



Community
Woodlands
Association

“Working in partnership”

CWA Annual Conference Report

Royal Marine Hotel, Dunoon, Argyll
Saturday 22nd and Sunday 23rd August 2015



Introduction

The 16th annual CWA Conference took place on Saturday 22nd and Sunday 23rd August 2015 in Dunoon, Argyll and attracted 67 delegates from across Scotland, England and Wales. Our theme this year was “Working in partnership”, and focussed on the opportunities (and challenges) for community woodlands working with private, public and other voluntary sector bodies in a wide range of contexts, from timber harvesting and conservation of biodiversity to healthy living initiatives and citizen science. 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 main part of the conference was held in the Royal Marine Hotel, Dunoon with site visits to nearby Glenfinart Walled Garden managed by Ardentiny Community Trust, Stronafian Forest managed by Colintraive and Glendaruel Development Trust and Acharossan Forest managed by Kilfinan Community Forest Company. Once again delegates were able to get together for informal discussions on the Making Local Woods Work project, woodland crofts and ethical labelling, and were able to have a go and learn some green woodworking skills with Mark Bamford from Kilfinan Community Forest Company.

Argyll and Bute is a truly beautiful place and is closely identified with woodland and forests: over 30% of the land area is wooded, and as such, forestry impacts on many aspects of the lives of the local population. The social, cultural and environmental influence of its woods and trees is as great, if not greater, than in any other part of Scotland. This was the first time the CWA Conference has been to Argyll and Bute and it was great that the weather held out to allow delegates to see it in its true splendour.

Quotes from the feedback received:

“Interested in finding out what I should be doing as a director of our local group, making connections”

“Ideas to take back to group; a feeling of working together with a Scotland-wide group on positive community and land, work that I am passionate about”

“It is always an informative event with excellent networking opportunities. The technical and practical content is always very high and it is bloody good fun”

“It was really interesting, well worth coming, especially sharing information and how people solved different problems - very enjoyable and 2 days of learning”

“The event is always dynamic, informative and well run - Carry on the good work”

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



Contents

Event Programme

Saturday 22nd August 2015

Presentation notes

Workshops

Site visits

Sunday 23rd August 2015

Presentation notes

Conference summary

Appendix 1. Event Feedback

Appendix 2. Rural Parliament
workshop outputs

Appendix 3. Speaker Biographies

Appendix 4 Delegate List

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



Event Programme

SATURDAY 22nd August 2015

- 9.15** REGISTRATION & REFRESHMENTS
- 10.00** Chair's Welcome and Introduction - Jon Hollingdale CWA
- 10.15** Keynote Speaker: Michael Russell MSP
- 10.45** Speaker 2: Rob Borruso (Kilfinan Community Forest Company)
- 11.05** Speaker 3: Eamon King (Colintraive & Glendaruel Development Trust)
- 11.25** TEA & COFFEE BREAK (11.25 to 11.50)
- 11.50** WORKSHOPS
- Workshop 1: Living It Up / Technology Enabled Care - A service that can help you get and share information for a healthier lifestyle
- Workshop 2: Sharing Staff and Resources – The Ward Forester Initiative
- Workshop 3: Working together to tackle invasive species
- 13.00** LUNCH
- SITE VISITS (13.20 to 1600)
- Site Visit 1: Stronafian Forest - Colintraive and Glendaruel Development Trust
- Site Visit 2: Acharossan Forest - Kilfinan Community Forest Company
- Site Visit 3: Glenfinart Walled Garden - Ardentinny Community Trust
- 17.00** THE ROYAL MARINE HOTEL
- Green woodworking demo
- Informal discussion groups
- 19.00** EVENING MEAL & CEILIDH

SUNDAY 23rd August 2015

- 9.30** REGISTRATION & REFRESHMENTS (9.30 to 10.00)
- 10.00** Chair's Welcome - Ian Hepburn
- 10.05** Sunday speaker 1: Kate Hutchinson (Forest Research) - "Observatree" & Citizen Science
- 10.30** Sunday speaker 2: Julie Young (ACT) Argyll - Branching Out: Partnerships with NHS
- 11.00** TEA & COFFEE BREAK (11.00 to 11.20)
- 11.20** Elaine Jamieson (FCS) and Jon Hollingdale (CWA): An introduction to SRDP and FGS
- 12:50** Conference Summary
- 13.00** LUNCH & end of conference
- 13.45** Community Woodlands Association Annual General Meeting
- 15.00** Close

Saturday 24th August 2013

**Chair's Welcome
Jon Hollingdale, CWA CEO**

Jon welcomed delegates to the conference, outlined the programme for the weekend and gave a brief overview of CWA's current and future activities. The conference theme "working in partnership" is a thread that runs through much of CWA's work in its core role of supporting and developing a growing membership.

CWA is keen to explore innovative ways to increase the support available, and has recently introduced a mentoring scheme, through which groups can have access to free advice from forestry professionals. CWA has also been working with Forestry Commission Scotland to develop a guide to working with the private sector in a range of circumstances, and investigating co-operative structures to help community groups develop small hydro schemes.

CWA are Scottish lead partners in a UK-wide Big Lottery funded project called "Making Local Woods Work", which is designed to support community woodland groups develop as social enterprises. The project will provide in-depth tailored support to about 50 woodland social enterprises across the UK, deliver a range of training and knowledge sharing events and develop resources and research to help grow the sector.

Jon also reflected on an interesting and busy year politically, with the passage of the Community Empowerment Act and the introduction of a new Land Reform Bill, set in a context of increased political engagement in the wake of the Referendum, and a Government demonstrating real commitment to and enjoying broad support for the Land Reform agenda.

**Keynote Speaker
Michael Russell MSP**



Mike welcomed everyone to Dunoon and to Argyll, and gave an overview of the need for Land Reform, and his aspirations for what it might achieve. Community woodlands bring together his great enthusiasms for communities and trees, which are at the heart of the changes and massive growth in confidence happening in Scotland.

Mike was a member of the CGDT Board for many years; it was very instructive for a politician to be inside the process and to see the difficulties, the pitfalls and also the pluses when the enthusiasm of communities can be harnessed. He identifies three issues:

- There can be a lack of professional management experience which means projects take longer than they should and sometimes don't achieve what people expect;
- There is a shortage of working capital, and the more community acquisitions you see the more apparent it is that we need to fund ventures, not just purchases, to sustain communities as they go forward;
- The incredible slowness of the official process in Scotland; getting tangible progress at the very early stages of a community buyout is absolutely essential.

A further problem is the widespread view that land reform is an exclusively rural, highland concern, whereas it is equally important for urban and central Scotland.

Hutting might be a vehicle to bring rural and urban communities together. There are a number of barriers: planning, finance, community concerns, but Mike would like to see one community woodland group grasp the nettle, take hutting forward and give the opportunity for those who live in urban and central Scotland to spend time in the countryside. Such a project might light a spark and create a bridge between urban and rural Scotland.

Communities and community councils have changed, become more active, and want to be engaged in the decision making, but "official Scotland" hasn't mirrored this change, as the experience of Kilfinan Community Forest demonstrates. We need to streamline bureaucratic structures to support and enable community initiatives.

Land Reform in Scotland remains very much unfinished business: the new Bill builds on what we have already, but addresses flaws and problems with the original legislation. Likewise the Community Empowerment Bill took the process forward and provided a more robust and consistent framework for community asset transfer.

Problems still arise. At Castle Toward a brilliant community proposal was stymied by a Local Authority that did not believe that communities could or should control assets: this demonstrated the need to amend legislation to give communities the right to appeal. The Community Empowerment Act introduced the abandoned and neglected land clause which allows people to look at assets in urban and rural Scotland and to say that if they are not being used productively they should be put to community use.

Ideally there will be a willing buyer and seller, but that's not always the case and in circumstances where the failure to sell the land will have a strong negative effect on the community it is absolutely right that the community has a mechanism to enable purchase. The Land Reform Bill is a positive document and it takes us a big step forward, but it still needs change. One probable amendment will propose a compulsion to publish information on beneficial ownership.

