

Kames Hotel, Tighnabruich - Friday 29th August 2014

A networking event for those who are or wish to become involved in forests which are community owned or managed for community benefit.

Agenda:

10.00	Arrive, tea and coffee
10.25	Welcome and Introductions – Elaine Jamieson
10.30	Forestry Commission Scotland – James Ogilvie and Hugh McNish
11.00	FCS Seedcorn Funding – Elaine Jamieson
11.10	Community Woodlands Association – Diane Oliver
11.20	North West Mull Community Woodland Company – Ian Hepburn
11.30	Break
11.45	Tips for Finding Funding – David Rennie
13.00	Lunch
13.45	Wood for All – Nikki Kenn
13.55	Collaborative Rhododendron Control – Gordon Gray Stephens
14.05	Kilfinan Forest 2 years on – Robert Baruso
14.30	Site Visit to Kilfinan Forest
16.00	Finish

Attending:

David Inglis and Jamie Quarton (Ardrishaig Community Trust); Colin Campbell and Patrick Harvey (Blarbuie Woodland Enterprise); Diane Oliver (Community Woodlands Association); James Ogilvie, Hugh McNish and Elaine Jamieson (Forestry Commission Scotland); Gordon Gray-Stephens (Native Woods Co-op); Andy Robinson (RSPB); Alasdair Calder and Lynda Mitchell (Allenergy); David Rennie (Argyll & Bute Council); Ian Hepburn (North West Mull Community Woodland Company); Michaela Blair, David Blair, Angus Blair, Nikki Brown, Colin Wiliment, Robert Baruso, Steve Williamson and Andy (Kilfinan Community Forest Company); Silke Vella and Nikki Kenn (Transition Stirling – Wood for All).

Apologies:

Emma Cooper (Bute Community Forest); Willie Russell (Campbeltown Community Orchard); Margaret Shields and Eamon King (Colintraive and Glendaruel Community Development Company); Jane Isaacson (Dunollie House); Alastair MacBeth (Friends of Duchess Wood); Claire Munro (Highlands and Islands Enterprise); Alan Parker (Mull Woodfuel Group); Ian Mathieson (SCVO); Catherine Kennedy, Matt Huddleston and Syd House (Forestry Commission Scotland); Ed Tyler (Kintyre Power to the People); Neil Donaldson (Argyll Farm Woodland Project); Pete Creech (Blarbuie Woodland Enterprise); Catriona O’Keeffe and Catherine Hill (South Loch Aweside Community Company); Anna Watkiss (Argyll and Bute Council); Kate Craig (Glenorchy and Innishail Community Orchard and Woodland); Peter Quelch (AGWA); David Adams and Rosemary Stevenson (Helensburgh Community Woodland Group); Julie Young (Argyll and the Isles Coast and Countryside Trust) and Fiona Hamilton (Outdoor and Woodland Learning Scotland).





Welcome:

Elaine Jamieson, Forestry Commission Scotland welcomed everyone to the sixth Argyll networking event.

Seedcorn Funding – Elaine Jamieson

This presentation is available to view online at <http://youtu.be/y7CWOObBHtW4>

Forestry Commission Scotland continues to work with groups on a range of issues and projects. Elaine outlined the Community Development Fund (cannot fund capital works) and the Seedcorn fund.

Elaine chatted through the Community Development Fund (previously Community Seedcorn Fund) current projects some of which are still in early discussion. It aims to support community groups and organisations that are encouraging and facilitating greater use of woods by people to derive health, well-being and community benefits. About 50% of this fund is currently committed and Elaine encouraged groups seeking funding to chat through their ideas and get submissions in as soon as possible. The Seedcorn Fund (is smaller and measured against the Scottish Forestry Strategy (<http://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/supporting/strategy-policy-guidance/forestry-strategy>)).

FCS is also a partner in the Argyll & the Isles Coast & Countryside Trust (ACT) and they currently have an 'ACT Alfresco' promotion where groups can submit ideas for projects which enhance, protect, promote the environment and receive £100; to register go online to www.act-now.org.uk/en/act-alfresco. Coming soon will be 'Your ACT' – a social media project competition to win £500 towards an environmental project. For more info on ACT go to their website www.act-now.org.uk, their Facebook page www.facebook.com/pages/Act/719901238050339 or follow on Twitter [@act_aicct](https://twitter.com/act_aicct).

The Forest Education Initiative (FEI) has recently rebranded and is now Outdoor & Woodland Learning Scotland (OWLS). There is discussion around amalgamating the 2 Argyll former FEI groups with localised offshoots. A networking event will be held 19th/20th September at Benmore Botanic Gardens, Argyll.

