and how she became involved in the Tickle Trail Project at Dunnet Forest Trust. Every day she takes her dog for a walk and at the side of the track there are some really big ditches which are full of different types of squidgy moss, mud and water. It looked so good that she just wanted to stand in it with bare feet and feel the gooeyness and softness. It’s not a foot fetish it’s a really just a simple sensory experience.



The first contact any of us have to our world is through senses, taste, smell touch, balance and body awareness. Occupational therapist work, especially for those that work with Paediatrics or learning disabilities, is through senses, movement and balance which is as important for adults as it is for children. Normal life today limits access to many rich sensory experiences: when we are out it is usually in a car, and even on the beach we usually have our shoes on. Socially acceptable sensory experiences have been commodified by the leisure industry, whether it’s going to an exclusive spa, or going on the waltzers at the fairground, we have to pay for it and that’s not good for us.

Sensory experience is essential for development, health and wellbeing and especially on how we regulate our moods. It’s usually sensory stuff that makes us feel better. It’s a physiological need not an extra. Woodlands are a sensory gold mine, as many of the delegates at the CWA Conference are more than aware of. Unfortunately many people don’t know that the sound of the wind in the trees, listening to the birds or jumping over ditches is important to how we feel and it’s amazing how many people don’t have the opportunity or the choice. There are agencies like Health for Happiness that know this and are trying to do something about it but only have access to clinic, or hospitals and not enough realise that community woodlands would be an excellent place to do their work rather than a stuffy day centre or draughty church hall.

The “Tickle Trail” was the name Health & Happiness gave their sensory trail. Katie googled sensor trails and found that there were quite a few abroad but none in Scotland and only a few in England. The trail wasn’t intended to be a tourist attraction but to be accessible for the individuals they worked with. Katie teamed up with Dunnet Forestry Trust and the learning support unit at Wick High School and through this was able to get some funding from the College of Occupational Therapists, but if you have some able-bodied volunteers and a wheel-barrow you don’t really need much funding. From February to June 2013 Katie ran fortnightly 2 to 3 hours session with 15 or so youngsters aged between 14 to 22 years. Everyone who participated had a wide range of disabilities, there was a lady in a wheelchair and others with mild learning disabilities but the most important thing was that there was something for everyone to do, whether heavy duty axe work or carrying a basket of moss.



They chose a site that was soft to walk on with bare feet, but mainly because there was very little undergrowth so a very low risk of ticks. They made troughs and filled them with different textures, such as pebbles from the beach, moss, seaweed, lichen and pinecones. They made stepping stones, created art work and made bags to put shoes in. The grand opening took place in the summer of 2013 where lots of children and families came together. It was an excellent project not only because by just doing it was an excellent sensory activity but it re-energised individuals, gave them a purpose and responsibility. Even though the schools had commented that some of the students can be quite difficult in a school environment Katie had no problems at all and the group all worked perfectly in the woodland environment.



It gave individuals a chance to build new relationships, to focus and create structure. The popularity of the project was so great that they ended up having a one to one ratio with clients and staff/volunteers mainly because so many people just wanted to be involved. The trail is extremely popular with families and it's great for the clients to have had such a positive impact on their community and receiving such great feedback was a real boost. It was good to see a group of individuals on the other side, wanting to give back rather than constantly being on the receiving end of charity or fundraisers.

What if you want to do a sensory project? If you're doing a community project in your woodland, it's probably already sensory but it helps to be more aware and to exploit that angle.

What if you want to involve more people with disabilities in your woodlands? Because this particular group of people are often the missing group from the woodland and because you don't always see them you don't notice that they're not there. If your woodland has thought about getting involved, then you should as it would make a huge difference to those people with mental health.

It's not always that simple and there are many concerns that never get addressed. Katie's advice is that it's probably best to be a bit more up front when dealing with the weird and wacky things that some people might do, don't worry about it, enjoy it and don't go it alone, ask for help. There is so much evidence out there about woodlands and health and wellbeing benefits. There is already lots of evidence where sensory trails are so beneficial for both children and adults alike. You have a resource that cannot be replicated anywhere else, use and exploit the evidence.

Remember:

Admit anxieties

Don't go it alone

Be the experts in your woodland

Exploit the evidence

Open your senses to generate ideas

Keep Calm and just do it.....

**Scottish Rural Parliament
Workshop on key themes - Emma Cooper**

The creation of a Scottish Rural Parliament is a unique opportunity to enable a stronger, more coherent voice for Scotland's rural communities. It is inspired by the successes of Rural Parliaments in other countries in Europe. A successful Scottish Rural Parliament must be firmly rooted in Scotland's rural communities, developed by and for the people who live and work in rural Scotland. It is supported by the Scottish Government to enable more effective engagement with Scotland's rural communities.