Land Reform is important for three reasons

- community: we want a country that thrives and this will happen if its communities are healthy.
- equity: community is the sum of individuals, we need to recognise that equity in the distribution of assets is important,
- national development: we need to make use of the assets that this country has and we need to use them to the greatest advantage of the greatest number.

Land reform will affect rural employment in a positive way; there will be more economic activity in rural Scotland. Land reform is very good for Argyll and Bute, but it is an enabler not a solution to

all our problems. We need to encourage innovation, to grow the population and grow the economy. We need to recognise vital contribution of community purchase, community activity and decision making to building a sustainable series of communities.

Mike has a ferocious optimism about Scotland and at the heart of that is the issue of community and Land Reform. It will be a very busy autumn and winter in the Scottish Parliament; he hopes that communities will apply additional pressure on the members of the committee so that when the Land Reform Bill comes out of Parliament it will be fit for purpose.



Working with others
Rob Borruso
Kilfinan Community Forest Company (KCFC)

Commercial relationships

For nearly 10 years, Kilfinan have worked with an enormous variety of other people and organisations, such as Forestry and Hydro contractors. Fortunately for KCFC, Rob was a project manager in London so he does have the experience of dealing with contractors. Rob's presentation covered the range of commercial relationships that KCFC, have require from contractors, funders, regulators, local authorities and other like-minded organisations.

There is a fundamental conflict at the heart of this relationship between customer and contractor: customers want as much done as possible for as little cash as possible and contractors want to do as little as possible for lots of cash. Both sides need to respect and understand that position - if not cooperative working is impossible.

Customers must expect that contractors will ask for extras, and must, be aware of what is a reasonable extra. You as a customer need to realise that every time you open your mouth, it's going to cost you money.

Size matters – who needs who; if you are dealing with a large scale contractor and you are one job in 20, do they really need you! If you're dealing with a smaller contractor it might work better, but they might not have the resources, the list goes on, find the one that suits your needs.

Commercial relationships can very easily come unstuck, you will be dealing with people who are very sharp and who deal with this day in day out and for the most part, you have a volunteer board that may lack the expertise and unfortunately some attitudes from commercial organisations is that community groups are warm and fussy! Do they really know what they are doing!

Consultants

KCFC employed many consultants over the years and they varied between good and excellent. When you are employing a consultant, know what you want, don't let them wander. Accept bad news, you might not like the outcome of their study but it's not always bad news. Make sure they are client focused, remember you are paying them. In Robs experience the more you help the consultant the more they can help you. Remember the consultant is there for you and not the other way round

Third Parties:

Third party consultants – avoid where possible!! Many people don't have a good experience, some do. There is no such thing as bad news. KCFC have had quite a few problems over the years when they were told that they need to use certain organisations.

Funders

They have frame works to work to and you need to understand that. If you work well with them, they will come back to you. Funders have money to spend, if you have a track record of success they you are helping them to meet their targets. KCFC have worked very well with HIE. It is all about trying to get into the mind of the funder, look at what they need to achieve. Remember you are the customer of the funder.

Regulatory authorities:

They have had reasonable interaction with some officers from the regulatory authorities, some not so good. The general attitude is “here's a small box, think inside of it”. It does make collaborator work impossible. In this area dig in your trenches and be prepared for the fight. You will take casualties.

National Agencies

Generally the relationship has been very good with national agencies. With all these things it's about track record, if you do well they will come back to you. They have found that it all depends on the individual officers. Sadly it can sometimes come down to a “them and us” attitude. Do not expect any support if you are trying to do something different. In Rob's experience, he has found by wanting something different the support is not necessary there. There should be the support for community groups who are trying to improve communities in all ways.

Other like-minded people

KCFC are always happy to talk to other groups about their experiences, pitfall and the benefits of their results and disseminate that information. This is where the CWA Conference works really well; it's an ideal opportunity for everyone to talk about their own experience to others.

“We are all in this together and sometimes we forget that, we are all trying to make our communities better.”



Effective Woodland Management
Eamon King
Colintraive & Glendaruel Development Trust (CGDT)

The CGDT was established in 2008 to engender a cohesive approach to developing the social, economic and cultural base of the area. A Community Development Plan was produced as a result of extensive community consultation.

Current & Future Projects:

- Stronafian Community Forest
- Community Allotments
- Skills for Regeneration Training
- Regeneration of the Cowal Way – Eamon hopes that this will bring more people to the forest as they stop by along the Way.
- Community Broadband



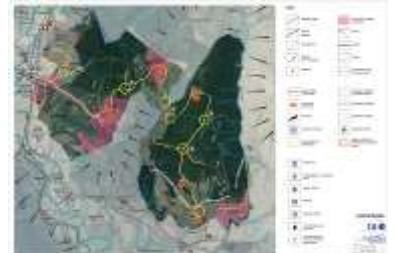
- Centre of Excellence Facility
- Renewable Energy
- Invasive Species Management

The new poly tunner which is a non forest project managed by Sara

In 2013 CGDT purchased 605 hectares of land, costing £1.5M, through the NFLS, requiring serious fundraising, and the leasing of commercial timber rights across much of the forest.

The land consisted of:

- Ancient Native Woodland
- Commercial Forestry
- Natural regeneration
- Open Land
- Ancient Bog land
- Neolithic Ruins
- 6 KM of Access



Aspirational map showing roads and paths

CGDT has secured multiple benefits from a long term forestry tenant, including effective and sensitive felling , because the Tenant has a long term interest in the land, assistance in infrastructure work, support in management plans and maps, free timber and financial gestures (CGDT wanted to created new wetland area, by taking the land away they need to compensate the Tenant. The piece of land in question was valued at £3,000. CGDT bought the land but the tenant gave it back to them as a donation) and above all a positive personal relationship.

Current Forest Developments:

- New recreational areas & wildlife hides;
- Improved access and new trails;
- Forest style children's play area;
- Conservation of the current archaeology;
- Interpretation panels & way marker signs;
- Volunteering-Skills-Employability programme;
- Workshop area;
- Wildlife surveys.



Showing some of the acinet Woodland



Volunteers at work



Giving the steps giving it a bit of character with the hand rails



Another board walk over bog land

One of the most biodiverse sites in Argyll with lots of different species such as a wild bees nest, butterflies and fungi.

Long term plans will include sculptures, chairs and want to give their forest a bit of character so that it stands out from the crowd. Any project like this needs vision, passion and dedication but once you start sharing them you find that everything else starts to fall into place. Forests are such an amazing resource but you have to look after and invest in them.



CGDT have submitted planning permission for two 500kw wind turbines: they will find out if they have been successful in a couple of months. The turbines would give CGDT future financial sustainability and allow them to start infrastructure work not only in the forest but also within the Glen area. CGDTs aim is to become non-reliant on funding; they believe that financial sustainably should be the goal right from the start.



They have 6 or 7 Neolithic ruins and are trying to get a proper study done so they can find out what they don't know and what else they haven't yet found.



They are very passionate about hutting. Sadly some locals are opposed to the idea. They want any huts to be of the same standard as the picture.



Ancient bog land which is very rare – mostly wiped out through forestry work.



They would like to replicate some neolithic buildings.

Future projects include Crofts, affordable housing, woodland burials, 300 ha of new woodland, working with Kew Gardens and they are hoping to develop a forest website. Stronafian Community Forest is not perfect but if you are looking for the diversity, then it has everything, it may have cost £1.5 million to buy, but truthfully it's priceless!

“A woodland without wildlife is just a wood.”

Workshops:



Workshop 1: Living It Up / Technology Enabled Care - A service that can help you get and share information for a healthier lifestyle By Elaine Booth

Just as there is no single model of a community woodland working group in Scotland, then there is no fixed process for creating one. Each woodland group starts in a unique way – seeing how others did it can be a very useful, and give some tips based on real community working groups experiences. The Workshop was aimed to explore the latest knowledge on the role of trees, woodlands and natural spaces in health and well-being to examine how using woodlands and natural spaces is good for mental, emotional, social and physical health throughout all seasons.

