

Community Woodlands Association



CWA E-NEWSLETTER - ISSUE 24

Welcome to the CWA E-newsletter, Spring 2015 Edition. Thank you to everyone who contributed, we had a great response from our members offering their stories which we hope will inspire and motivate, and give you the opportunity to catch up on what other CWA members have been up to over the past few months.

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CWA Conference August 2015 22nd & 23rd August 2015 at the at The Royal Marine Hotel, Hunter's Quay, Dunoon, Argyll PA23 8HJ



Come and join us at the 16th annual CWA conference which will take place on 22nd & 23rd August 2015 at the at The Royal

Marine Hotel, Hunter's Quay, Dunoon, Argyll PA23 8HJ.

Accommodation is available at the hotel and rooms cost £60pppn. To book a room, please call the hotel direct on tel: 01369 705810 or email:

info@royalmarinehotel.co.uk
www.royalmarinehotel.co.uk

The theme of the conference this year will be based around 'Working in Partnership'. Presentations, workshops and site visits will cover community's working together with partners in both the private and public sector. Delegates will also have the opportunity to visit to Stronafian Forest and Kilfinan Forest .

The CWA conference is about all the dedicated people who manage community woodlands and it is a chance to share



and learn from each other's experiences as well as having the opportunity to network with old and new friends. As always you will have the chance to relax and catch up for a chat at the dinner and ceilidh on Saturday evening.

Here's just some of the feedback we received from last years' conference:

"Meeting people, new ideas, thought provoking"

"Increased knowledge in a number of different areas"

"Great to talk, and experience the success of this movement"

Delegate fees and subsidies

CWA full members have 2 free places and CWA basic members have one free place. Fees for other delegates and details of travel & subsistence support for members will be finalised shortly, Booking forms will be available online by the end of June.





Alva Glen Heritage Trust Wild about the Hillfoots



In Clackmannanshire the Wild about the Hillfoots project is transforming areas along the Hillfoots, Ochil Community Garden, and parts of the walking and cycling path between Alva and Tillicoultry, by sowing and planting wild flowers and Scottish native plants. In Alva Glen a new seating area and pergola will provide a focal point for a newly planted community space.

The project sees the creation of a new partnership with Alva Glen Heritage Trust, Alva Community Council, Ochil Community Garden near Menstrie, Clackmannanshire Youth Services and Susstrans, enabling young people to learn new skills across all areas of the project including woodland management, digital and social media, arts and events, construction and bio-diversity research across a range of sites.

With the support of individuals from adult day care services at the Ochil Community Garden seeds and plug plants are being sown and grown on, some of which will then be planted out at Alva Glen and along the leisure path to Tillicoultry.

It's all part of Grow Wild, a dynamic £10.5 million programme which aims to bring people and communities together to sow, grow and support UK native wild flowers. Grow Wild hopes to inspire people to get together and transform sites throughout the country into eco-friendly wild flower areas that can be appreciated and developed by members of the community.

Alva Glen Heritage Trust and Alva Community Council were awarded £4000 by the Big Lottery and Grow Wild and taking inspiration from the wild flowers, plants and trees that adorn the Ochil Hills will be celebrating native species. With such a rich botanical diversity shared between the villages that sit at the foot of the Ochil Hills the members believe that this project will strengthen their connections with each other and their understanding of their natural heritage.

To bring all ages together to enjoy learning about native plants and to get the community involved a range of activities is planned with something happening each month. Alva Glen is always a popular destination for Easter Sunday and this year visi-





tors to the glen were able to admire the new pergola installed in the morning by volunteers.

Other activities that were enjoyed by young and old included native tree storytelling and a wild flower inspired easter egg hunt and facepainting. Birch tree sap has already been collected and at a workshop later in the year this along with other fruits and berries will be turned into syrup to be used in different recipes.

On Sunday 7th June the glen will host a Wild about the Hillfoots Natural Art Festival with photography, drawing and painting, natural dye workshop and wild flower ID walk. In July on Sunday 5th a BBQ and outdoor concert with music celebrating Scottish wild flowers will take place in the glen with traditional musicians and youth groups.