Emma was appointed by Scottish Rural Action, the group responsible for developing and organising the Scottish Rural Parliament earlier this year. Scottish Rural Action's board comprises representatives from organisations working with rural communities across Scotland including Scottish Community Alliance, Community Land Scotland, Development Trust Association Scotland, Community Woodlands Association and the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations.

The Scottish Rural Parliament will hold a national meeting on **6th – 8th November 2014** in Oban. Its aim is to bring together the people of rural Scotland and policy makers to enable better understanding, improve policy making and address rural issues. It exists to give communities a stronger voice; to connect with each other and to celebrate what rural communities contribute to the local economy. The Rural Parliament is not a formal part of government, it's not democratically elected, they do not have decision making powers and they do not have a delivery budget. The event is open to everyone and if anyone wants to attend they can and if anyone wants to contribute to some extent in some way they can.

95% land in Scotland is classed as rural, this is home to just under 20% of the population (just under 1 million), but government policy is often dominated by urban voices and interests. Rural areas have many issues in common, but there is a need to identify and articulate these, and to break out of the thematic silos of policy thinking. Experience from other countries demonstrates that rural parliaments can be effective in ensuring that policy meets rural needs as well as urban and gives rural communities a stronger voice.

Scottish Rural Action has been carrying out a series of consultations to identify key themes and issues. A wide range of responses were received, these have been marshalled into seven key themes, of which three are particularly relevant to community woodlands and were the focus of workshops at the CWA conference:

- *Protecting national assets and adapting to environmental change;*
- *Land use planning and land reform;*
- *Communities leading with confidence.*

Delegates divided themselves into groups to discuss one of the above topics, and to answer the following two questions:

- *What most needs to change and what barriers are there to success?*
- *What actions could address these concerns and who needs to do it?*

The workshops were repeated so all delegates had the opportunity to discuss two of the three themes. Outputs from the workshops are presented in Appendix 2.



Emma reminded delegates that Rural Parliament hold regular twitter debates which everyone is welcome to take part in, and that they could apply to attend the event in November. If there are more people interested in attending than places available they will make sure that those who attend would represent a good geographic group as well as making sure that there is a good range of topics to be discussed. Scottish Rural Action is aiming for a balance of 75% of people from rural communities and up to 25% of people who are in decision making organisations and other international guests. For more details on the Scottish Rural Parliament National event on 6th – 8th November 2014, visit www.scottishruralparliament.org.uk

Conference Summary Jon Hollingdale CWA CEO

Our theme this year was “making connections” which allowed us to try and capture the diversity and interconnectedness of the community woodland experience, and of course, reflect to reflect on the conference itself as a mechanism to connect everyone. It’s been great to see everyone and to have the opportunity to hear about other groups’ achievements and plans, and in particular the extraordinary range of community initiatives that we have seen, from Dunbar and Caithness to the large scale restoration projects in the Borders’

It’s worth noting that John Muir’s formative wilderness wasn’t the Cairngorms plateau but in Dunbar, which probably doesn’t fit everyone’s expectations of wilderness now or indeed 100 years ago. Natural beauty is where ever we find it and it’s there if we go and look for it. What’s great about community woodland groups is that they love the woodland that they have, sometimes the weather isn’t great, sometimes people aren’t great, but that passion that allows you to achieve their aims and that’s what makes it all worthwhile.

Jon thanked delegates for engaging in the Scottish Rural Parliament session and encouraged delegates to sign up: it’s important that the event it to be driven by people who have a passion and not just by representatives who have been told to go by their bosses.

One final thought: Community Woodlands Association is a great name and we’re very happy with it, but “Health and Happiness”: what a fantastic name for an organisation! Maybe all organisations should be called that or at least have it as their mission statement.

The conference is always a collective effort and Jon thanked sponsors: Forestry Commission Scotland and Highlands and Islands Enterprise, as well as everyone else who also helped to make it another successful conference: The Bleachingfield Centre and all their staff, the Mackintosh Hotel who stood in as a last minute as our ceilidh venue, the Dunbar Community Kitchen, Isobel Knox and her fellow members of Dunbar Community Woodland Group, CWA directors, Diane Oliver CWA, Caroline Derbyshire CWA Administrator, all the speakers, workshop hosts, delegates and to everyone who contributed to the success of the CWA Conference 2014. Wooplaw Community woodlands also provided some oak tree saplings for delegates to take and plant at home or on route home.