This is a website based project helping people to self-manage long term health issues. The workshop was discovering how activities in CWA member group's woodlands can feed into what Living It Up (LIU) is about.

LIU produce experience guides to encourage people to do more and get out and about. Guides can be accessed online and printed out easily. The workshop would help to create a four season guide of what to do in the woods and also a guide on how to set up a woodland.



The speaker, Elaine Booth, also told us about the IT side of LIU where people are taught how to use the internet, email etc to connect with other people. They are also taught to use Telehealth via mobile phones where people are reminded to take drugs or submit daily reading for blood pressure etc that can put up a red flag for them to seek immediate medical help. This system is called “Florence”. The aim is to save lives and save the NHS by reducing pressure on funds.

The delegates then went on to spend the rest of the session creating the guide by putting post it notes on charts provided that built up a picture of what can be done to get out and about in woodlands at any time of year. The guide will be turned into an online down loadable document.

The general consensus was that woodlands are good for wellbeing. Woodland groups could provide health and wellbeing networks for support. This works well if you can feed people as they always come if there is food available.

Workshop 2: Sharing Staff and Resources – The Ward Forester Initiative

By Amanda Calvert

The workshop was included in the conference in response to a number of groups raising interest in setting up a shared forester scheme to help support their woodland management. To get a better idea of the number of groups that may be interested and to find out what they need, and how they would like a shared forester scheme to run. It was attended by 18 members from community woodland groups across Scotland, England and Wales, the Forestry Commission and also Highlands Islands Enterprise staff.

Initially a presentation was given showcasing examples of similar schemes and potential options from across the UK and Europe. The group was then split to discuss what was required and how this could be developed in Scotland. Several questions were addressed during the discussions:



- What do the groups need?
- What opportunities could a scheme such as 'shared forester' provide for the groups?
- What would need to be done to achieve this?
- What could the structure look like?
- How could it be funded?

All involved agreed that such a scheme could be beneficial and was required. Groups could either 'buy in' to options or even provide services for other groups.

Key points from each of the questions asked are listed below:

Initial requirements

- Mapping the networks, landowners, regulators – producing a database
- Understanding needs and who is out there
- Identification of potential clusters across Scotland

What would be included?

- Networking and sharing skills
- Training
- Advise
- All aspects of forest management taking a holistic approach
- Brokering and marketing for products

Structure: What would be important?

- Scale
- Sustainability

- Appropriate level of bureaucracy

Opportunities

- UKWAS certification opportunity
- Framework contracts
- Maximising local value from forest management

Funding: How could this be funded?

- SRDP?
- Public funding or corporate sponsorship?

Workshop 3: Working together to tackle invasive species

By Gordon Gray Stephens



The aim of this workshop was to allow participants to explore the process of putting together an effective proposal for invasive species control. It looked at making the case for invasive control, preparatory surveys and community engagement, handling negativity, funding mechanisms, delivery techniques. This workshop proved popular with 18 delegates attending.

Gordon and delegates discussed the dealing with Invasive Non Native Species and the community approach. Invasive Non Native Species or INNS (plants and animals which have been introduced to Scotland, and whose spread is threatening native habitats or species) are increasingly an issue for land managers in Scotland. Scottish Government has produced a Code of Practice (www.gov.scot/Resource/0039/00398608.pdf). This workshop focused (mostly) on plants rather than mammals, and explored some of the issues around controlling these troublesome species, drawing upon the experiences of the people who attended the workshop. This write-up summarises some of the topics that we dealt with.

INNS are best dealt with on a “population” basis: if you do not deal with the whole population then the problem frequently re-appears, as plants seed in from areas which were not treated. This almost always means that successful INNS treatment requires neighbours to co-operate, and come together to deal with the issue. Because INNS often started off life as garden plants, and have also often spread along main transport networks their successful treatment often means winning over gardeners who do not see the plants as a pest.

A successful approach therefore requires being prepared to negotiate with many people who may see INNS in a different light. For example invasive rhododendron can be seen as an attractive purple flower, it creates a great screen (especially if there’s a trunk road on the other side), and

further removal may risk contractors upsetting an established garden. Successful projects spend time talking to people well in advance of any implementation, and are prepared to explain why action is necessary, to minimise disruption for gardeners, and to offer replacement plants and screening where this is required.

Funding INNS removal projects is not easy. They can be seen as “negative” conservation, taking something away, rather than creating something, and this deters some funders. Control is a long term business, and for the more persistent plants this involves work over a decade or two. Funders are reluctant to make such long term commitments, and grant aid packages rarely last more than 5 years. The main funding source has been the Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP), however SRDP gained a bad reputation because it was perceived as too bureaucratic, and it was also very slow in paying out grant claims, leaving people with severe cash-flow headaches. The terms of the contract also transferred much of the risk for a project onto the land manager. As a result take-up was low.

Control techniques for INNS have developed in recent years, and some of these techniques demonstrate community innovation. For example, using Lever and Mulch to control invasive rhododendron has been pioneered in Morvern, and one of the first woods to be treated with this non chemical exercise regime is managed by Morvern Community Woodlands. Knoydart Forest Trust has also successfully completed the first clearance of a population level control project on the peninsula. There is plenty of scope for community groups to be innovative, and to take advantage of the rural development opportunities that INNS control can create.

Site Visits



**Site Visit 1:
Stronafian Forest
Colintraive and Glendaruel
Development Trust**



Delegates arrived at the west side pedestrian entrance of Stronafian Community Forest in Glendaruel, Cowal and began their visit which followed on from the morning's presentation. They were met by Eamon King who led them up the path past a piece of rock-art within the Stronafian Woodland. Locals had alluded to rock-art within the woodland but no-one was quite sure where it lurked and no-one had any recollections of seeing it until it was recently discovered under bracken by Eamon on the 2014 summer solstice. He found what looked like a cup and ring marked slab, lying just off the proposed new path up to the cairn. Although they aren't sure what the cup marks are about they do believe that they have been there for over 4,000 years. These particular stones are traditionally associated with hawthorns and interestingly there are hardly any hawthorns in that particular wood but the best example of a hawthorn is right by the Stone!

The visit looked at the on-going recreational infrastructure work currently being carried out by the Scottish Government funded 'Skills for Regeneration' volunteering programme. Part of the work involves linking up several of the Neolithic ruins that lie within the forest with new access paths. With several ruins dotted around the forest, it is really important that a proper

archaeology survey is also done to find out what else is in the area. They know that the mounds found within the woodland are Neolithic burial sites but still know very little about its history.



Eamon was unaware of this particular mound until about 4 weeks previously. The mound is actually quite large with an entrance on the far side.



Delegates were then taken to the area of the Cairns where Eamon gave a brief overview of the areas history. Very little was found in the last land survey which was completed in the 1970s but they did find some arrow heads and pottery which have been connected to a large ancient settlement nearby. This was also proof that a reasonable population existed in that particular area. Some of the items found are currently with the National Museum of Scotland, but they are in the process of trying to have them returned so that the Trust can carefully display them. After the neolithic period and the cross over to Celtic Christianity they think that the chambered cairn had some significance and was used as a chapel, possibly St Modan's Church, a follower of St. Columba, who established a monastery in the Glen. The paths will eventually link the village to the cairns to create a circular walk. The path will also go down to the ancient well, believed to be St Modan's Well. This well was lost for a number of years but was recently found when the Church of Scotland sent someone to the area to search for the well. Unfortunately the well area is still very overgrown so, due to trip hazards, delegates were not taken there. Before delegates headed back down the hill to the coach Eamon pointed out the community allotment area and the proposed area for the new Centre of Excellence and Forest Visitors Centre. A decision on whether to use the hotel or build a new facility for the Centre is yet to be decided by the Trust and the community.



