

Community Woodlands Association



CWA E-NEWSLETTER - ISSUE 25

Welcome to the CWA E-newsletter, Spring 2016 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 1st & 2nd October 2016 Horizon Scotland, Forres, Moray IV36 2AB



The 17th annual CWA Conference will take place on Saturday 1st & Sunday 2nd October 2016 at Horizon Scotland, The Enterprise Park, Forres, Moray. This years conference will be hosted by Findhorn Hinterland Trust, a local charity working to promote conservation, education, the building of local community and the provision of recreational facilities and activities.

The conference will offer delegates plenty of opportunities to network, share experiences and be inspired by a diverse line up of speakers, workshops and site visits which will include: Findhorn Foundation, hosted by Findhorn Hinterland Trust and Sanquhar Woods hosted by Forres Community Woodland Trust.



This is a great chance for delegates to visit the beautiful Moray Firth coast and to enjoy the delights of Findhorn and Forres.

Details on the conference and how to book can be found at: <http://www.communitywoods.org/events.php>



CWA is recruiting!

We are seeking a Community Woodland Officer to provide in-depth community development and land management advice and assistance to community woodland groups across Scotland and to develop and deliver the CWA training programme. 3 days / week, £27,000 pa pro-rata, initially to 31/3/2017, extension subject to funding.

Location will be agreed with successful candidate, may be home or office based.

Job description and application form at: <http://www.communitywoods.org/about-jobs.php>

Completed application forms should be returned by 5pm Friday 27th May to: admin@communitywoods.org



The Maryculter Woodlands Trust - Community Woodland Opened in Aberdeenshire

On Saturday 26th March Maryculter Woodlands Trust held the official opening ceremony for their community woodland. It has taken over 3 years of sustained effort to acquire the 165 acre wood from Forestry Commission Scotland. Along the way they gathered a lot of support (and also £240,000) from the community, the Scottish Land Fund, Aberdeenshire Council, their Rural Community Council, local organisations and local businesses.

To acknowledge this support they arranged for a labelled tree-planting as part of the opening ceremony. Over 80 people attended and they supplied the saplings, wooden stakes, treeguards and aluminium tags on which people could write their own label. The weather was awful, unless you **view it from a tree's perspective, but they still** planted 150 trees (mostly oak, but also cherry, hawthorn, hornbeam and lime). The trees were donated by OVO Energy.



Tree Planting in Proper Welly Weather

The Maryculter Scouting Group lent their large marquee for the event, in which they served hot drinks and homebakes: this proved to be very popular as did the waterproof nature of the marquee.



The wood was officially opened by Mrs Carol Kinghorn, the Lord Lieutenant of Kincardineshire. She also planted an oak and cut the ribbon for the new noticeboard at the entrance to the woods. MCT had originally

planned a simple covered noticeboard but local firms offered their time and materials for free and so they ended up with an outdoor classroom (see photo at the end of article) with a weatherproof noticeboard on the back wall. The green roof is of sedum with extra plants and rocks from the wood.



Homebakes After the Tree-Planting



The Area Planted During the Opening Ceremony. The trees are planted in an area of prolific birch regeneration (and gorse). Ancient woodland of the Kingcausie Estate in the far distance

The wood has been a commercial plantation for the last 80 years so MCT are not starting with pristine wilderness. That is perhaps part of the charm of the place as it should be extremely rewarding to help slowly restore the wood to (mostly) native species.

Maryculter Woodlands Trust is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation with a strong board and a supportive community behind it. As other community groups have done before them, they have started their work to improve at least a small part of the local environment and maintain it for the benefit of wildlife and people.



Outdoor Classroom



Broadford and Strath Community Company – Happy Campers in Broadford thanks to £1.1 Million Award *Article and photographs courtesy of the “West Highland Free Press”*