Appendix I Event Feedback

Delegates were invited to rate aspects of the conference organisation and the content and relevance to them of presentations, workshops, site visits etc. 40 forms were returned (not all questions were answered by all respondents)

1 = V good 2 = Good 3 = Fair 4 = Poor 5 = V poor

	1	2	3	4	5
Location	28	12			
Organisation	36	4			
Catering	32	8			
Facilities	28	11		1	

	Content					Relevance				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Saturday Presentations										
Welcome to Dunbar & DCW	14	21	1	2		19	12	2		
Sustaining Dunbar	23	13	3			18	11	4		
The Legacy of John Muir	24	14	1			15	10	8		
Workshops										
Forestry Finance & Funding	2	3				3	2			
Experience of Growing a forest Garden	5	1	2			5	2	1		
Woodland wedding and burials	8	4				9	1	2		
Plant health: current threats and implications	6	3				7	1			
Site Visits										
Lochend Woods	7	12	8			11	12	4		
John Muir Birthplace Tour	4	3	2			3	4	2		
Informal Sessions										
Community Shares		1					1			
Hutting in Community Woodlands	1	1	1				2			1
Donor fundraising	1	1				2				
Sustaining paid educational posts in community woods					2					2
Green woodworking: come and try it	5	4				6	3			
Sunday Presentations										
Engaging communities in native woodland restoration	18	20				19	15	3		
Health & Happiness in Dunnet Forest	27	6	1			25	9	1		
Scottish Rural Parliament Workshop	21	12	2			20	12	2		

Do you feel this event delivered your expectations?

Yes 38, No 0, Partly 1

If answer was no / partly:

*Mostly really, marred by Saturday informal session - session leader was not competent
Good mix of talks but primarily I'd be interested in more input re highlands upland, conifer woodlands
and a more focused & informative site visit*

Why did you want to take part in the event?

Took over as chair of land trust trying to establish woodland and wanted to network, pick up ideas

To hear more about what other community woodlands are doing

New ideas, networking

*To hear of others experience, inspire, share, re-charge burnt out batteries, learn more, be part of
CWA activities*

Networking opportunities, because it is always informative and fun

Networking

Networking and sharing experiences

*Networking with others community woodlands sites (projects, equipment, ideas and problems
Because it was about making connections, because I know I can come and talk to people about
issues & someone will have had some experience with it to help me.*

To meet similar minded people and learn from them

Highly informative & insight into other groups and potential problems and solutions

Very good for networking / knowledge gain / ideas and enthusiasm

Networking

Networking new ideas

Accompanying hubby and always pleased to learn

Connection with others, good ideas

Dunbar committee member

Interest in Scottish Community woodlands

To learn from others and share experiences

To connect with the rest of Scotland

Networking sharing ideas

Meet people involved in community activities

Invited to do a presentation. To learn more about forestry

Meeting people, sharing / gaining ideas

Network, catch up with developments, visit Dunbar CW

I was volunteered

I find CWA events inspiring and invigorating

Gain awareness of what others are doing

Keep in touch , make connections, network and reinvigorate

Meet like-minded people

Opportunity for fresh ideas, inspiration and contacts

Good networking

What benefits did you feel you gain from attending the event?

Ideas, contacts, networking, promotion of own trust

Meeting people, new ideas, thought provoking

re-linked with other woodlands

Met a lot of helpful and inspiring people

Networking, ideas, positive energy, enthusiasm knowledge

One of Michael Barnett's wooden bowls, catching up with other practitioners

Cross-fertilisation of ideas

Increased knowledge in a number of different areas

Met various new groups. Green burial workshop: major interest now

Meeting new people but meeting / seeing people I met last year, building relationships and having a sense of realness communities clash and knowing other have similar experiences

Different ways to improve our woodlands and engagement with the community

Networking with other groups and information on potential future projects

Meeting people with different views

Reinvigorated

Contacts - ideas

New energy and ideas

Friendship, enthusiasm, heartening of the human race and a project to take home - "Log drums"

Connections with others good ideas

Sharing ideas and experiences

Networking / inspirational information and always a good ceilidh

More understanding of things going on and new ideas

New ideas and inspiration

Connecting and going forward

Networking

Learned loads

I am going to create a forest garden. Excellent wide-ranging new awareness of forestry issue

Greater understanding of Scottish Rural Parliament. A bit more knowledge about Forest Gardens

Caught up with people and what's happening in Community Woodlands land

Networking

Inspiration and ideas

New contracts, motivation

Nice to network, got ideas from others, gained confidence in what we are doing as a group

New enthusiasm

Everyone else is facing the same challenges

Ideas, contacts and inspiration

What will you do with the experience / skills/ ideas you have gained from attendance?