The community allotment polytunnel can be seen in the distance



The planned area for the Centre of Excellence and new Forest Visitors Ventre



For more details on Colintraive and Glendaruel Development Trust (CGDT) please email info@cgdt.org or visit: cgdt.org/about

**Site Visit 2:
Acharossan Forest
Kilfinan Community Forest Company**



During the site visit to Acharossan Forest delegates were given a tour to the recently constructed hydro-electric scheme, community composting operation, woodfuel and sawmill enterprise, community allotments, and shown where the affordable housing/ forest crofts will go. Delegates were taken to Acharossan Forest by coach, which was about 50 minutes away from Dunoon. Here delegates were split into 2 groups, and given the opportunity to see first-hand what Kilfinan Community Forest (KFC) have achieved over the last 10 years.

One group of delegates, led by David and Michaela Blair, were taken to the allotment area, which was the first area to be developed when the project began 10 years ago in August. At that time they received 2 years of funding which paid for the first stage of the development which was to provide road access, shortly after they erected the polytunnel. The aim at the start was to grow food as a whole community and with that they started monthly markets to encourage local trading and exchange. They have since leased the allotments to the Kyle Allotment Group for £1 year, they are doing a great job and it has been their biggest social win yet. 28 families are now using the communal polytunnel, with another polytunnel in the planning, and they hope to encourage more families to get involved.

Scattered over the local area are 700 residents and the main aim of the KFC is to keep those people, especially families, in the community which is vital if they want to keep it alive and prosperous. It is extremely important to keep the community informed about future plans and projects and they do this by letting the folk have an influence in what happens in their community. Not everyone in the community is on-line, so they mainly communicate by posters and through public meetings.

Michaela and David were asked “how do they coordinate volunteer numbers?” - KFC now has a fulltime post of a Forest Access Co-ordinator, who deals with the volunteers. They are always on the lookout for more people to get involved and there is always a role for everyone skilled or unskilled. Volunteers can help in loads of ways, from developing educational resource packs to supporting their marketing efforts to sharing their knowledge about the heritage of the forest. They firmly believe that volunteering is a two-way relationship and they always want to make sure that volunteers gain from the experience too.

Delegates also had the opportunity to go into the polytunnel and see for themselves some of the products being grown by the local group. This summer the polytunnel really proved its worth, with tomatoes, lettuce, rocket, courgettes, carrots, beetroot, spinach, and French/ runner beans all growing in abundance. Vegetables that even the most green-fingered gardener would struggle to cultivate made an appearance, including chillies, basil, peppers, pumpkins and samphire!



Samphire



Pumpkins

At KCF they have an on-going commitment to reducing local carbon emissions in Tighnabruaich and the surrounding area, while building a more sustainable and resilient community; this means decreasing dependency on fossil fuels. They are trying to convert to wood burning stoves as a means to reduce fuel bills, and in the process developing a viable wood fuel enterprise to serve the local area and beyond. Rob Borusso led the other group of delegates up the hill to the Sawmill, which as well as a process to becoming more sustainable; it is also where they make their money. Decent cuts go into the saw mill process, the off cuts are bagged and smaller logs are slit and sold for firewood. They are a social enterprise so using profits from the sawmill means that they can pay people to make paths, for example. However, one of the problems they have with some of the timber is that only once it's been through the sawmill process, they realise that it doesn't grade well; if there are too many knots in the timber it won't grade leaving the timber worthless.



Renewable energy has been a Kilfinan Community Forest objective from the early days of consultation to the present time and Rob was delighted to be able to take delegates down to the newly installed 75kW hydro-electric scheme.



At the end of the visit delegates were taken to their Kilfinan Community Forest Shop to look at some of their products for sale and enjoyed a nice welcome cup of tea.



Site Visit 3 - Glenfinart Walled Garden – Ardentinny Community Trust



The Glenfinart Walled Garden was created around 1840 as a private garden with no public access (apart from locals occasionally sneaking in!). In 2012 it was purchased by Ardentinny Community Trust through the National Forest Land Scheme, and was opened to the public for the first time.

The surrounding wall has deteriorated in a number of places but the trust has begun the process of restoration. The garden itself is a very calm place and the community have worked very hard over the last three years to create a combination of beautiful and productive space. Managed and worked by the trustees, a part-time gardener, and a range of volunteer groups the garden has been transformed from an overgrown jungle. The polytunnel was won at a conference, the shed purchased using a grant and the sensory garden designed by the Beechgrove Garden and constructed entirely with volunteer help. The majority of the plants and shrubs growing have been donated.

The orchard was restocked in 2013 and the vegetable plots and polytunnel provide produce that is exchanged for donations to help support the garden. The children's garden designed by volunteer from Dunoon has a bird hide, edible wigwam, bug hotel, bicycle trellis and willow tunnel. Used initially by school groups it is now less well attended due to a drop in numbers in the school, the distance and a loss in transport.

The trustees organise a range of volunteer groups to work in the garden including Carr Gorm, National Park volunteers, community payback volunteers, the HELP team, and the job centre sends out volunteers to gain work experience. The garden is also used for a range of activities including a recent wedding.



An evolving work of art the garden is open to the public at weekends with 'action days' where volunteers come to help on Thursdays and the last Saturday of the month. Well loved and cared for it obviously takes a lot of hard graft to upkeep and with the wall restoration work the group has a lot of hard work ahead. All enjoyed their visit very much; the group were very welcoming

and quite rightly very proud of their achievements and look forward to going back in a few years' time to see how they have progressed.

Sunday 23rd August 2015



**Kate Hutchinson
(Forest Research) "Observatree" & Citizen
Science
Introduction to "Observatree" Monitoring
Tree Health**



Kate gave a fascinating presentation on the aims of "Observatree"; what citizen science is; the tree health situation in the UK; how you can get involved and other tree related citizen science projects. The aim of Observatree is to create a tree health early warning system and thus spot new tree diseases sooner using citizen science.



"Observatree" is a partnership project led by Forest Research, Forestry Commission Scotland, Woodland Trust, National Trust and the Food and Environment Research Agency (Fera). The project has been funded by Life Plus, an EU fund. This is a 4 year project and they are just coming up to the 2 year point. Other organisations also support the project by sending staff.

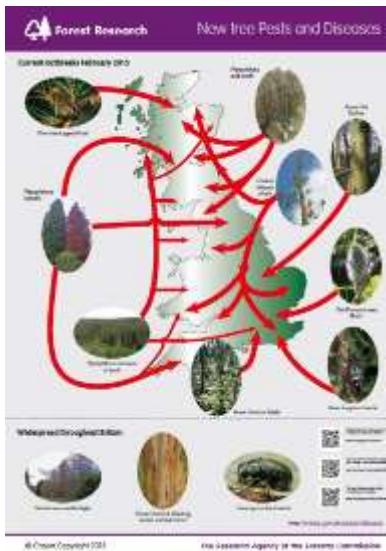
What is citizen science?

Citizen science is the involvement of volunteers in science! Just because they are volunteers, it does not mean that they are unqualified in this field. There are various approaches, from mass public participation to working with small numbers of expert naturalists, and public engagement through to data for scientific papers. Key issues to consider include: reliability of data & verification, cost-effective data collection, and what do the volunteers get out of it?

Tree health in the UK

The threat from new pests and diseases from other parts of the world has increased hugely over the last decade: this is directly related to increase in global trade (both live plants and packing materials). Natural processes (windblown spores) and climate change may also have an impact. These pests and diseases could potentially have a devastating impact on our trees and woodland, as there are no natural biological controls and no resistance to these new threats.

Forest Research summary of some of the diseases found and the list below are diseases that have found in Scotland



- Phytophthora ramorum
- Phytophthora austocedri
- Phytophthora lateralis
- Pine tree lappet moth
- Chalara dieback of ash
- Dothistroma needle blight

Tree health policy and Observatree:

Observatree are monitoring the Government strategy which is to:

1. Keep it out
2. Eradicate before spread
3. Control and manage

For example: *Asian longhorn beetle*, found in the south have been eradicated, different strategies used for different species.

Why use citizen science?