Elaine can be contacted at elaine.jamieson@forestry.gsi.gov.uk. More information about Forestry Commission Scotland can be found on their website www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/enjoyscotlandsforests and you can follow them on Twitter [@FCScotlandnews](https://twitter.com/FCScotlandnews) and [@fcscotland](https://twitter.com/fcscotland).

Forestry Commission Scotland – James Ogilvie and Hugh McNish

This presentation is available to view online at <http://youtu.be/tz-ct18eJH4>

Hugh is recently in post, taking over from Bob Frost until March 2015.

Hugh emphasised the commitment of FCS to work with people as well as trees. He outlined the FCS policies and programmes which help to ensure that projects fit with policy:

- Woods for Learning
- Woods for Health
- National Forest Land Scheme
- Outdoor and Woodland Learning

Woodlands in and Around Town (WIAT) phase 3 is on its way, and Hugh's current focus is on the WIAT review. He will be contacting people to discuss how the scheme can be improved and how to ensure it remains 'fit for purpose'.

FCS is looking to sustain the legacy and want to provide support and guidance for the management of urban woodlands. <£1,000 will require a letter of application and >£1,000 will require an application form.

James updated everyone re a number of initiatives.

NFLS (National Forest Land Scheme) – Malcolm Wield is working on this on a day-to-day basis – contact him to discuss ideas early on

National Planning Framework 3 – 14 priorities of the Scottish Government mostly major infrastructure. 1 priority is Central Scotland Green Network.

The Scottish Government target for community ownership for 2020 is 1 million acres – about half way there (lots of work still to go to meet this target).

Scottish Land Fund – there had been a number of issues around groups and State Aid for projects assisted by the Scottish Land Fund, however these have now been mainly resolved and for a project to be affected by State Aid it must be large and commercial. FCS are happy to advise groups on this.

Hutting – Reforesting Scotland are leading and interest in this continues to grow. The main aim is to enable those living in cities to reconnect with the countryside (like Scandinavia). There is a trial site now being developed on National Forest Estate in Fife.

Woodlots – this scheme aims to connect landowners with people with the skills to manage it. FCS is working with Scottish Woodlots Association on different models and a few are now coming onstream.

Community Empowerment Bill – deadline for submissions is 5th September 2014

Land Reform Review Group – the Scottish Government is looking at the recommendations. A key aim is the creation of a complete land register.

Community Woodland Association – Diane Oliver

This presentation is available to view online at <http://youtu.be/8Al5wt5uI-Y>

Diane shared some of the highlights from the annual CWA conference, which was held the previous weekend at Dunbar with the theme being 'Making the Connections'.

The Scottish Rural Parliament is holding events around the country and the first parliament will be held in Oban 6th – 8th November 2014. The group discussed attendance at the parliament and it was suggested that some way be found to take representation from the group.



2 training events will be held this year in addition to the 2 networking meetings. The group discussed ideas based on previous attendees feedback and training requests. It was agreed to focus on contract management, health and safety and large machinery. Other training prioritised included wood products, woodfuel production, how to engage with volunteers and volunteer management.

Other sources of information, support, training and funding mentioned included:

- HSE website
- Volunteer Development Scotland
- Volunteer Action Fund
- Skills Development Scotland - (potential financial support for accredited training costs – it should be possible to include volunteers as staff for this fund, other CWA groups have previously)
- Business Gateway – training

Diane can be contacted at di.oliver@communitywoods.org. More information about CWA can be found on their website www.communitywoods.org, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/Communitywoods and you can follow them on Twitter @CommunityWoods.

North West Mull Community Woodland Company Update – Ian Hepburn

This presentation is available to view online at <http://youtu.be/qmb2C-gBnPI>

Ian gave some background and outlined the Company's main aims. They have recently secured Scottish Government funding for a Development Manager (first external funding assistance in c.4 years).

The haul route and the new fixed link pier are now completed saving around 168,000 road miles. By December, the loan for the haul route should be paid off (will have taken 2½–3yrs) and NWMCWC will then be able to make a profit that can then be used to start replanting.

The organisation has been looking to utilise their low grade timber and generate income and therefore moved into the woodfuel market after another local provider stopped. A bequest enabled the company to purchase much needed equipment. They have now also moved to woodchip – this has lots of cost benefits but is a massive step up and quality is key – and purchased the Island's supplier in early 2014.

Ian can be contacted at ian_nwmullwoodland@btconnect.com. North West Mull Community Woodland Company can be found online at www.nwmullwoodland.co.uk and on Facebook groups at www.facebook.com/groups/5505105987/.