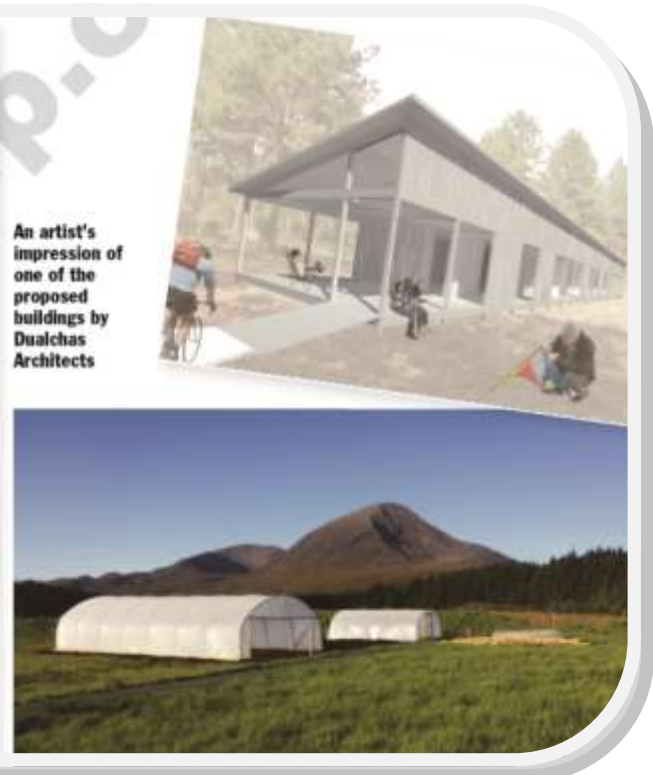
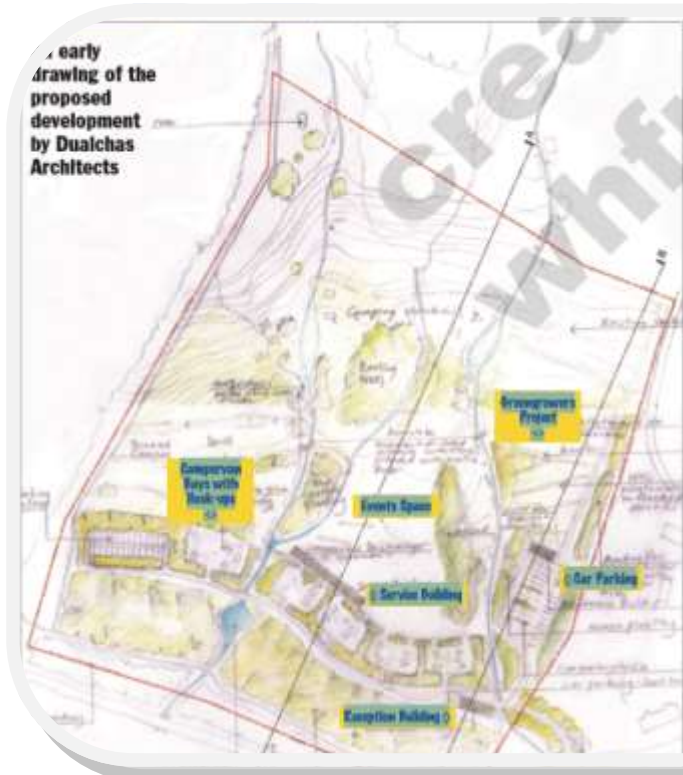
The Broadford and Strath Community Company (BSCC) was formed in 2003 to carry forward the aspirations of the Broadford and Strath Environmental Group. BSCC, led by project officers Adele Beck and Shirley Grant along with a dedicated bunch of volunteers, has pursued a range of projects to improve amenities in and around Skye’s second largest settlement.

In 2011 BSCC purchased 23 hectares of land from Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) on

the edge of the village to create a community woodland, providing a much needed recreational space for the benefit of the community and visitors alike. In recent years they have helped create a new marble-line path network, built two bridges over the Broadford River, installed interpretation panels at various sites and initiated a Green Growers scheme, providing allotments to the north west of the village which have now all been taken up.

In March the group has received the tremendous news that it had been awarded £1.1 million by the Big Lottery Fund to transform part of the land acquired from FCS into a community owned camping and caravan site, with modern, well-equipped facilities, and an event space which can be used for a range of projects.

BSCC Chairman Alistair McPherson said the **campsite and event space** is “a vital part of the woodland development which, once established, will bring an income for maintaining existing community assets and supporting new community initiatives.”





Exciting Developments at Hill Holt Wood

Hill Holt Wood is a 14 hectare sustainably managed ancient woodland situated on the Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire border. Every day they work hard to help change the lives of young people and are delighted to have been given the opportunity to do even more for the local area. Hill Holt Wood has been selected as one of 31 organisations for a share of The Big Lottery Fund's "Our Bright Future" project. CEO Designate Steve Donagain said: "We have been selected alongside a very high calibre of organisations including Blackburne House, Action for Blind People and Falkland Stewardship Trust and this shows what a difference social enterprise can have."