- Early detection requires increased surveillance – we need to spot it sooner;
- It is a huge task to undertake research across all UK's trees, forests and woodlands
- A lot of work being done by Government bodies – but can't be everywhere;
- Need to harness knowledge of people in contact with trees on a day to day basis.

Increasing surveillance and reporting: Citizen Science 'strand One'

- Please look out for pests and diseases!
- Increased levels of surveillance;
- Please report **unusual** pests and diseases;
- Report via TreeAlert: FC's online tree health reporting tool;
- Provide resources on pest and disease ID – has it always been here?
- Targeting knowledgeable audiences; at present they are only going to target people involved in woodlands - **Like you!**
- No commitment required.

Observatree volunteer network: Citizen science 'strand 2'

- 200 specialist Observatree volunteers:
 - Recruited volunteers with existing skills and knowledge of pests and diseases;
 - Trained over 4 years, face to face training, webinars etc;
- Desk-based - triage and verification:
 - 20 volunteers;
 - Processing and verifying TreeAlert reports, checking that they are of good quality;
 - Allow FR Scientists to focus on more skilled work.
- Survey work – other volunteer tasks:
 - Monitoring NT and WT sites – started summer 2014;
 - TreeAlert report follow up site visits – 2015;

- Oriental Chestnut Gall Wasp survey – 2015; (eg: Observatree volunteers were sent out to observe and actually found a secondary site of the wasps);
- Surveying for Chalara in Scotland – 2015.

TreeAlert - Report it! www.forestry.gov.uk/treealert



- If you see one of the Five pests & diseases below TreeAlert have their own reporting form on their website:
 - Acute Oak Decline;
 - Asian Longhorn Beetle;
 - Dothistroma Needle Blight;
 - P. lateralis;
 - Chalara.
- General reporting line - if not one of the 5 or you don't know what it is.
- Register – so you don't have to put your contact details in each time

TreeAlert – what to record if you spot something:

- Location (grid reference or click on map);
- Number of trees affected;
- Approximate stem diameter;
- Approximate age and whether recently planted;
- Tree species;
- Symptoms;
- Three photographs.



Asian Longhorn Beetle



Bronze Birch Borer

Observatree priority pests and diseases



Dothistroma Needle Blight



Oak Lace Bug



Red-necked Longhorn Beetle



Plane Lace Bug



Emerald Ash Borer



Great Spruce Bark Beetle



Phytophthora austrocedri



Chalara Dieback of Ash



Sweet Chestnut Blight



Oak Processionary Moth



Phytophthora lateralis



Acute Oak Decline



Sweet Chestnut Gall Wasp



Plane Wilt



Horse Chestnut Leaf Miner



Pine Processionary Moth



Citrus Longhorn Beetle

We have identified pests and diseases of the highest concern. You can help our scientists by looking out for them and reporting any sightings visit www.observatree.org.uk



You can help to spot these threats sooner. If you think you have spotted a tree pest or disease use Tree Alert to report it: www.forestry.gov.uk/treearlert



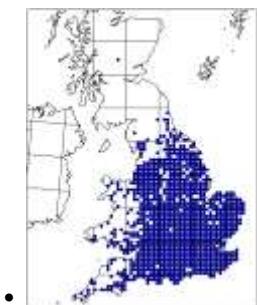
Chalara dieback of ash:

- <http://chalaromap>;
- <http://fera.co.uk/>;
- Interested in reports in 'blank' squares;
- Map as at August 2015.



Horse Chestnut Leaf Miner:

- Interested in sightings in Scotland;
- Confirmed reports up to 2014.



Observatree Information portal

The Project is also providing information on ID the help individuals on signs and symptoms:

- They have created a Catalogue of existing tree health resources;
- Hosted on the Observatree website.



Acute Oak Decline (AOD)



Ash Dieback
(*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*)



Bronze Birch Borer



Chestnut Blight
(*Oryctocnemis parasitica*)



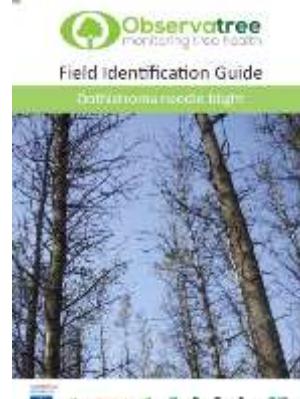
Asian Longhorn Beetle



Chestnut Gall Wasp

Additional resources coming soon:

- Online videos on pest and disease id and look-a-likes;
- Webinar recordings;
- MOOC – online e-learning course;
- Possibly face to face training.



What happens to TreeAlert reports?

- Information will go direct to FR Tree Health Diagnosis Advisory Team;
- This information is checked daily;
- If the report needs additional information you may be contacted by FR or an Observatree volunteer;
- If it looks like it is notifiable or priority pest or disease – the information will be passed straight on to FCS tree health team;
- Some reports might go to Observatree volunteers to follow up or take samples;
- When will you hear back? Depending on what you have found;
- Remember TreeAlert is the fastest way to get your report to the people who need it.

Other tree-related citizen science projects:

- Ashtag are looking for trees that are resistant to chalara. You can buy a pack of metal tags and then keep an eye on the trees. The aim is to spot those that don't have the disease; www.ashtag.org/
- The Open Air Laboratories (OPAL) network is a UK-wide citizen science initiative that allows **you** to get hands-on with nature, whatever your age, background or level of ability; www.opalexplorernature.org/aboutopal
- Conker tree science; www.conkertreescience.org.uk/
- Longhorn beetle pheromone traps

- Treezilla; www.treezilla.org/
- Track A Tree; trackatree.bio.ed.ac.uk/
- Nature's calendar. www.naturescalendar.org.uk/

Summary

- Project website: www.observatree.org.uk
- Find out more about tree pests and diseases;
- Enewsletter if you want to find out more about pests and diseases – sign up!
- **Look out and report it via TreeAlert!**



**Julie Young, Argyll and the Isles Coast and Countryside Trust (ACT)
and
Sara MacLean (Branching Out Leader)
Branching Out: Partnerships with NHS**



Julie Young, a Development Officer for Argyll and the Isles Coast and Countryside Trust (ACT) since September 2013, gave a presentation on ACT; how it was established to care for, enhance and promote the coast and countryside of Argyll for the benefit of the people who live, work and visit the area. Sara Mclean, who recently joined Kilfinan Community Forest Company (KCFC) as their Forest Access Coordinator and a Branching Out Leader gave a presentation on Branching Out, an innovative partnership programme between FCS and NHS, which provides woodland activities on referral for mental health services.

In 2012 a feasibility study took place involving 135 organisations and individuals. The result showed an overwhelming (89%) support in favour of establishing a Coast and Countryside Trust in Argyll. ACT Argyll, which was launched in April 2014, is a partnership of five organisations; Forestry Commission Scotland; Argyll and Bute Council; Scottish Natural Heritage; NHS Highland and most importantly, the Community!

They aim to achieve as many of their objectives as possible within each project:

- To **care** for our environment;
- To **enjoy and benefit** from our environment;
- To **encourage investment** to improve our environment;
- To **share ideas** on how to care for, enhance and enjoy our environment;
- To **increase opportunities** for local people such as work, training and volunteering;
- To **support** the existing network.

June 2015 – Projects

The following projects have emerged as ones where ACT can make a significant contribution.

1. **act Argyll Ltd;**
2. Rhododendron ponticum/INNS;
3. Secret Coast Trails;
4. Long Distance Routes;
5. Branching Out.

Rhododendron/INNS Management – outline of Rhododendron issues and bids

ACT are working with groups across the area as well as advisors from FCS and SNH to come up with an effective and strategic approach to Rhododendron Ponticum management. Looking ahead they plan to progress the work undertaken at Glen Creran and establish a number of additional sites to start control programmes.

They submitted two funding applications addressing rhododendron management. The Heritage Lottery Fund bid will consolidate and progress with work started by FCS in Glen Creran with a view to completely eradicating the species within that area. The second proposal is to make an application for Interreg funds to develop a suite of approaches to community rhododendron management at a range of sites across Argyll. They are working with community groups, FCS, SNH, Argyll Fisheries Trust and Argyll and Bute Council's European Funding Unit to develop this project which they hope to launch in spring 2016.