Tips for Finding Funding – David Rennie

David outlined 10 top tips for funding and provided a handout showing examples of applications. He explained how to get support from the Argyll & Bute Social Enterprise team. He gave an overview of Argyll & Bute Council services. The Social Enterprise team are based within Economic Development which is part of Development & Infrastructure Services. The Community Development staff can help with community engagement.



There is a significant amount of information on the Council website – use the A-Z finder and go to G for Grants – this link goes straight to the relevant layer of the website. David ran through all the information available including GRANTnet, which is a bespoke search engine, subscribed to be the Council. There are also useful documents eg beginners guides. David and the team will run a bespoke search for groups if requested. The Council produces a monthly funding alert and it is well worth subscribing to receive this (see links below).

It is worth noting that the Scottish Land Fund is now open until 2016 and that Awards for All has now reopened to applications but has changed criteria and how it works.

Key weblinks used by David during his workshop:-

- Funding main page www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/community-life-and-leisure/grants-and-funding
- GRANTnet www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/community-life-and-leisure/grantnet
- Funding & support www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/community-life-and-leisure/funding-and-support
- Support www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/community-life-and-leisure/support
- Monthly funding alert www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/community-life-and-leisure/new-months-funding-alert
- To register interest www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/forms/note-interest-form
- Scottish Land Fund www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/global-content/programmes/scotland/scottish-land-fund
- Awards for All www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/global-content/programmes/scotland/awards-for-all-scotland

10 Top Tips (from handout)

1. **Start early** – don't wait until the last minute. Large amounts of funding will require you to supply larger amounts of information. Have at hand information about your organisation and the work you do/ want to do.
2. **Read the application, Read the guidelines, before** you start filling in the application.
3. **Answer what they ask, not what you want to tell.** Tell how your project meets their outcomes – not just what you want to do.
4. **Stick to the format** they ask for – use 500 words where it says, not 550. Don't write "as above" try to understand what information they are asking for – if in doubt call them and ask. (Proposals that do not meeting the requirements will not get through the first hurdle to be even be considered.)
5. **Avoid rhetoric and hyperbole.** Stay away from jargon and buzz words. Talk in plain English.
6. **Be specific about outputs and outcomes.** The application should explicitly state expected practical, tangible outputs and outcomes (SMART measures: **S**ustainable, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant/realistic and **T**ime-bound). Make sure you state how the project satisfies their outcomes. (It is often better to show clearly how you satisfy one outcome rather than try to show you cover everything).
7. **Do a little research,** find out who else has received an award from the source to which you are applying. Often case examples are up on their website. For larger applications try contacting them and find out about their project and their application. Ask for other projects that are doing similar work to yourselves that the funder can recommend you talk to.



8. **Develop credible plans for assessment and dissemination** and not just as afterthoughts. How will you know that you have been successful? And how will you let others know about your work?
9. **Illustrate your reporting back with real instances or examples.**
10. **Be Ready** with a proposal/ idea so that if a short deadline comes up your already prepared to respond quickly.

David can be contacted at david.rennie@argyll-bute.gov.uk / 01700 501371.

Wood for All – Nikki Kenn

Transition Stirling is part of the Transition movement, one of a network of organisations based on sustainability and taking action locally. After starting with some small projects, their first large funded project was Wood for All, which is funded via the Climate Challenge Fund and runs March 2012 – March 2015. The main aim of the project is to reduce the Stirling Area's carbon footprint by:-

- Increasing both supply and demand for woodfuel
- Bringing together undermanaged woodlands, landowners, and interested community groups in Stirling area
- Providing impartial biomass heating advice
- Carbon Footprinting farms
- Providing Carbon detox cards to individuals

The team are all part time and consist of a project manager, 2 energy coordinators, a woodland coordinator and a community & volunteer coordinator. Wood for All also host a TCV (The Conservation Volunteers) Natural Communities Coordinator and rely on lots of volunteers.

The project runs a number of activities to support and increase supply and demand for woodfuel including home energy visits, drop in evenings across the small villages. Other events include woodland management and coppice skills. Other free workshops have been run to teach and promote woodland skills and potential beyond woodfuel such as green woodworking, and introduction to willow, including weaving and feding.

In partnership with Fintry Development Trust, Wood for All developed a local woodfuel supply project in Fintry after being approached by a local woodland owner who had an undermanaged woodland. Together with the help of Wood for All volunteers who have been put through their basic chainsaw certificate under the project, Fintry Splitters and other locals, this project now utilises the windblow for woodfuel, and is following a management plan for other trees needing thinning and areas for replanting. The result is positive for the local community and the woodland owner, providing a local source of woodfuel to the community, scope for a better managed woodland, and the opportunity for many skills to have been developed in the process.