Hill Holt Wood has called their five year project Growing Up Green and hope to inspire a whole new generation of young people, and are going to engage over 3,000 young people (11-25yrs). They'll be recruiting new Rangers and going out into schools, colleges, universities and anywhere else we can find young people who are going to be facing the environmental issues of tomorrow. They will become equipped with the skills and **knowledge to tackle tomorrow's issues through certified training courses, practical courses and increasing awareness.**

Adding value to timber has long been Hill Holt Wood's approach to financially sustainable forestry. As part of this process they are currently ex-

tending our wood workshop facility. The work has been carried out by two of our rangers and a dozen 15-16 year old students from local secondary schools working towards their BTEC Level 1 in Construction.



Hill Holt Wood has purchased a new Logosol wood drying kiln to facilitate an increase the production of hardwood timber products including tables, benches and cheeseboards. They have chosen to go down the route of gaining Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) accreditation and we are pleased to announce they received chain of custody membership in January, and hope this will increase the markets that they can sell our products into. Exciting times ahead!

For more information on Hill Holt Wood please visit: <http://www.hillholtwood.co.uk/>



The Helmsdale Crosses Journey, by Mike Ellis

2014 – The beginning

For years I have stood, head bowed on Remembrance Sunday at the Helmsdale memorial to honour the fallen. Their names are listed on a plaque and that is all that is there to show for their sacrifice. I had a thought that this was not enough and thus put it to the infamous woodies (Helmsdale Woodlanders) that we should mark the grim centenary and beyond with a physical reminder of those lives lost.

Consensus, being a good thing, we decided to make a cross for all cited on the memorials at Helmsdale and Loth: each cross would have the rank, name and unit engraved of the fallen and be installed on the memorial site for remembrance. Western Hemlock was felled and brought back to woodies HQ where it was shaped, jointed and engraved to make each cross. Much midnight oil was used, drawknife, side axe and chisel, we were knee deep in shaving and kerf and so it went on.

We made 54 crosses the first year to honour the fallen from the Great War, the following year we made the crosses for WWII: in all we made



74 crosses. The Helmsdale Primary school pupils “adopted” one of the fallen and made a hand-made poppy that would be pinned to each cross as well as a remembrance card.

That’s about the nuts and bolts of it. Of more importance is something different however. Forget the 13 man hours to turn a log into a cross, the woodies would build a great wall of china out of wood (given the chance!). What they have made are physical, tangible memorials to those brave men and women that still are a legacy that makes the village what is.



Postscript.

Crosses made and installed, the gathering to remember, for some it would be the first time they had seen something marking their ancestors other than a name on a

plaque: of the 74 crosses we made, the 74 recorded as fallen, only 3 lie here. A poppy and card was made by a young lad from the village for his great-grandfather who died at the Somme. Well, there you have it folks, that was a journey for us, there will be more to come, tis why we are all woodies!





Evanton Community Woods

An activity area development with users in mind.



Evanton community wood has launched its new activity area designed with input from four schools and 3 community groups and built with the man/woman power of the community payback team and volunteers.

As part of the ongoing developments at Evanton community wood, an area close to the woodland classroom was identified as an ideal location to build an activity area for use by all, with the focus on developing gross motor skills for young people and those with special needs.

In partnership with both St Clements and St Duthus special schools and with both local nurseries, the education officer Simon Harry set about **compiling a list of 'requirements'**: *"we wanted to ensure that in addition to a play area, we also built structures that encouraged those who have limited mobility to try out the activities in support of developing their gross motor skills"* said Simon. *"We asked all the potential user group what would be the best activities we could build in the wood using our own timber, our own muscles and would be cost effective"*.

Following feedback, plans were made with St Duthus pupils measuring out the area ready for the **initial work**. *"we needed to make sure that whatever we did was within a fairly tight budget, almost 90% was spent on the hire of a digger to make the area flat and safe, the rest was spent on bolts!"*.

Over a period of 3 months during the winter, Evanton wood worked with the community payback team to build the structures, donations of culvert pipe ensured that tunnels could be built, felling nearby larch meant that a large balance beam could be made (perfect for gross motor skills and developing balance) and the building skills of the payback team meant that a large rustic bench centrepiece could ensure that parents can let their children roam free and explore all within eyesight.

For more information on Evanton Woods visit: <http://www.evantonwood.com/>





Findhorn Hinterland Trust - Successful Woodland Festival in Wilkies Wood



A glorious day of sunshine and celebration attended by over two hundred people took place in the middle of Wilkies Wood on Saturday. Positive comments from young and old were received and there was much appreciation for the diverse range of displays and activities available ranging from green woodworking, charcoal making, mask making, willow weaving, bush craft and nature activities put on by Wild Things!, music making, a

In amongst the laid back party atmosphere, information was gathered that will be incorporated



into the report on the vision for managing the land. A further twenty-five people also joined the trust.



bee display, great food and drink and visually interesting displays about the Trust's work and the landowners involved.