Songs you might hear “Wild Mountain Thyme” “Wild thing”, who knows? The projects celebratory event will be held in September at the Ochil Community Garden, showing works from the June Natural Art Festival.

Future plans are to continue to plant seeds and grow on plants at Ochil Community Garden to be shared with the communities that are Wild about the Hillfoots.

For further information or to arrange to photograph the event/volunteer work in action, contact Claire Templeton at Claire83a@aol.com or 01259 760997.

www.growwilduk.com/community-projects/wild-about-hillfoots



Community Woodlands Association *Advance notice of Workshops planned for 2015*



CWA is working with Highlands and Islands Enterprise to deliver 3 workshops later this year.

Community Woodland Burials

This event aims to cover: planning and legal regulations, choosing suitable sites, infrastructure requirements, burial options, memorial areas, resources and supply chains and marketing.

Hutting in Community Woodlands

This event aims to cover: background information to the hutting movement, planning, tenure and other legal issues, site selection, service provision, management of huts in a community setting, income generation and manufacture of huts. The venue is likely to be Stronafian Forest, Colintrave and Glendaruel Trust, Argyll.

Leases/licences/tenancies for individuals in community woodlands

This event aims to cover: background information about the history of leases / tenancies within woodlands, the range of options, legal requirements, exploration of relationships between community landowners and individual tenants / licence holders, potential spins offs and income generation opportunities.

The workshops will be held in the Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) area and travel expenses will be available to support representatives of community groups travelling from within the HIE area.

Dates and venues are yet to be confirmed however if you would like to indicate interest in attending or find out more please email Diane on di.oliver@communitywoods.org



Strathnairn Community Woodlands

Local children learn the importance of woodland management at School Wood

The community of Strathnairn is in the Highlands of Scotland, approximately 10 miles south of Inverness. In 2003 it took over ownership of School and Milton Woods in Farr from the Forestry Commission. A charitable company was set up with the object of conserving, regenerating and promoting the restoration of predominantly native woodlands in Strathnairn as an important part of Scotland's natural environment for the benefit of the public.



Access is easy using well defined footpaths and good car parking and both woods are used by the wider community and as a resource by the Highland Council Countryside Ranger Service. The Woods are managed by local volunteers to meet objectives set out in a Long Term Forest Management Plan approved by the Forestry Commission. That plan includes periodic harvesting and regeneration so that these former plantations will eventually develop into more diverse woodlands with a varied species, height and age structure.

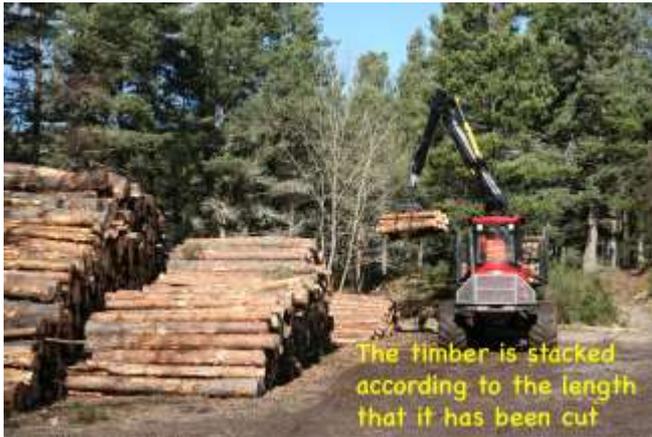
School Wood (12.14 hectares) sits immediately behind Farr Primary School. Milton Wood (28 hectares) is at the west end of Farr, alongside the River Nairn. Both woodlands contain areas of environmental and scenic interest, and exhibit a mix of trees which offer a habitat for woodpeckers, red squirrels, foxes, bats, deer and badgers as well as a good variety of invertebrates, plants, mosses, lichens and fungi. School

This year has seen the second period of harvesting which included a limited amount of clear felling of non-native species and thinning of Scots Pine.



Wood is a Forestry Commission Red Squirrel "Hot Spot" and is also home to a wood cabin that was built using timber from the trees growing in Milton Wood.





