

Timber Harvesting Update

The community woodland is an even-aged forest which was planted in 1956, and like most forests in the area it was designed to be clearfelled. Even-aged forests have limited value for wildlife; for animals, plants, fungi and everything else that lives in the forest to thrive, there needs to be trees present from different stages of their life. Now that it is under community-ownership a different management style can be implemented. One of the main aims is to create a forest which is more diverse, with more tree species, and more variation in tree ages and our new Forest Plan explains how we will achieve this over the next 20 years.

The first operation to start this process off begins in early 2018, and will focus on the larger area of the community woodland to the northeast of the A87. Some small-scale clearfelling cannot be avoided, due to the way the forest was managed in the past. This will mainly be the stand of Douglas fir at the northern end of Faichem which has begun to blow over, often falling across the road in strong winds. Other areas include a stand of Norway spruce, and another of Western hemlock both of which are next to the A87 (on the bend). All of the other areas will be thinned. Thinning means felling 1 in every 4 or 5 trees in an area, usually removing the trees which have developed poorly and have partially developed crowns, or look a bit bendy, but leaving the largest and best trees to keep growing. Thinning opens up the canopy, letting in light which promotes growth of new plants.

Planning this operation is more complicated than it might appear, and our plans have had to change a few times already. All of the harvested wood will now exit the forest via the Depot straight onto the A87 and we've applied for planning permission to build a lorry turnaround and timber stacking area next to the Depot. Unfortunately this is costly and will use much of the revenue from timber sales, but it will be a good investment for the future and can be used as a yard for the other work we hope to do. While work is taking place **please keep well away from the working areas which can be dangerous**. Any questions, please get in touch with Tom.



Clearfelling is the only option for this unstable stand of Douglas fir

AGM 2017

There was a good turnout for the Community Woodland's second AGM on Wednesday 4th October in the Depot. The chair, Alan White opened the meeting by giving thanks to the board. After agreeing the minutes of the last AGM, Alan went on to outline what he called 'a very busy and successful year' at the community woodland. The new treasurer, Joanna Rodgers gave her overview of the company's accounts for the financial year ending 31/3/17 and after answering questions about some of the grants the community woodland had received the accounts were approved.

Alan then introduced the Development Officer Tom, who reported on the last year's activities. After covering this, he briefed everyone on the latest developments for harvesting timber from the woodland, explaining why it needs to be done, how it will be carried out and when. There followed some question about clearfelling and timber lorries to which Tom replied that clearfelling could not be avoided in some areas due to the way the forest had been previously managed.

Election of new directors came next, with two board members stepping down. Two new directors were elected: Mairi Davies and Sandra Coy. Mairi and Sandra said a few words about themselves and why they were supporting the community woodland. There being no further business, the chair closed the meeting.

Green Woodworking

December was the last session of our first ever Green Woodworking evening class. The class was very popular and filled up almost as soon as we advertised it. Running for 6 sessions from October to December, 7 participants started by learning about what types of wood to use and why it needs to be green, before moving on to their first project: a butter knife. Throughout the course, people had a go at carving a spoon, a bowl, sharpening their tools and then finishing with the using lathe. We hope to run more courses like this one in the future, if you're interested, please get in touch.



Three green wood workers working away on their spoons

Halloween in the Woods

Saturday 28th of October was our first Halloween event. 52 people came to the community woodland to take part in the themed crafts, including pumpkin and 'neep

carving, making willow witches wands, traditional witches broomsticks, and Halloween lanterns. There was a storyteller from Lochcarron Community Woodland who told two long stories around the fire, and the children went on a short lantern parade into the woods.



Spooky stories around the fireside at halloween

Glengarry Community Woodlands Development Plan

In December we started working with consultants C J Piper to write a 'Development Plan' for the community woodland. The plan will revisit some of the opportunities and ideas that were highlighted in the Feasibility Study, and identify how well they would deliver our objectives. One of the main issues it will be focussing on is how the woodland can generate income and provide employment for the area. Our aim is to become financially self-dependent so we do not rely on grants, but can keep on providing all the services that the community have been enjoying. Once the plan is ready, we will be inviting everybody to comment on it and give feedback.

Christmas

For the first year, the Community Woodland has supplied the village Christmas tree, as well as trees for the Glengarry Community Hall, the Invergarry Church of Scotland and Invergarry Primary School. We hope to do the same in years to come. *Merry Christmas everyone!*