Take time back to my Trust for discussion & consideration, implementation

Use them to inform you work

Follow up with some contacts

Put them in the woodlands after discussions with committee

Report to the board, share resources, spread info and ideas. Push forward with more creative ideas - with facts, evidence to help overcome barriers and attitudes, to educate others

Hopefully use it to enable to manage our woodlands in a better way

Investigate feasibility of future projects

Put other ideas into practice

Put new knowledge / skills into practice

Share

Add to 2015 planning for woodlands

Hopefully log drums at some point in our woodland and notes to type up on woodland burial experiences

Feed back to management committee of own community group. Contact and visit projects and further develop ideas. Feedback to membership and local community about event through local paper article and email list

Hopefully apply some of the learning from other groups within our community

Push fundraising, try and engage members more

I will implement a couple of new projects and share what I've learnt with other groups

Go forward and inform others

Take back and implement

Share with others - do more research

Follow up

Apply to organisations, discuss

An ability to organise woodland burials

Knowledge shared and gained re health and woodlands, importance of engagement with Rural Parliament in particular

More of the same

Feel guilty about not using them effectively

feed back to board

Would you recommend this event to a friend?

Yes 40, No 0

Can you explain why / why not:

Slightly qualified yes - of value to my Trust but not hugely so, therefore only if travel etc. is not too large

for networking opportunities and to be enthused

It actually has further relevance than just woodlands and forestry. Renewable, natural resources, community development

To learn and discover new ideas

Value of networking and sharing

Really feel more directors /board members would benefit by attending, think they look as outsiders and don't appreciate what they would learn

Stimulate the grass roots work we do on land

*It is always good to meet enthusiastic, like-minded people who you can learn from
It's a fun and informative weekend
Always do but not able to enthuse others
Great experience
Always a great valuable experience - lots of fun, well run! (As always) Well done team!
Great learning and inspiring
Great groups to engage with
An inspiring and informative opportunity to learn, discuss and network everything community forest
This is a fantastic event
Great to talk, and experience the success of this movement
They will benefit from it*

What would you like to see Community Woodlands Association do next?

Are there other training / seminar opportunities you would like to see organised

Is there information about what each community woodland is doing, history pictures etc. available on the website? If not, it would be interesting. Seminars on particular topics would be good, e.g. educational, funding, forestry skills, forest management

More skills days and visit together community woodlands

Practical woodlands management workshops

Where is ECDAW Project, keen to see this being pushed soon

I liked the informal sessions. I'd like to see a workshop on events in woodlands, or ideas about how to engage communities on their and in their environment. The bloke said go and have a cup of tea, there must be many ways community consultations can happen

A representative from OSCR to explain about its work

More forestry work

Training seminars: Business development

Even more "chunky" content here. More speakers, only have time for one event per year

More on tracking and forest gardens

Help with affordable land agenda in Galloway and Dumfries

Continue finding common topics that are of interest to all

Regional groups

Lobby strongly for REAL community engagement

Keep up the good work

Tell us more about what you do and your aspirations - more links with other groups internationally and in the UK

Again more of the same, "if it ain't broke....."

The cost of accountancy has been mentioned by a few people this weekend, and is a huge cost to these organisations, could CWA possibly find a collective deal for this cost?

Training on plant health

Any other comments on any aspect of the event?

Thanks for the opportunity

Better to have the ceilidh in the same venue as the meal

Another great conference - keep them coming

Great - Thanks for your work

PA in main hall would have been good, PowerPoint images: very dark

But also - event wise, bodging, tree ID, sustainability, sensory- these almost need putting in an "ideas book"

Please make sure a microphone is available for future events, some of us are a bit hard of hearing

Very good thanks

Thanks - Perhaps speakers could "try out" their voices in the room, The female voice is often challenged being lighter

Space in the event timetable for more spontaneous sessions to be held on subjects that might interest the gathering

Great event, fantastic group - lovely food

Come to the Highlands

Would have liked a second site visit. Slides not very visible - darker room better

Good to involve SDP - more opportunities like that to input to CWA

Really informative and enjoyable

Thanks you

Well done

Caroline has done another splendid job. Suggestion: A volunteer to sit at the back of the hall and monitor a speakers

Continue to use community venues and catering

Good all round

Once again, good. Maybe hold the AGM on Saturday??

Demographics of those who returned feedback sheet

Gender

Male	19
Female	18

Age Group

16-39	8
40-60	17
60+	12

Appendix 2: Rural Parliament workshop outputs

Land use, planning and land reform:

- More effective, efficient and transparent planning process
- Good ideas- need to be seen through to conclusion (mechanism) i.e. things shouldn't effect outcomes change in staff
- Rights and responsibilities- 2006 Land Reform Act- Diversified ownership (a bit) but did not create sustainable land ownership- it gave communities responsibilities not income earning assets- SRDP- outcome based payment
- Fundamental and stiff in cultural perception- people- access
 - Tax systems
 - Land value tax
 - Tax relief for land management responsibilities
- Tenancy- ownership- management
- Grants and tax- estates- 100% land registration- individuals not shell companies
- Ownership- vast majority of land owned by small minority
- Natural tenure- tied properties etc...
- Legislation changes needed
- Money- housing
 - Access to land- right to buy (proof of need) - how to set value (German example where values set)
 - Range of types of housing
- Limits to house sizes and gardens due to applying urban mind set to rural situations (we have lots of room)
- Large estates owned by absentees
- CPO's needed- for housing access woodland whatever a community can prove a need for
- Current political arrangement- lack of local influence community councils no power influence
- Money-land, human inspiration, communities
- Place-making (focus on all 7 themes) - community input from the very beginning of any development
 - Balanced
 - Professionals
 - Communities- inhabitants- listened to/ understood and included
- JUST DO IT!- KISS= Keep It Simple Stupid- stop trying to prove it before you begin
- Landscape- level collaboration and coordination of all owners, users and potential users- more frequency and transparency- barrier- estate ownership
- Land reform is about more than land ownership it is about productive land use
- What most needs change?- economically viable, access for people (to use the land)- Fuel:
 - All renewables- local use first then export to grid
 - Ensuring land use is economically viable so that communities can survive and grow
 - Transport regulations currently equal restrictions
- Small businesses- productive for everyone- growing, fuel
- Rural planning separate from urban planning
- Using designations to make things happen rather than stop development

Protecting our natural assets and adapting to environment change:

- What needs to change?
 - Recognise 'value' of natural asset/resource often intangible, eco-system services amenity valuation. Heritage/social importance

- *Barriers? Should be locally determined*
 - *Funding/capital- often from private corporates with external agenda*
 - *Apathy- lack of information, education*
 - *Lack of power/ control of assets*
 - *Councils- good? Bad?*
- *Actions? Gather info/audit*
- *GIS collation*
- *By who? Grass Roots involvement, school kids?*
- *Realisation of potential*
 1. *Consumerism private transport- development- (keep big corporate buyers out) awareness of commercial operations ethos- profit about environment and survival*
 2. *What most needs to change and what barriers- commercial interests, political structures, loss of skills, expectations of consumers- generally attitudes of life*
 3. *Experience, education, offering alternatives*

Communities leading with confidence:

What to change? : barriers to success?

- *Lack confidence, negativity- therefore need a 'can do' mentality, education and exposure*
- *'Incomers' v. 'natives' = low expectations*
- *Threat, disaster- bring together*
- *Retreat of funding*
- *Solutions-*
 - *Take responsibility*
 - *Take ownership*
 - *Stronger voices i.e. 'We want to do' the 'we' has to be inclusive- government needs to 'respect' the voice of communities*
- *Engage with individuals*
- *Greater local democracy motivating power*
- *Lots of groups- members in common less and share*
- *Needs a purpose- needs an anchor organisation-engagement- not one size fits all*
- *Support- learning, sharing experiences, in kind, finance*
- *Breaking habits changing perspectives- money- goes to the community to use- education, action- results- then it is proved or disproved*
- *Don't try to reach everyone- reach everyone you can!*
- *Make engagement fun! E.g. Pole lathe example this weekend*
- *Communication-up/down and sideways*
- *Forms of community engagement that actually engage the whole community- communicate the way people want to*
- *Currently tick boxing- power of corporations they answer to nobody- should be renationalised communities/ people can't even talk to them- contact accountability*
- *Abandon Community Councils in favour of:*
 1. *Self organised groups (SOGs)- bottom up development*
 2. *Facilitate the set up of SOG's*
 3. *Smaller/local democracy (of the Norwegian model)*
 4. *Listen to people in their locality*
 5. *Less fluffy noises*
 6. *Less spin*
- *Facilitate*
 - *Empower*
 - *Fund*

- Help
- Inform
- Upskill
- Train
- Local infrastructure
- How do you create strong community?
- What is the community?
- What is the I?
- How does one enable the individual or the task group?
- What is a need for policy?
- It's a need for security
- Knowing in advance
- Lack of trust
- Listening without agenda
- Obligation- community ownership- increased transparency R.E. council plans
- Communities needing increased control of land use
- Councils often dictating (make decisions then- taken consultation- community land bill could really help this
- Community Councils- increased empowerment/ access to funds- non-political. How can they be best supported? Accountability? Training? Which leads to increased understanding and effectiveness

Land use planning and land reform:

We need a complete Land register to show all land and the identity of the beneficial owner;

Take ownership;

Land value tax;

Sustainable access is the most important thing;

Governments need to listen to rural communities and have a real understanding of what rural communities want, integration and action that needs to be done now;

Tenants chartered agriculture and residential right to buy and strengthen tenants' rights;

Planning needs to be more effective, efficient and transparent, you cannot plan when the planners are delaying forever or not feeding back. Not meeting needs.