The timber is stacked according to the length that it has been cut

The work was undertaken by [Scottish Woodlands](#) Ltd who are to be commended for the care they took to safeguard the areas supporting protected wild life despite the confined space and ground conditions making this task particularly onerous.

As a community project, the directors have worked closely with Farr and Daviot Primary Schools. from the very beginning. In fact there is a



The children learn that the lorry has been specially made to carry the timber

gate from Farr Primary School playground directly into School Wood so that full use of the wood as a teaching resource has been made over many years. Although the woods were closed for har-

vesting the opportunity was taken to show the children how important woodland management and timber production is for the Highlands and let them see the harvesting machinery in action. They really enjoyed seeing how the equipment worked, how the operators needed particular skills and learning about the inherent dangers that are part of tree harvesting and haulage.



Walking through the recently thinned wood to look at the forwarder and timber lorry

Now that this period of felling has been completed everyone is getting very excited about the opportunities for further improvement and re planting that has been given.



The children were watching from a safe distance

For more details on Strathnairn Community Woodlands please visit: www.strathnairn.org.uk

Forestry Commission Scotland Horse Logging Demo for Foresters – Greenlaw, Scottish Borders



See working horses in action pulling timber from woodland as part of a commercial thinning operation. Meet local logger Billy Anderson and his Clydesdale logging horse. Discover how horses continue to play an active role in sustainable modern forest man-

agement. Entrance by donation. Booking essential. Disabled access & facilities limited: phone to discuss requirements. Booking & further info please contact Iain Laidlaw via:
Tel: 07831 327319
Email: iain.laidlaw@forestry.gsi.gov.uk
Visit: www.scottishlandandestates.co.uk



Ledmore & Migdale Woods

Over 1000 people enjoy the woods, by Juliet Robinson, Events Co-ordinator



Last year as part of the 'People and Trees' project at Ledmore and Migdale woods in Sutherland, over a thousand people enjoyed events at the wood. The collage below shows some of the fun we had.

We started the year with a fabulous spoon making event in March, where participants went home with their own handmade spoon made from trees fallen in the winter storms. At mid-summer, we were delighted by a troop of Unicorns ridden by mythical Queens of the woods, and participants used their handmade faery wands to make wishes at the magical Rowan tree.

In the autumn, we made charcoal drawings and rubbings which brought the creative side out of everyone and, later on in the year, our Halloween lantern event and sausage sizzle got everyone out in the evening to enjoy the dark, yet beautiful woods!

We are delighted to be able to hold more events **this year, and here is a summary of what's in store** for 2015:

Saturday 16th May – Surviving the woods. Join survival expert Neil Foote to make you into Bear Grills! There are three sessions available for small groups throughout the day. Free and for anyone over the age of 10.

Saturday 29th August – Wild Woodland Life. Join Creeping Toad for a truly unique experience in the woods, free and suitable for all ages.

Saturday 12th September – Boats ahoy! Join internationally acclaimed artists Zoe Walker and Neil Bromwich for a spectacular event for all the family. Times and details tbc.

To find out more, contact Juliet at: ledmoremigdale@woodlandtrust.org.uk





Lochbroom Woodfuels **Hold their First Workin' Wood Awards Ceremony**



Lochbroom Woodfuels held their **first Workin' Wood awards ceremony** on Friday 27th February to celebrate all the hard work and achievements of their team of young people.

Lochbroom Woodfuels was set up by Ullapool Community Trust in 2012 with the dual aims of creating a continuous supply of sustainable woodfuels in Ullapool and creating training and employment opportunities for young people. **Workin' Wood was launched in January to expand and improve this support to young people.**

Four young people were awarded certificates on Friday to recognise both in-house and accredited training. This included Angus Foote, a pupil at Ullapool High School who passed his forklift truck training with New Start Highland. Angus has a work placement with Lochbroom Woodfuels two mornings a week, helping with deliveries, warehousing and processing.