Heritage Lottery Fund:

- Glen Creran

European funding:

- Cross Border Interreg Fund (Peatland preservation);
- Northern Periphery Programme (community management and policy development).

The Secret Coast Trail

This project was initiated by ACT to improve access routes across Kilfinan Parish, during which they worked with existing groups and projects, including the Cowal Way and Kilfinan Community Forest Trust, Tighnabruaich Community Council, Kyles Marketing Group, Tighnabruaich and District Development Trust, Kilfinan Community Council and Portavadie Marina. Their intention was to develop a good quality network of routes which are signed, mapped and well publicised for visitors and residents.



This is now a showcase for other parts of Argyll and will help other communities with the delivery of access projects in their locations. They also hope to attract a combination of grant funds and developer contributions.

Branching Out

Branching Out, a partnership programme between NHS, FCS and community organisations, developed a 3-year proposal to create a sustainable programme of delivery across Argyll.

Act and Branching Out - How they got started

- They set up a Health and Wellbeing Network;
- CWA – Partnership;
- FCS – Funders;
- NHS – Funders.

How ACT contributed

- Through Partnerships;
- Networks;
- Lead partner.

Their plan

- To secure funding;
- To train leaders;
- Branching Out Argyll

Sara Maclean¹ is a Qualified Branching Out Leader and is the Cowal lead for Branching Out Argyll. The following organisations involved in the Cowal Partnership are: ACT; CWA; NHS; FCS and Colintraive and Glendaruel Development Trust (Stronafian Community Forest).

Branching Out is an innovative development for adults who use mental health services in Scotland. For each client, the service consists of 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
- Bushcraft
- Use of natural materials
- Learning
- Conservation
- Environmental art
- Photography
- Green woodworking
- Outdoor cooking

On completion of the course there's an awards ceremony where clients receive certificates of completion, tool handling and achievement (e.g. The John Muir Award where applicable), and are signposted on to community-based leisure, volunteer and training opportunities.

Branching Out Cowal 2015 / 16

- Argyll Leader training took place in September;
- The 1st Cowal Programme took place between September and November;
- Feedback and evaluation Cowal will be ready by December;
- 2016 will see a repeat and roll out to Argyll and Bute.

¹ sara@cgdt.org

For more information on Argyll and the Isles Coast and Countryside Trust (ACT) please contact them via email at:info@act-now.org.uk or via tel: 01546 604309 or visit their webpage www.act-now.org.uk



Elaine Jamieson (FCS) and Jon Hollingdale (CWA): An introduction to SRDP and the new Forestry Grant Scheme

The Scottish Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 has a total budget of £1.3Billion, and is promised to be simpler and more accessible than its predecessor. The SRDP includes 15 grant schemes: most are agricultural. This presentation concentrated on the Forestry Grant Scheme (FGS), but community woodland groups may also be eligible for funding from LEADER (for rural development projects) and the Agri-Environment Climate Scheme (AECS) for non-woodland habitats and improving public access in rural areas.

The Forestry Grant Scheme has 8 categories, with the majority of the budget earmarked for woodland creation. The focus of this session was on WIG: Woodland Improvement Grants (capital payments for specific activities) and SMF: Sustainable Management of Forests (annual payments for on-going work), both of which aim to support the management of existing forests and woodlands. Other categories include Forest Infrastructure, Harvesting & Processing, Co-operation, Tree Health, Agroforestry; some of these may be of interest to community woodlands. A key point is that most FGS grants are targeted: not everything is available everywhere.

WIG are capital payments for specific activities. Each capital item has its own specification. Capital items should be claimed after completion and FCS may inspect the site to ensure that the work has been carried out to the correct specification. SMF are annual payments, based on standard costs, paid for up to five years and claimed on the Single Application Form (SAF). Annual monitoring is required and evidence must be submitted between 1st December and 31st January.

Several of the SMF options are linked to WIG options: the annual activity (such as deer control or litter picking) is covered by the SMF and the capital work (such as path construction or underplanting) are available under the WIG. The SMF and WIG will have similar selection criteria and be applied for together.

Woodland Improvement Grant

There are five WIG options, two of which were looked at in-depth:

- Planning
- Restructuring Regeneration
- Habitats and Species
- Low Impact Silvicultural Systems (LISS)
- Woods In and Around Towns (WIAT)

WIG Habitats and Species

This option aims to improve or restore native woodlands, PAWS, non-woodland habitats, or Woodland Designed Landscapes, and to improve habitats for species associated with the woodland edge. Eligibility is based on Native Woodland Survey of Scotland (NWSS), priority habitats and species (Scottish Biodiversity Strategy), or woodland designed landscapes. An approved Forest Plan is required for woodlands > 100ha, or an approved Management Plan for woodlands <100 ha.

There are 58 capital items listed under 5 headings: vegetation removal, boundaries & fencing, felling & tree removal, forest management & enhancement, ditches, bridges & stock management. One of the capital items is for natural regeneration establishment of native trees on open ground within or around the woodland edge. Grant can be claimed once regeneration has successfully established (i.e. minimum stocking density of 400 trees/ha, average height >0.5m).

WIG WIAT

This option aims to support the sustainable management of urban woodland for public access. The woodland must be located within one kilometre of settlements with a population of over 2000 people. There are 47 capital items under the headings: clearance, fences and gates, boardwalks and paths, outdoor furniture and signage, woodland management. Applicants must have an FCS approved Urban Woodland Management Plan (UWMP). The WIG – WIAT also requires an Operational Plan which includes additional detail on the capital items.

Sustainable Management of Forests (SMF)

There are nine SMF options, three of which were looked at in-depth:

- Low Impact Silvicultural Systems (LISS)
- Native Woodlands
- Livestock Exclusion
- Woodland Grazing
- Public Access: WIAT
- Public Access: Rural Woods
- Species Conservation - Grey Squirrel Control,
- Species Conservation - Reducing Deer Impact
- Species Conservation - Predator Control for Capercaillie & Black Grouse

SMF Native Woodland

This option is to maintain or enhance good ecological condition of native woodlands and support the restoration of Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS). The grant support is £25/ha/year for 5 years to support the costs of deer control and monitoring. A deer management plan (DMP) is required and annual habitat impacts assessments will be necessary to claim grant. Eligibility is based on Native Woodland Survey of Scotland (NWSS), but the boundary can be extended to cover an area of natural regeneration.

SMF WIAT

This option is to provide support for the sustainable management of urban woodlands for public access. Grant support of £100/ha/year for first 10ha, then £10/ha/year for remaining area, is for 5 years and based on annual maintenance activities (annual tree and path safety inspections, litter picking, keeping paths and signs and recreational facilities up to an acceptable standard); applicants will need to retain surveys and a diary of time inputs.

An FCS approved Urban Woodland Management Plan (UWMP) is required. The woodland must be located within one kilometre of settlements with a population of over 2000 people and on the National Forest Inventory. Scoring is based on the location of the woodland, the intensity of woodland management, and the level of community engagement.

SMF Rural Woods

This option aims to: support the costs of maintenance of public access in woodlands: carrying out annual tree and path safety inspections, keeping access routes free of litter and tree debris, keeping paths and signs and recreational facilities up to an acceptable standard. The grant rate is £100/ha/year for up to 5 years; the eligible area is calculated using path length x 25m buffer either side (200m path * 50m buffer = 1ha), grant is capped at £10k per management unit pa.

An approved Forest Plan is required for woodlands > 100ha, for woodlands <100 ha an approved Management Plan is acceptable. Applicants must carry out and retain annual tree safety surveys and keep an annual monitoring form of time inputs as required. This must include days spent litter picking and undertaking path, sign and furniture maintenance. Scoring recognises applications which are community owned, led, or supported, and which clearly demonstrate the delivery of significant benefits to the local community.

Exercise

Delegates divided into groups to assess the eligibility of and calculate the grant payable for a (fictional) application for the SMF Native Woodlands & WIG Habitats & Species options.