Wood for All also ran a woodfuel day covering the best types of wood fuel, teaching axe splitting techniques, demonstrating machine log splitting with Fintry Splitters (available to hire locally), and teaching how to make simple log stores from pallets.

These events aim to involve local woodland owners, community groups and interested volunteers. Wood for All works across the Stirling area and is involved in supporting a number of small woodland groups across the area by coordinating action days and volunteers, advertising and managing events including working with a Community council and volunteers at Gowan Hill; birch thinning, tree



planting and hazel layering at Burnside Wood, Kippen and bringing in Green Aspirations Scotland to run tool training sessions in to train up group members and Wood for All volunteers in correct practice. Wood for All is now concentrating on their next stage of the project which is woodland coordination and are running a woodland management day in October to bring together different groups.

Wood for All/ Transition Stirling can be found online at www.transitionstirling.org.uk, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/WoodforAllStirling and you can follow them on Twitter [@WoodforAll](https://twitter.com/WoodforAll) and [@transitionstir](https://twitter.com/transitionstir).

Collaborative Rhododendron ponticum Control – Gordon Gray Stephens

This presentation is available to view online at <http://youtu.be/ShjKz6lUNfY>

Rhodies need to be managed on a large scale (not on a land ownership basis) and this collaborative approach has been recognised by FCS and SRPD (Scottish Rural Development Programme). FCS Forest Development funding has provided the support to develop a rhodie management plan for Glen Creran. A collaborative approach can be challenging with not all partners wishing to get rid of R. ponticum (some people like it in their gardens etc). There is no quick fix and it is important to plan for the future and secure funding packages.

A Guidance sheet on eradicating rhodies has been produced and is available from Elaine/ Gordon. Gordon outlined the various methods of removing ponticum. Of the different removal techniques, lever and mulch is the more accessible for working with volunteers rather than cut and burn as it doesn't require chainsaws and other tools.

Gordon emphasised the importance of working together on a large scale and highlighted that there is less funding available for Rhododendron ponticum control in the next round of SRDP.

Kilfinan Forest 2 Years On – Robert Baruso

Rob outlined the:

- distant past - purchase, initial development, access, haul route etc
- recent past – community composting scheme; polytunnels; Vermiculture; rent an area to Kyles Allotment Group of 40+ members (plus waiting list). This is probably the greatest success so far and the Allotment group is involved in the prizewinning producers' market
- current projects – now timber harvesting; using their sawmill and selling some products and about to start work on installing a hydro scheme
- future projects – affordable housing and woodland crofts

KCFC were a Scottish Finest Wood Awards winner in 2014, having been commended in 2013.

Over the summer they ran a successful youth summer work placement with 5 young people (15-16yrs) working in the woods gaining skills and experience.

More information about KCFC can be found on their website www.kilfinancommunityforest.co.uk, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/pages/Kilfinan-Community-Forest/145208138905268 and you can follow them on Twitter [@kilfinanforest](https://twitter.com/kilfinanforest).



Site Visit to Kilfinan Forest:

Steve Williamson, Rob and other directors then gave us all a guided tour of Kilfinan Forest. We were taken to see their community composting scheme; community growing area; buildings; timber processing area; future hydro scheme, woodland croft and housing sites; and waymarked path including children's squirrel project.



More photos are available online at the CWA Flickr site at <https://flic.kr/s/aHsk3swCFE>



Feedback Summary:

General verbal feedback was very positive and 10 feedback forms were completed. Delegates were asked to score the following (none scored poor):

	Organisation	Location	Venue	Catering	Speakers	Site Visit
very good	6	6	4	6	5	4
good	1	1	3	1	1	

All 7 delegates who returned their feedback forms felt the event met their expectations.

Delegates felt they gained the following benefits:

- Networking x 3
- Better understanding of other forests' activities
- Hearing about grants and inspiring woodland projects
- Learning about Kilfinan progress
- Good networking and contact with potential CLS and CWA members
- An insight to the success of a variety of community woodlands
- A chance to meet past correspondents and possible new correspondents
- An amazing lunch!

Next meeting location suggestions included:

- Mull x 2
- South Argyll
- Bute x 3

Next meeting agenda suggestions included:

- Health and Safety – risk assessments
- More of the same
- Woodfuel
- SRDP
- Collaboration
- Updates on community woodland successes
- Funding streams for different projects
- Discussion on potential projects to increase collaboration and partnerships

All would recommend others to take part in similar events, because:

- A lot of quality, first hand info on the woodfuel sector
- Funding streams meant that there was another level to the meeting.

Delegates would like further training and events in:

- Dealing with contractors
- Machinery specifications
- Discussion meeting on potential partnerships to investigate risk of additionality/ increase partnerships etc