Euan MacRae recently started in employment as a trainee yard assistant. He also successfully **completed his forklift truck training and 'Know Your Wood' training.** Lindsey Russell had only been in post as administrative assistant for one week when she received her certificate for induction training which included health and safety

at work, digital marketing, customer service skills and an introduction to woodfuels. Finally, Calum Wilson received his induction training certificate after recently starting a work placement.



Workin' Wood offers young people the chance to learn and develop their skills and confidence in a practical and flexible way. There are often opportunities to do work placements to gain experience in different aspects of the business. Young people can also work towards the volunteering element of the Duke of Edinburgh Award by helping with retail at markets or helping with the free wood stacking service.

For more information about opportunities for young people, contact Helen Munro at: helen@lochbroomwoodfuels.com or 01854 612 193.



RSPB Scotland searches for leading lights of conservation **Entries open for wildlife charity's Nature of Scotland Awards**



The search for Scotland's leading lights of conservation has begun with entries **now open for the RSPB's**

prestigious Nature of Scotland Awards. The annual competition is a celebration of the people and projects that go the extra mile to protect **Scotland's precious wildlife and the natural environment.**

RSPB Scotland is inviting entries from individuals, schools and organisations that demonstrate an innovative approach to wildlife conservation and

work hard to enhance the nation's natural heritage.

The categories for entry include: Marine Conservation, Sustainable Development, Politician of the Year, Youth and Education, Community Initiative, Innovation, The Nature Tourism Award and RSPB Species Champion.

The closing date for entries is Friday 12th June 2015. To find out more or to submit an entry to the Nature of Scotland Awards, please visit: <http://www.rspb.org.uk/natureofscotland>



Woodlot Licences

A New Tool in the Toolbox



When community groups take on the management of their local woodlands, they are often faced (particularly if larger areas are involved) with balancing the demands of routine forest management – thinning, harvesting & extraction, restocking etc – with more people-focused community woodland activities. In many cases the former will generate income for the latter, but at the same time can place significant demands on already hard stretched local staff and volunteers.

The solution is often to contract out the forest management to the larger commercial forestry companies. This generally works well, and some companies in particular have shown themselves to be very sensitive to the needs of communities. However at the same time there is often an aspiration to see that ongoing management support local people more directly.

One way to do this is through woodlot licences - a leasehold model of woodland tenure whereby a licence holder rents an area of woodland from a landowner, on a long term basis. Under the terms of the licence, the tenant is responsible for managing the woodlot according to an agreed management plan. This includes felling and extracting timber, which can be used or sold on, and subsequent restocking. In return an annual rental is paid for the woodlot.

There are a number of similarities between woodlot licences and woodland crofts (which are currently better known), but important differences too. One obvious difference is that, not being tied to crofting legislation, they are potentially available throughout Scotland and not just in the crofting counties.

Community woodlands anywhere in the country can therefore make use of woodlot licences to support local, small-scale forestry and at the same time implement essential management of their woodlands. This approach could potentially be either an alternative to the larger scale commercial management companies, or equally complement their involvement, depending on the nature of the site.

Under a woodlot licence, harvesting – and the setting of rent – is calculated using a concept known as the Allowable Annual Cut. Space precludes a detailed explanation here but more information is available from the Scottish Woodlot Association (SWA).

The SWA is a Co-operative founded in 2012 to bring woodlot licences to Scotland, giving rural people a direct stake in their local forests. They were inspired by the situation in British Columbia (BC), where the Provincial Government has been running a highly successful woodlot licence programme on Crown land for over 30 years. There, they are seen as an important part of a diverse forestry sector, delivering particular local and community benefits, and as such are being actively promoted and expanded by the Government

In BC however woodlot licences exist on public land only, whilst the SWA believes the model can successfully be applied to public, private and community woodlands. To date half a dozen woodlots have been established on private land in Scotland, but the SWA believes there is a particular opportunity for community owners to make use of the model to support local rural development **through 'family forestry'**.