Protecting our natural assets and adapting to environmental change:

Councils need to recognising planning permission;

Development value;

Government needs to shift income tax to consumer tax and focus on resources;

Government needs to change the education system so that future generations can enjoy and value our natural assets;

Communities leading with confidence:

Councils and communities council to be a bit more effective and not to be dictated to, reinforce this and to be more connected with individuals;

To facilitate community cohesion, empower the exciting powers;

Community councils need to have a voice and the ability to make changes;

In communities don't think them and us think families, take a different view and chat over a coffee using a team of 2 and see what comes up, be quiet and listen to what they say;

Listening without agenda, listen to the other person and enable to other person;

More communities to be empowered there needs to be an organisation that comes from grass roots level.

Environment	Land	Community
Move towards a steady state economy	Review of charitable status (large estates) Land Tax	Empowerment of self-organised groups (not c. council) listening to local people, understanding and acting on it
Climate change may result in much larger areas of Scotland becoming rich agricultural land- we need to guard against this land being owned by big corporations	Planning process- needs to be much more effective, efficient, transparent	Clear organisation with clear purpose- member/grass roots led and accountable
Gather info/audit on natural assets by the community (grass roots)	A cleaner Mechanism system need to be put in place to ensure good ideas seen through to conclusion	Continuous process to- engage, listen with individuals by a team of two
Perpetual growth does not work	CPO available where need and solution demonstrated	Challenge power of corporations- should be renationalised so they are accountable
Change education system to engage children from age 3 with natural assets- go barefoot/get dirty –go naked so they will value it	Grants system including subsidies	Education and experience-breaking habits, changing perspectives
Keep big corporations out	Maintain recognition of the difference. It is a majority in terms of land area (not a minority of people) A move to small scale government	Empowering community councils and finding ways of them being ore connected with individuals within a community
Promote alternatives to consumerism	Interested parties able to register interest in land. Given opportunity to buy when land next for sale	Communication and engagement-change old fashioned methods-include use of social media to enable individuals to be heard
Tax and grant aid land to incentivise sustainable use	Money should not be able to buy influence	Communicate: up, down, sideways
Develop methodology to determine value in monetary terms of natural assets (comparative experimental valuation)	Smaller council areas-more local influence	Legislation to require councils to serve communities and not to dictate to them and enforce it
Shift income tax to consumer tax focussed on resources which are limited	Tax system- land value tax	Facilitate community cohesion: empower existing bodies e.g. community councils
	Land register- complete ownership of all land Identity of beneficial owner	
	Listening- understanding, inclusion/integration, action – Just do it (now)	
	Sustainable access to all resources-changing the balance and dynamics of power to enable local control through legislation	
	Tenants Charter- agricultural, residential- right to buy/land grab-financial aid and strengthen rights	

Appendix 3: Speaker Biographies

Saturday Speakers



Isobel Knox – CWA Director and Convenor of Dunbar Community Woodland Group: Isobel Knox grew up in a Dundee housing scheme - which had a huge corner garden with mature trees, part of the original country estate. She has been convenor of Dunbar Community Woodland Group for 5 years, 2005 to 2010, retiring at AGM last month. She has been delivering John Muir Award for 4 years at Dunbar Grammar School, where she is a Pupil Support Worker. She is involved peripherally with the Dunbar Arts Trust, and helped them to organise an Easter Arts, crafts, music & poetry event. She also supports the friends of John Muir’s Birthplace Museum.



Philip Revell – Project Manager, Sustaining Dunbar: With a background in engineering and aerodynamics, Philip has acquired wide-ranging experience in environmental and community development projects since working in rural Zimbabwe in the early 1980’s. Most recently, this includes setting up Dunbar Community Woodland, Dunbar Community Bakery and Sustaining Dunbar -a Community Development Trust and part of the Transition Network. This is working to help create a resilient, low-carbon economy in the town and its rural hinterland. Philip is currently Chair of the Scottish Communities Climate Action Network and is an Associate with Climate Futures, researching the impact of grass-roots led climate action groups across Europe and how they can be better supported. Philip is also a potter, with a large wood-fired kiln which he currently fires once a year.



Jo Moulin – John Muir Birthplace Trust: Jo is Manager of the John Muir Birth Place and a Trustee of the John Muir Trust.

Workshop Hosts



Ludwig Appeltans – Earth Ways: Ludwig has been passionate about protecting and caring for the environment since he was a child. When he was 8, he started thinking the permaculture way when he learned that trees produce the oxygen that we breathe and he persuaded his parents to plant an oak tree in the garden. His passion for permaculture was born, even though he didn’t know the word!



Amanda Bryan - Aigas Community Forest, Forestry Commissioner for Scotland: Amanda Bryan is a member of Aigas Community Forest, Forestry Commissioner for Scotland and was an Adviser to the Scottish Government’s Land Reform Review Group. Amanda is also a freelance rural development consultant working across the Highlands and Islands who has worked for many CWA members. Through this she has gained considerable experience on the ground with community groups and also within the public sector so has a good knowledge of the processes involved on both sides of the fence.