Conference Summary *Jon Hollingdale CWA CEO*

Jon gave a brief summary of the conference. This year's theme had been "working in partnership" and it was clear that there were a great many opportunities for groups to achieve their aspirations by working with others. There were also new opportunities for community woodlands, including those opening up through the Community Empowerment Act and the Making Local Woods Work project.

There are challenges, not least the continuing difficult financial climate, but Jon had been struck by the positive and optimistic tone through the conference: this had started with Mike Russell's keynote address and continued throughout the weekend.

Jon thanked all the speakers, workshop and site visit hosts, the CWA Directors who helped out over the weekend, and Caroline and Diane, who had put in an enormous amount of work to organise the conference and ensure that everything ran smoothly. He also thanked the conference funders, Forestry Commission Scotland and Highland and Islands Enterprise, and all the staff at the Royal Marine Hotel who had looked after delegates so well.

Finally, Jon made the sad announcement that, after five years with CWA, Diane Oliver was standing down. Di made a huge contribution to the organisation and will be greatly missed, although she's not going too far away and is likely to be doing some work for us on a consultancy basis. On behalf of CWA Directors and staff Jon presented Di with a wooden bowl turned by Mick Barnett.

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

	V.Good	Good	Fair	Poor	V.Poor
Location	16	9	3	0	0
Organisation	23	4	1	0	0
Catering	9	14	5	0	0
Facilities	6	16	6	0	0

	Content					Relevance				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Saturday Presentations										
Rob Burruso (Kilfinan Community Forest Trust)	14	10	4	0	0	14	7	4	0	0
Eamon King (Colintraive and Glendaruel DT)	12	12	4	0	0	10	10	5	0	0
Workshops										
Living It Up / Technology Enabled Care - A service that can help you get and share information for a healthier lifestyle	1	3	4	0	0	1	3	2	2	0
Sharing Staff and Resources – The Ward Forester Initiative	2	3	3	0	0	4	3	1	0	0
Working together to tackle invasive species	3	5	3	0	0	7	2	2	0	0
Site Visits										
Stronafian Forest - Colintraive and Glendaruel Development Trust	2	7	0	1	0	2	7	2	0	0
Acharossan Forest - Kilfinan Community Forest Company	10	4	1	0	0	6	6	1	1	0
Glenfinart Walled Garden - Ardentinny Community Trust	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
Informal Sessions										
Woodland Crofts	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0
The Making Local Woods Work Project	2	3	0	0	0	3	2	0	0	0
Green Woodworking Demo	2	2	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0
Sunday Presentations										
Kate Hutchinson (Forest Research) -	16	7	3	0	0	15	6	2	0	0

“Observatree” & Citizen Science										
Julie Young (ACT) Argyll - Branching Out: Partnerships with NHS	13	9	4	0	0	10	8	5	0	0
Elaine Jamieson (FCS) and Jon Hollingdale (CWA): An introduction to SRDP and the new Forestry Grant Scheme with presentations and an interactive session	17	8	0	0	0	14	7	0	0	0

Do you feel this event delivered your expectations?

Yes 29, No 0, Partly 1

If answer was no / partly:

Perhaps have a range of subjects for those of less and more experience.

Improvement - introductions (brief) from participants would have been good, especially form the community wood groups - more information on what groups are doing - give them the floor.

Why did you want to take part in the event?

To gain more experience and find out about possible grants.

Inspirational; networking; bring ideas back home and ceilidh!

Networking.

To learn what was happening across Scotland.

Networking, face to face contact.

Interested in finding out what I should be doing as a director of our local group, making connections.

Discuss ideas with fellow directors.

As always great to see like-minded passionate folk.

Networking, learning about what others are doing

Networking, going to new place, talking to people.

to meet with others, share information, learn new things.

CWA Conferences are always interesting and stimulating and very relaxed.

Sharing gathering information from others practical experience with projects similar to ours.

More information about woodlands etc.

Networking and keeping with what other woods are doing.

To meet up with like-minded people.

Networking, information.

Networking; learning about other projects and initiatives.

Invited to speak.

New director of community forest.

To meet like-minded people and gain an insight as to how they tackle similar problems to learn more and network with CWA and others.

It is always an informative event with excellent networking opportunities. The technical and practical content is always very high and it is bloody good fun

Meet other groups and learn from them. Learning about new CWA projects

Peer support and knowledge sharing; not reinventing the wheel and feeling we are not alone.

Networking/ learning.

To look at links for future work and collaboration with others.

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

Networking very useful to see what others are doing and learning new things.

Catching up.

New ideas, confidence.

Brought up to date with funding.

New contacts, new ideas.

Networking, meeting, learning.

More knowledge about groups in the Argyll area.

Ideas to take back to group; A feeling of working together with a Scottish wide group on positive community and land work that I am passionate about.

Talks were very interesting; with a few points I didn't know or had forgotten.

Insight into other woodlands; Start thinking about things not specific to our woodland.

Up to date with information and, as ever, learned new facts.

New contacts and information.

Networking.

Ideas, information, gaining feeling that you are not alone.

Inspired to find my local woodland and get involved.

Networking , knowledge.

Gained useful advice regarding dealing with bureaucracy and dealing with invasive species.

Larger understanding of what CWA and members have to offer.

Learnt a lot.

Renewed enthusiasm.

Wider knowledge, insight into new projects.

Inspirational to continue volunteering knowledge and networking.

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

Explain to our own committee what we gathered from the conference and move forward with the lessons learnt.

Some useful ideas that are directly useable for our plans and gains.

Try citizen science.

Share widely with others.

Follow up with contacts to explore partnerships (collaboration / training opportunities.

Use them to help our people.

Share it with my group.

Apply them to our groups own questions.

Share with group management committee and membership; Visit some of projects delegates are involved in before next conference.

Remove Rhododendrons completely from our glen.

Try and introduce ideas to our woodland.

put them into practice.

Share/ learn from.

Carry them to improve our organisation.

Do woodland grant scheme paperwork; Train with ACT as a leader; craft outlet for own woodworking community – investigate.

We will be able to apply them to our location.

Use it in our volunteer programme in Falkirk.

*I hope to implement them with the organisation form whom I work. I will certainly try them for myself.
Develop our community wood - buy it!!*

Make more use of connections going forward working together and sharing learning.

Help other groups.

Follow up some points.

Inspire others.

Would you recommend this event to a friend?

explain why / why not:

By attending you always learn something you didn't know before

To find out what's new, available, going on

Welcome friendly, helpful

Widespread of organisations/groups present

Definitely recommend for the support and innovation

Not many at home feel like they are about a larger network

Very good thing to attend, contacts, ideas

To meet others involved in similar projects

Help keep you in touch with the bigger inspiring picture

It was really interesting, well worth coming, especially sharing information and how people solved different problems - very enjoyable and 2 days of learning

Make connections with woodlands of all sorts

To explain knowledge and understanding of community woods

Help to share information

It was fun! (and informative and supportive)

It is very informed and can be applied

*Because of the enormous benefit to be gained and the great value for money and the fun
Validates what we're trying to do*

*Being a part of something bigger than our group and getting support to move forward
Great learning*

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

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

More detail in the best funding available for different scales of woodland particularly for projects like car parks

Brown field site/VDL reclamation for woodlands

Investigate more fully the shared resources and the role CWA play in overseeing this to ensure quality of service

Training for new charity trustees with special emphasis on working well together as a team

Font of all knowledge can put us in contact with similar woodlands. Someone at the CWA will have done it before

Information on setting up training events for other groups

Promote skill sharing between member groups

First Aid; Full invasive species weekend; Practice and theory

Develop a woodland for every community; To help communities develop commercial activities

Blog forum for SRDP advice/ experience

Develop a strong strategy and communicate with other groups more effectively

More training, resource pooling, contractor pools

Any other comments on any aspect of the event?

Note: The group worksheet was over the top for a number of people as it was too in-depth for small organisations

Great to have it in Cowal!