If you would like to find out more or are interested in renting or leasing a woodlot, please contact Scottish Woodlot Association at:

info@scottishwoodlotassociation.co.uk or visit www.scottishwoodlotassociation.co.uk



Abriachan Forest Trust and NHS Highland Mental health project picked for top award



The Branching Out programme is a partnership between Abriachan Forest Trust and NHS Highland aimed at improving the physical and mental health of service users through activities outdoors. The scheme, originally developed by Forestry Commission Scotland, has proved extremely popular with health professionals and clients. Highland Council Deprived Area Fund support for enabled a *Branching Out: Moving On* pilot that has now been recognised by the Mental Health Nursing Forum Scotland.

NHS Highland Mid Ross community mental health team leader **Helen Neville** said: *“We are absolutely delighted to be selected for an Excellence in Mental Health Nursing Practice national award, especially when you read about the other fantastic projects that were in contention. There are so many innovative work streams across the country specifically focused on improving people’s mental health and well-being, so to be selected is a tremendous endorsement of the work we’re doing in Mid Ross.”*

Clients are supported through an initial 12-week skills development course and encouraged to participate in a further 12 weekly sessions aimed at developing life skills, through volunteering independently with a goal of returning to employment. They are encouraged to participate in conservation and craft activities that have been adapted to suit the group’s interests, skills and imagination, which plays a key role in participant’s health and wellbeing.

The current group, supported by Abriachan’s Branching Out Leader Roni Smith, have been producing saw horses from wind blown timber, protecting a tree nursery, painting circle time stools for a local school and building a mud kitchen for visiting children. They have also begun compiling a one-pot, outdoor cookery book that will include their favourite eat yourself healthy and happy recipes and will be available later this year. The income from the saw horses and stools will cover the initial printing costs.



“Quite simply, nothing is more important than a person’s self-confidence and self-belief,” Helen said.

“By encouraging people to try new things and learn new skills, this project has enabled our service users to improve theirs. They set the agenda for the programme and deserve huge credit for their participation, imagination and hard-work. We’ve been able to use the natural resources on our doorstep and take full advantage of living in the beautiful Highlands. I think this project is a wonderful example of thinking outside the box and a creative way of encouraging people to try something new to improve their mental health.”



Branching Out programmes run by the new leaders are starting in Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross this week, Dunain Woodland very soon, Dunnet in late summer, Abriachan ongoing with assorted groups. For further information on Branching Out in Highland please contact:

abriachanforest@gmail.com or if in Scotland Nathalie.Moriarty@forestry.gsi.gov.uk



Knoydart Forest Trust (KFT) Munchatreeaforest Revisited



Knoydart is a peninsula on the North West Coast. Knoydart Forest Trust manage the woodlands on behalf of the community landowner, the Knoydart Foundation. Inverie

Woods is a 250 hectare mixed woodland that forms the backdrop to the main settlement on Knoydart. There are some areas of Ancient Semi-natural Woodland however a large part of the woods (150 ha) is conifer plantation, mainly Sitka spruce, planted in the 1960s and 70s. The aim of our Long Term Forest Plan is to fell areas of unstable conifers in stages over 20 years and replant with mixed species that will provide useful timber in the future and greater biodiversity.

Ltd as their agents and Forest Works Manager, giving them the responsibility to do the job to the relevant standards, manage harvesting, haulage and shipping contractors, negotiate with timber buyers and take on cashflow implications. This arrangement works well for them and means that they can focus on making sure things go smoothly on the ground.



The works have a big impact on their community – harvesters and forwarders work long hours in the woods near houses, lorries trundle up and down affecting access to the pier, a few hydro-electric shut downs for work near power lines. Giving people information about what is happening is really important and getting them out in the woods to see the machines and on the pier to look at the timber lorries and boats to understand more about the process is a great way to get folk of all ages interested.

You might remember the film *Munchatreeaforest* that told the story of KFT's first phase of felling in Inverie Woods in 2007. They decided that it was time to tackle the second phase of felling as wind-blow was increasing due to severe storms and trees were posing an increasing threat to the community owned power line. So the felling began in January 2015.