Andrew Leaver - Aigas Community Forest: Andrew Leaver is Secretary of Aigas Community Forest. Aigas Forest is situated in Lower Strathglass about 5 miles from Beauly in Inverness-shire. Andrew has worked in fundraising and business development in the charitable and public sector for over 20 years and is currently Head of Fundraising at Highland Hospice. In 2009 Andrew was one of a group in his community who responded to Forestry Commissions Scotland's decision to sell Aigas Forest by preparing and submitting a successful National Forest Land Scheme application. Over the past 5 years Andrew has helped Aigas Community Forest source a range of grants to develop a business plan, investigate different purchase and lease opportunities and source capital funding. Over the past year this has included discussion with HIE and other authorities on the impact of applying State Aid regulations to community purchases. In February this year Aigas secured a Scottish Land Fund grant, exempt from State Aid, to support purchase of a part of the woodland.



Jonathan Caddy – Findhorn Hinterland Group: Jonathan currently lives in the Findhorn Ecological Village and community at The Park, Findhorn, Moray. He has had a very varied and interesting life and is the middle son of the founders of the 52 year old Findhorn Community in Moray. He is an Ecological Science graduate of the University of Edinburgh; one of the four pioneers of the island based rural community on the Isle of Erraid established 36 years ago and was General Manager for two years; set up and ran a wood supply business for three years working in a mature oak/beech forest on the Moray Estates; Manager of the Buchan Countryside Group where he was involved in woodland management and running a native tree nursery; involved in the establishment and later was Managing Director of Lothian Tree Services processing and supplying native timber using a portable saw and fixed sawmill as well as woodland management and tree surgery. He worked for a large landscaping company developing a native plant nursery for three years in Ontario, Canada; has over twenty years of teaching experience with children and young adults, was a Director for a couple of years of Trees for Life charity involved in the long-term work of restoring the Caledonian Forest. He built his own ecological house at Findhorn twenty years ago. He has helped establish and run the Findhorn Hinterland Group a community group involved in conservation, environmental education and land management on the Findhorn Peninsula and is presently the Convenor of the group and six years ago instigated and establish the Wilkies Wood Green Burial site, one of the two green burial sites in Moray. Jonathan is also the father of two children, a keen beekeeper, hill walker, scuba diver, gardener and sailor and has just taken early retirement from teaching so that he can take a little more time to reflect on things after a life, so far, of continually doing and making things happen!

Informal Session Hosts



Kelly McIntyre – Community Shares Scotland: Kelly McIntyre joined Community Shares Scotland as Programme Manager in June to lead the work of the exciting new programme to provide awareness raising, a dedicated support service, in-depth specialist support and range of training opportunities to grow a sustainable legacy for community shares in Scotland. Community Shares Scotland is delivered through the consortium of Development Trust Association, Co-operatives UK, Locality, Plunkett Scotland and Rocket Science and funded by Big Lottery and Carnegie UK. Prior to joining Community Shares Scotland, Kelly worked in the development trust sector for several years which included work within a wide range of community programmes and

initiatives including woodlands, growing, woodfuel, renewables and transport.



Ninian Stuart – Falkland Centre for Stewardship and Reforesting Scotland.

After an early career in community social work in Glasgow and in the mental health field, Ninian returned to his roots and responsibilities in a run-down rural estate in the 1990s. Since then he has been working with others to revive a landscape, build community and mind the future of this wooded place. This has involved starting up and supporting a range of social enterprises and community initiatives. He is co-founder of Falkland Centre for Stewardship which runs the Big Tent Festival and currently leads a programme of learning activities and public engagement in Falkland's woods.



Diane Campbell – Ullapool Community Trust & CWA Director:

Diane has been working with community groups for the over 12 years. Before joining the COSS team she was Development Manager for Community Woodlands Association with a particular focus on social enterprise development and funding. Diane is based in Ullapool and covers Highlands, Argyll and Bute, Aberdeenshire, Moray, Perth and Kinross and Comhairle nan Eilean Siar for the COSS project. Diane is the treasurer for Ullapool Community Trust and sits on the board of Community Woodlands Association. Before joining the COSS team Diane spent 18 months on the board of DTA Scotland. She is also a member of the Institute of Fundraising, a qualified trainer and facilitator.

Gavin Mitchell – Bushcraft Scotland: Gavin Mitchell is a facilitator/ trainer for Bushcraft-Scotland, he is also currently working part-time as an instructor for the Youth Vision Project. Gavin has been learning and practicing bushcraft skills since he was 7 years old. He has completed the Rudolf Steiner teachers training and many things connected with bushcraft and survival including the Tom Brown courses. He is also trained to Forest School Level 3 Group Leader. Gavin loves teaching bushcraft and survival skills and is particularly interest in the ways the skills can lead to greater awareness of the self and the spirit.