There was a strong voice from those that attended to make this an annual event. Huge thanks go out to the many people who came together to give of their time and energy to make this event such a success – Thank you!



Those attending the guided walks that were run throughout the day learnt more about the land and the specialist lichen walks were a real eye opener for those that were able to gain a place on them. The tractor rides around the woods and the animal mask making seem to have been a couple of the highlights for the many children that attended.

For more information on the Findhorn Hinterland Trust please visit:

<http://www.findhornhinterland.org/>



GlenWyvis Launches Share Offer for First Community Owned Distillery in Scotland

GlenWyvis Distillery Community Benefit Society, based in the historic Highland town of Dingwall, is realising its long held ambition to create Scotland's very first community-owned craft whisky distillery and has launched a Community Share Offer to raise over £1.5m of investment that will help to put whisky distilling back at the heart of Dingwall.

The launch, organised in conjunction with Community Shares Scotland, offers investment opportunities for as little as £250 to locals living in all IV postcode areas. This will ensure a high level of local ownership of the distillery, but the share offer is also open to whisky lovers worldwide. The new GlenWyvis Distillery will be built on a farm above the town of Dingwall and will be 100% powered by renewable energy. To find out more visit <https://glenwyvis.com/>



Photo: Left to right Richard Lockett; Stuart Nickerson; John Fraser McKenzie; James Cameron; William Reynolds

For more information on Community Shares Scotland please visit: <http://communitysharesscotland.org.uk/>



Dunbar Community Woodland Group

Dunbar Community Woodland Group have been busy planting 400 baby oak trees all over the woods, with schoolchildren, cubs, and volunteers. These two cute wee girls at their Easter Egg hunt had quite a haul of treasure in their buckets!

They had tea and pancakes cooked on the camp fire. It was such a busy day, I was sitting at the fire for 3 hours turning out the pancakes!



For more information on Dunbar Community Woodland Group visit: <http://dunbarwoods.org/about-us/about/>



Paths for All Spring 2016 - New Community Paths Courses



April was a busy time for the Active Environments team at Paths for All. As well as working on our popular Community Path grant scheme, our 2 development officers, John and Roxanne, were travelling the country to meet with local people interested in improving and maintaining their local paths. They kicked off with a Path Funding training course in Stirling which involved sharing lots of really beneficial tips and hints on how to write a successful funding application and helping community groups move in the right direction towards securing those much needed project funds. Everyone who attended had lots to **contribute to the day's discussion. It was wonderful to see local people engaged and sharing knowledge with each other on their own triumphs and learning curves related to their experience of funding applications.**

The next stop was up north to the village of Dingwall where they held a Path Maintenance



course. The morning involved getting to know what path maintenance is all about and why it is so important when thinking about starting a path project. There was lots of participatory activity **and the group got to find out about each other's project over tea, coffee and of course the obligatory biscuit!** The sun was shining in Dingwall that **day; perfect for the afternoon's activities which** gave the group some hands-on experience of path maintenance. The group donned their high-vis jackets and as well as learning lots about the practical side of path maintenance, many laughs were shared which created a good feel to the day.



Here are a few things people said about the training:

"I thought it was good the mix of theory and outdoors, and it was also important to meet other folk from community organisations who have similar challenges/issues. Your advice and guidance was insightful too."

"thanks for running the maintenance course. I learnt a lot and came home with all sorts of ideas for our woodland, both practical work and finding volunteers."

If you are interested in any of the training courses Paths for All have available then [sign up to their newsletter](#) for regular updates. They have lots of great information, advice and support on path maintenance and how you can help your community to get more active through walking on their website www.pathsforall.org.uk



CWA Training Events

CWA has organised four training and networking events in the first few months of 2016, with more to come in the rest of the year. Our training events are usually free to members, and support for travel costs is often available.

Events are advertised in the monthly CWA e-bulletin, on our website and our www.facebook.com/Communitywoods or visit: www.communitywoods.org/events

A Wood of Our Own Meeting, Dalmally Community Centre, Argyll



This was the 9th AWOO networking event in Argyll, funded by Forestry Commission Scotland and organised by CWA, for all those who are or wish to be involved in forests which are community owned or managed for community benefit.

Participants heard updates from Argyll groups, Forestry Commission Scotland and Highlands &

Islands Enterprise and enjoyed a site visit to Dalmally Community Orchard & Woodland Garden.