Felling and extracting a few thousand tonnes of timber would be a piece of cake for many, but for KFT, an organisation with 3 employees, and their wee community it is a pretty big deal. KFT entered into a contract with Scottish Woodlands

There is no road access to Knoydart which poses particular challenges when it comes to getting ma-





chines in and out and timber away, on top of that the weather has not been kind to them and has seen contractors stranded in Mallaig, timber boats delayed and windblow buried in snow.

KFT's deadline for the work was Easter, before the tourists arrive and the birds nest. Although not all of the timber was shipped until after Easter, the job went well. Nearly 5,000 tonnes of timber was



felled and extracted: 4,000 tonnes were exported, the sawlogs going to Ireland for milling and the small roundwood to Workington for biomass, whilst 1,000 tonnes was retained for the local woodfuel and milled timber needs.

KFT have improved their woodland, the financial return from the timber sales will be reinvested in the woods – replanting including access, ground preparation, fence maintenance, deer management and ongoing woodland management. The operation also provided indirect benefits to local busi-

nesses such as boat operators and accommodation providers. KFT still have work to do re-instating **paths and replanting but that's pretty much it on the felling front until for another 5 years or so!**



View from the pier before the felling



View from the pier after the felling

For more information about Knoydart Forest Trust, please visit their webpage: www.knoydart-foundation.com/about/knoydart-forest-trust/





CWA News

Join the CWA

Voting membership of CWA is open to incorporated community woodlands groups: meaning any democratic, community-led organisation engaged in aspects of woodland management on their own or in partnership with others.

The annual fee for *Full* membership is £30. *Basic* membership (annual fee £10) is available for new and small community woodland groups with an annual turnover < £1000.

Individuals who support the CWA aims and objectives may become *Individual* members (annual fee £10), and other organisations working to support community engagement with woodlands may become *Associate* members (annual fee £100)

Application forms can be found at www.communitywoods.org/projects.php Please contact us if you are unsure which category you fit into.

CWA Members receive our regular newsletters & e-bulletins, access to our e-groups, the Woodland Voices magazines and invitations (and often subsidised places) to our programme of training and networking events, including our annual Conference.

CWA Membership continue to grow and we would like to give a warm welcome to new members: Three Hares Community Woodland (Midlothian), The Isle of Rum Community Trust, Arkaig Community Forest (Lochaber), Strichen Community Park Company (Aberdeenshire) and Lower Braes Woodland Group (Falkirk) .

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CWA Staff & Directors

Jon Hollingdale CEO

Jon is responsible for the promotion and representation of the community woodland sector and offers specialist forestry advice to member groups across Scotland.

Steading Cottage, Craigfield Farm, Kintessack, Forres, Moray IV36 2SP Tel: 01309 674004 | Mob: 0779 202 8675 | jon@communitywoods.org

Diane Oliver, Training and Development Manager (p/t)

Diane is responsible for CWA's program of training events and supports member groups with social enterprise and project development. Tel: 01852 310 955 | Mob: 0770 102 9819

di.oliver@communitywoods.org

Caroline Derbyshire, Administrator (p/t)

Caroline provides administrative support to the CEO and is responsible for the CWA e-bulletin, newsletter and conference.

c/o Steading Cottage, Craigfield Farm, Kintessack, Forres, Moray IV36 2SP Tel: 01309 674004
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CWA Directors:

Ian Hepburn (Mull)
Mark Lazzeri (Fife)
Jean Barnett (Dunnet)
Gordon Gray Stephens (Kilmartin)
Amanda Calvert (Kingussie)
Diane Campbell (Ullapool)
Alison Macleod (Applecross)
Chris Marsh (Skye)

Interested in being a CWA Director? –please contact **Jon** for an informal chat about what's required.

Keep up to date with what's happening by following CWA on [Twitter \(@communitywoods\)](#) and liking us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/Communitywoods **Di Oliver is compiling a 'list' of CWA members' Twitter names: if you would like to be included please email her at di.oliver@communitywoods.org with your group's 'name' on Twitter.**

This is a great tool to publicise your work/events/course etc. for free!

Please send news & stories for the next newsletter to caroline@communitywoods.org