Dave Crosbie – Tree-ditions Woodland Crafts School: Dave runs an East Lothian's Woodland Crafts School that offers varied courses in everything from bushcraft, primitive technology and survival skills to green woodworking using the same tools and natural local materials that not so long ago would have been used throughout the country to make everyday wooden items. Dave has had various jobs over the years, including floor and carpet laying, building, carpentry and outdoor activities instruction, and he has always used the outdoors for leisure as well as work.

Appendix 4: Delegate List

Name		Organisation
Debra	Adam	Roots of Arran Community Woodland
Neil	Anderson	Barrhead
Ludwig	Appletans	Earthways, Findhorn
Jean	Barnett	Dunnet Forestry Trust
Michael	Barnett	Dunnet Forestry Trust
Robert	Borruso	Kilfinan Community Forest Company
Amanda	Bryan	Aigas Community Forest
Jonathan	Caddy	Findhorn Hinterland Group
Amanda	Calvert	Kingussie Community Development Company
Diane	Campbell	Ullapool Community Trust
Mary	Campbell	Glendale Estate Charitable Trust
Emma	Cooper	Bute Community Land Company
Anna	Craigen	Borders Forest Trust
Grace	Craigie	Crossgates Community Woodland
Dave	Crosbie	Tree-ditions, Woodland Crafts School
Matt	Davies	North Cloich Forest Garden
Jim	deBank	Laggan Forest Trust
Caroline	Derbyshire	CWA
Charles	Dixon-Spain	Colintraive and Glendaruel Development Trust
Bob	Fleet	Wooplaw Community Woodlands
Vicky	Flood	Forres Community Woodland Trust
Catherine	Francis	Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Brigitte	Geddes	Gearrhoille Community Wood Ardgay
Neil	Gerrard	Ullapool Community Trust
Joanna	Gilliatt	Laggan Forest Trust
Gordon	Gray Stephens	Argyll Green Woodworkers Association
Kenny	Grieve	Clatto Community Woodlands
Ian	Hall	Laggan Forest Trust
Ian	Hepburn	North West Mull Community Woodland Company
Joan	Hepburn	North West Mull Community Woodland Company
William	Hoare	Highland Perthshire Communities Land Trust
Kelly	Hodgson	Falkland Centre for Stewardship
Jon	Hollingdale	CWA
Grant	Holroyd	Knoydart Forest Trust
Eva	Hurley	Dunbar Community Woodland Group
Alyne	Jones	South-West Community Woodlands Trust
Steven	Kelvin	Alva Glen Heritage Trust
Isobel	Knox	Dunbar Community Woodland Group
Sasha	Laing	Forestry Commission Scotland
Mark	Lazzeri	Falkland Centre for Stewardship
Andrew	Leaver	Aigas Community Forest
Johann	Liebenberg	Knoydart Forest Trust
Harry	Lowthrop	Hill Holt Wood
Nigel	Lowthrop	Hill Holt Wood
Alison	Macleod	Applecross Community Company

Chris	Marsh	Sleat Community Trust
Kelly	McIntyre	DTA Scotland
Hugh	McNish	Forestry Commission Scotland
Gavin	Mitchell	Bushcraft Scotland
Jo	Moulin	John Muir Birthplace Trust
James	Ogilvie	Forestry Commission Scotland
Diane	Oliver	CWA
Ute	Penny	Dunbar Community Woodland Group
Philip	Revell	Sustaining Dunbar
Steve	Robertson	Isle of Rum Community Trust
Dr Jane	Rosegrant	Borders Forest Trust
Chick	Rutherford	Barrhead
Fay	Sharpley	Llais y Goedwig
Roni	Smith	Abriachan Forest Trust
Craig	Stebbing	Dunbar Community Woodland Group
James	Stewart	Glendale Estate Charitable Trust
Tim	Stobard	Bute Community Land Company
Vicky	Stonebridge	Kirkton Woodland & Heritage Group
Ninian	Stuart	Falkland Centre for Stewardship
Kate	Swade	Shared Assets
Andrew	Taylor	Kirkton Woodland & Heritage Group
Claire	Templeton	Alva Glen Heritage Trust
Iwan	Thomas	The VAT Run, South Queensferry
Frank	van Duivenbode	Gearrhoille Community Wood Ardgay
Juliette	Walsh	Roots of Arran Community Woodland
Katie	Webster	Health & Happiness, Caithness
Nigel	Webster	Hill Holt Wood
David	Williamson	Dunbar Community Woodland Group
Steve	Williamson	Kilfinan Community Forest Company
Ben	Wilson	Hill Holt Wood
Jess	Windsor	North Cloich Forest Garden
Iain	Young	Dunbar Community Woodland Group