A full report is available at: <http://www.communitywoods.org/resources-details.php?id=16>





CWA Seminars 2016



CWA Leases, Licences and Charges Seminar, Laggan Visitor Centre.



The seminar, hosted by Laggan Forest Trust and funded by Highlands and Islands Enterprise, focused on the various ways that community woodland groups and other community land owners can generate income through leases, licences and charges to others for using their woods. The programme featured speaker from the private and public sectors, and covered a range of opportunities woodland crofts and woodlots to developing renewables, firewood businesses and tourist accommodation to charging for activities such as organised sporting events, car parking, sporting rights and filming.



CWA Green Burials in Community Woodlands seminar, Aigas Field Centre

This event, hosted by Aigas Community Forest and funded by Highlands and Islands Enterprise, focused on the opportunities for community woodland groups to develop green burials. The event covered planning and legal regulations, choosing suitable sites, infrastructure requirements, burial options, memorial areas, resources and supply chains and marketing. After lunch participants took a walk to consider a potential green burial site in Aigas Forest, and had a useful discussion on possible constraints such as access and water courses.



CWA Hutting Seminar, Colintrave Village Hall, Argyll



This event, hosted by Colintrave and Glendaruel Development Trust and funded by Highlands and Islands Enterprise, focused on the opportunities for developing hutting in community woodlands following the publication of *New Hutting Developments- Good Practice Guidance on the planning, development and management of huts and hut sites*, (available [here](#)).



Reports for all 3 events are available at: <http://www.communitywoods.org/resources-details.php?>



CWA News

Making Local Woods Work

Making Local Woods Work is a 3-year, UK-wide, Lottery-funded project working to help support and grow woodland-based social enterprises across the UK.

Ten Scottish groups have been selected to join the project: Aigas Community Forest, Argyll Small Woods Co-operative, Arkaig Community Forest, Beechbrae, Dunbar Community Woodland Group, Glengarry Community Woodlands, Green Aspirations Scotland CIC, Isle of Eigg Heritage Trust, Knoydart Forest Trust, South West Mull and Iona Development.

These groups will receive specialist support tailored to their needs. MLWW will also deliver a series of training and networking events to help anyone interested in woodland social enterprise to achieve their ambitions. For more information see: <https://www.plunkett.co.uk/woodlands>

Community Woodland Trading

CWA was commissioned by Highlands and Islands Enterprise to compile a database of community organisations in the HIE area which trade by selling goods or services from community-owned or managed woodlands.

27 groups reported trading activity across a wide range of goods and services. Unprocessed roundwood and fuel wood was the most commonly reported broad category, but there was significant activity in other areas, notably training, education and health; and access and recreation.

The results of the survey are available at <http://www.communitywoods.org/resources-details.php?id=9> and a more detailed analysis on a woodland by woodland basis will be available on the CWA website soon.

Hydro Coop Project

The Community Woodlands Association has been investigating setting up a co-operative to support and facilitate investment by community woodland groups in renewables projects.

We commissioned Locogen to carry out desktop assessments of some potential sites within community woodlands and Burness Paull to provide a report on the most appropriate legal model, this is available at <http://www.communitywoods.org/resources-details.php?id=9>

Branching Out Argyll Funding Success

Branching Out is an innovative programme for adults who use mental health services in Scotland. Clients participate in around three hours of activities per week in a woodland setting, over 12 weeks. Activities are adapted to suit the client group, site and time of year, and generally include physical activity, conservation activities, bushcraft and environmental art.

In March 2016 Argyll & the Isles Coast & Countryside Trust secured £192,000 from the Scottish **Government's Transforming Self-Management** in Scotland Fund and £3500 from Argyll and Bute Council to take forward the development of Branching Out in Argyll. CWA wrote the scoping report and did the initial development work for this project to support ACT.

CWA has been integral to the establishment of Branching Out Highland, working with Abriachan Forest Trust, NHS Highland, FCS and other community woodlands to run pilot programmes and support the development across the area.

For more information on the Argyll & the Isles Coast & Countryside Trust visit: <http://www.act-now.org.uk/en/>



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 our new members: Tweeddale Community Woodfuel (Scottish Borders), Environmental Arts (North Lanarkshire) and 6 individual members.

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CWA Staff & Directors

Jon Hollingdale, CEO

Jon represents the community woodland sector and offers specialist forestry advice to member groups across Scotland.

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Keep up to date with what's happening by following CWA on [@CommunityWoods](https://twitter.com/CommunityWoods) and keep liking us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/Communitywoods

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