

It is full steam ahead at Glengarry Community Woodlands, with major steps being taken across all our projects and a range of events and activities for young and old. Now is the perfect time for you to get involved and get in touch.

Update from Bruce Kocjan, the Community Woodland Officer

Hasn't the Year flown? We're into July already and things have been so busy in the woodlands: Into the Woods and Junior Rangers, our two clubs for children, ran sessions over the Easter holidays. For the young kids at Into the Woods the highlight was repeated visits from a young Sika stag, dubbed Uno as he only had one antler, who came right into our woodland site.



The young folks in our Junior Rangers group had a more detailed, if less intimate, brush with nature as we spent a session looking at tracking and animal signs. You'd be amazed how hard it is to track down a teenager in the woods when they don't want to be found! Bushcraft is always a popular topic for the JR group, so we also spent a day learning knots and how to build shelters. Many thanks to our sessional staff for all their hard work with these clubs.

We run the club during the summer holidays too. Look out for the booking email soon, with sessions in the last week of July and the first week of August.

On Saturday 8th April we held "Hunt the Gowk" - our Easter family event, a new twist on an old Scots tradition. The visiting children helped our band of woodland folk seek out the eggs that the forgetful Gowk (Cuckoo) had laid in the woods and forgotten.

It was a fun chance for the kids to have a go at some traditional woodland crafts, with our staunch group of wood-

land folk helping them along. Of course, there was a tasty chocolate reward to be had once all the eggs had been returned to the cuckoo. The Tombola was popular as always, as were teas, coffees, and the ever-present Welsh cakes keeping parents happy while the kids had their fun.

For those who prefer a more sedate form of entertainment, and don't mind an early rise, we ran our Dawn Chorus walk on the 6th of May. Starting at 6 am, a small group explored the forest and riverside paths, listening out for the tell-tale sounds of spring birdsong. On returning to the campfire, we all enjoyed a hearty breakfast roll and a hot cuppa, prepared for us by our Development Manager, Tom.

With so much new growth in spring, it's a perfect time to introduce the wealth of wild food growing in and around the woodlands. On the 20th May we ran our Wild Food walk, with our cooking done for us by local chef, Calum Anderson. After a gentle walk through the woods to explore the tastes and textures available from the wild, we returned to the campfire to find out from Calum what you can do with those flavors in your own kitchen. If anyone was unable to join us on the day but would like to find out more about wild food, feel free to email bruce@glengarry.org.uk for some recipes and advice.



Most recently, we celebrated the longest day in year with our Midsummer at Midnight event on the 17th June. We gathered around the campfire and listened to many beautiful music performances, including cello duets and songs accompanied by guitar. We also listened to stories and legends surrounding this special time

of the year. To make the evening complete, we roasted pork and vegetables under the campfire slowly all evening long. At midnight we unearthed our delicious fire-cooked meal.

Lower Ardochy Forest – Community Consultation

On Saturday 27th May we held a community consultation event at the community hall in Invergarry. We presented the plans for the first stage of developing woodland crofts and affordable housing at Ardochy. The whole project team – architects catoe/brown, the Communities Housing Trust and the Woodland Crofts Partnership - was on hand to answer questions and we were very happy to see such a good turnout. Most importantly, we've received some very useful comments and feedback.

The plans shared at this stage are for Area 1 of the Ardochy Development. Once completed, the second phase of this project will see the development of a further four woodland crofts on the east portion of the land. We understand that our plans for Ardochy will not by themselves satisfy all of the housing needs of our community, and that the location, at Ardochy, is not suitable for everybody. Discussions are underway about what other opportunities there may be to develop housing in other parts of the community, including around the village. It is important that we hear what people in the community think to help inform these plans. For this reason, we really encourage you to get in touch and share your thoughts when it comes time to consult on the Community Action Plan.



GCW Governance

We are compiling a register of people interested in joining the board of GCW. This organisation is governed by a modern governing document, which has fixed terms for board members. This ensures that new people are included in the governance of the organisation, which in turn reflects the changes underway in the community. If you sup-

port the aims of our organisation, and think you have the time, skill, experience, background, patience, and enthusiasm for the work we do, get in touch. New Board Members are elected at the AGM in the Autumn.

Community Action Plan

Our community is changing and a great variety of new opportunities and challenges are ahead of us in the next few years. It is up to us to decide what happens in Glengarry and what the community we want to live in looks like. The Community Action Plan is a way to help us reach a consensus and gives local organisations a basis on which to take their projects forward.

As we reported earlier this year, we were awarded funding from Highlands and Islands Enterprise to develop a Community Action Plan. We have commissioned the Paisley-based consultancy firm Slikk7 to take that project forward. Slikk7 are a small consultancy working in the private, public and 3rd sectors across Scotland and help community organisations to realise their projects and initiatives.

At the moment they are working to identify and understand who the different types of stakeholders are that will feed into the plan – such as residents, landowners, businesses, service providers, funders, etc. It is really key that everyone is heard in this process. The next step will be a period of contacting you. We know that summer is a busy period for everyone and the consultants approaches to you will be sensitive to that.

Coming Up Soon

There's more fun to be had in the community woodland over the next couple of months. Junior Rangers and Into the woods are both running during the holidays. Booking emails will be going out soon. If you have children in the Glengarry area, or who go to Invergarry Primary School, and want to come along please contact bruce@glengarry.org.uk.

We also have some wildlife walks and talks coming up in September. Keep an eye on our social media for info nearer the time.