Thanks very much and well done

I enjoyed the site visit

Brilliant - Thanks

The event is always dynamic, informative and well run - Carry on the good work

*Except for HIE its getting expensive for delegates. Campsite would be great (and a fire to sit around)
Thank you for organising the event*

Appendix 3: Speaker Biographies

Saturday Speakers



Michael Russell MSP

Mike Russell is Member of the Scottish Parliament for the Argyll and Bute constituency. He is a member of the Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee, and was formerly Minister for Environment and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning. He is also a television producer and director and the author of seven books.



Robert Borruso – Director, Kilfinan Community Forest Company

Robert is passionate about sustainable energy use and renewables, leading seminars on these topics all over the country. Having been involved with KCFC since its inception in 2005, Robert is currently managing the forest housing project, the long term aim being to provide a range of affordable housing for people who want to live and work in the area.



Eamon King – Forest Development Officer, Stronafian Community Forest, Colintraive and Glendaruel Development Trust.

Eamon King is the Forest Development Officer for Stronafian Community Forest in Glendaruel, Argyll. Previously he spent two years developing the site at Kilfinan Community Forest in nearby Tighnabruaich. He has worked in the Third Sector in Argyll for 13 years in a number of roles covering environmental education, waste management, energy efficiency, renewable energy and now community forestry.

Workshop Hosts

Elaine Booth – Living It Up / Technology Enabled Care



Amanda Calvert – CWA Director

Amanda is lucky enough to live in the Highlands with peace and quiet and views of Abernethy nature reserve from her desk. As a self-confessed workaholic when her kids all grew up and left home she discovered how much you can actually fit into a day (until most of them came back!). Amanda is a self-employed consultant in the forestry, biomass and land reform sectors, but also works as a project officer for the European SIMWOOD project which aims to increase the area of woodland in management and the volume of products coming to market. Her spare time is taken up with her passion for gardening, gardening and then more gardening (and of course knitting)!



Gordon Gray Stephens – CWA Director

Gordon is a director of the Native Woods Cooperative (Scotland) Ltd, which works on a range of native woodland and community based projects across Scotland. He is also a founding member of the Argyll Green Woodworkers Association (AGWA).

Sunday Speakers



Ian Hepburn - North West Mull Community Woodland Company Ltd & CWA Director

Ian was born in 1948 and brought up in the West Riding of Yorkshire, he trained as an accountant and worked in a variety of industries from Heavy Engineering to Logistics. Ian retired from a post with DHL/Exel in 2008 2 years after fulfilling a long held ambition of moving to Mull. Ian has recently retired as the Manager for North West Mull Community Woodland Company; he is a Director of Community Land Scotland and the Chair of Argyll and Isles Coast and Countryside Trust



Kate Hutchinson - Observatree Project Manager

Kate studied Biology at the University of Nottingham, followed by an MSc in Rural Development and Resource Management at the University of Newcastle. Since 2003 Kate has managed numerous publically funded projects related to woodlands and forestry, working for organisations such as SRUC and Rural Development Initiatives. Kate joined Forest Research at the end of 2013 in order to project manage the LIFE+ funded Observatree project which is developing a tree health early warning system using citizen science. As Partnership Project Manager her role is to coordinate the overall delivery of the project, working with the project partners: The Woodland Trust, Fera Science and the National Trust.



Julie Young – Development Officer, Argyll and the Isles Coast and Countryside Trust (ACT)

Julie has been the Development Officer for ACT since September 2013. Prior to moving to ACT Julie was the Sustainable Travel Co-ordinator for Argyll and Bute Council where she was responsible for the development and promotion of cycling and walking in Argyll and Bute, including infrastructure improvements, network development and travel planning.



Elaine Jamieson - Development Officer for Perth and Argyll Conservancy, Forestry Commission Scotland

Elaine is responsible for managing the local Community Fund applications and taking an active role in 'A Wood of Our Own' networking events has allowed her to make strong connections with the Argyll community woodland sector. Elaine has held a variety of roles within FCS across Scotland in the last 20 years and worked in Argyll for 12 years.

Appendix 4: Delegate List

NAME	SURNAME	ORGANISATION
Claire	Templeton	Alva Glen Heritage Trust
Steven	Kelvin	Alva Glen Heritage Trust
Liz	Evans	AOEC Trust Ltd (Ardroy OEC)
Alison	Macleod	Applecross Community Company CWA Director
Dennis	Gower	Ardentinny Community Trust Ltd
Julie	Young	Argyll and the Isles Coast and Countryside Trust
Gordon	Gray Stephens	Argyll Green Woodworkers Association / CWA Director
John	Bell	Axewood Co-operative
Allison	Aiken	Beechbrae
Charles	Dixon-Spain	Colintraive and Glendaruel Development Trust (CGDT)
Eamon	King	Colintraive and Glendaruel Development Trust (CGDT)
Bob	Frost	Community Policy Adviser, Forestry Commission Scotland
Douglas	Locke	Cormonachan Woodlands Association
Edna	Elliot-McColl	Cree Valley Community Woodlands Trust
Linda	Moorhouse	Cree Valley Community Woodlands Trust
Peter	Robinson	Cree Valley Community Woodlands Trust
Grace	Craigie	Crossgates Community Woodland
Caroline	Derbyshire	CWA Administrator
Jon	Hollingdale	CWA CEO
Diane	Oliver	CWA Training & Devt Manager
Isobel	Knox	Dunbar Community Woodland Group
Michael	Barnett	Dunnet Forestry Trust
Jean	Barnett	Dunnet Forestry Trust / CWA Director
Peter	Livingstone	Eadha Enterprises
Mark	Lazzeri	Falkland Centre for Stewardship / CWA Director
Jonathan	Caddy	Findhorn Hinterland Group
Kajedo	Wanderer	Findhorn Hinterland Group
Craig	Millar	Forestry Commission Scotland
Elaine	Jamieson	Forestry Commission Scotland - Perth and Argyll
Grace	Grant	Glengarry Community Woodlands
Louise	McAllister	Green Aspirations
Paul	Cookson	Green Aspirations
Derek	Noble	Guest
Pamela	Noble	Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Karen	Lowthrop	Hill Holt Wood
Nigel	Lowthrop	Hill Holt Wood
Steve	Robertson	Isle of Rum Community Trust
Mark	Bamford	Kilfinan Community Forest Company
Michaela	Blair	Kilfinan Community Forest Company
Nikki	Brown	Kilfinan Community Forest Company
Rob	Borruso	Kilfinan Community Forest Company
Sara	Maclean	Kilfinan Community Forest Company
Amanda	Calvert	Kingussie Community Development Co / CWA Director

Amie	Dow	Knoydart Forest Trust
Ian	Dow	Knoydart Forest Trust
Elaine	Booth	LIVING IT UP / TEC
Fay	Sharpley	Llais y Goedwig
Jane	Gronow	Llais y Goedwig
Piotr	Godziszewski	Lochcarron Community Development Company
Chris	Mackey	Lower Braes Woodland Group
Peter	Lavelle	Lower Braes Woodland Group
Sheila	Mackey	Lower Braes Woodland Group
Sonia	McLay	Lower Braes Woodland Group
Veronique	Walraven	Morvern Community Woodlands Company
Michael	Russell	MSP North West Mull Community Woodland Company Ltd / CWA Director
Ian	Hepburn	NVA, Engagement Coordinator
Rebecca	Powrie	Observatree Project Manager, Forest Research
Kate	Hutchinson	Project Officer, Cumbria Woodlands
Jamie	Chaplin-Brice	Roots of Arran Community Woodland
Juliette	Walsh	South Loch-Aweside Community Company
Andrew	Hill	South West Mull and Iona Development
Jack	Degnan	South West Mull and Iona Development
Stewart	MacDougall	The Field Group (Duddingston)
Nick	Marshall	Ullapool Community Trust / CWA Director
Diane	Campbell	Woodland Croft Partnership
Jamie	McIntyre	Wooplaw Community Woodlands
Bob	Fleet	