



North West Mull Community Woodland Co Ltd
 Penmore Mill, Dervaig, Isle of Mull, PA75 6QS
 Tel: 01688 400600 admin@nwmullwoodland.co.uk
 Charity no. SCO37336 Company no. 287343

Winter Newsletter 2013

Fuel Wood

NWMCWC Ltd has purchased the assets of Crannich Woodfuel. Trading under the new name of Island Woodfuels, the Company will now sell wood chip as well as logs, kindling and bulk fuel. This will increase turnover enough to create a new job. Robin Sedgwick, who set up and developed Crannich Woodfuels, will work with the new business providing free guidance to people considering a switch to woodfuel. Robin will continue deliveries for the company while they train up the new employee and also help maintain good quality woodchip, ensuring a seamless transition for existing customers. This has been a great opportunity for NWMCWC Ltd to add value to our timber resource and create a local job. There is a new telephone number dedicated to Island Woodfuels - 01688 400627 or you can continue to contact the Office. Further information and the job advertisement can be found in our Woodfuel Bulletin published recently, or on our website.

Lochdonhead Primary School Café

A short time ago NWMCWC Ltd was pleased to donate some sawn timber offcuts to Loch Don Primary School for a craft project associated with the new Lochdonhead Café that was opened on Monday 16th September. Ian Hepburn attended the opening ceremony carried out by Mary Jean Devon. The idea is that the Café will open once a month to allow the local community to come together for refreshments while providing the school with an outlet for selling produce and crafts. The children will run the enterprise as a profit making company allowing them to learn many new skills and raise funds for their school. The opening Café raised a fantastic £231.50



Lochdonhead Primary School Café

100 Club

In the final 100 Club Draw of 2013 the lucky winners were: 1st prize – Ailsa Morgan, 2nd Prize – Lesley Hastie, 3rd Prize – Emma Gardiner and 4th Prize – Cath Mayo. Congratulations to everyone who has won a prize this year. The first 100 Club Draw of 2014 will take place at the end of January.

Harvesting and Transport

Harvesting continues to progress well and the demand for our saw logs remains high. Timber prices are still good so our payments against the road costs are slightly ahead of schedule which is very encouraging. Work on the fixed pier at Fishnish is still slightly behind the original estimate for completion but we hope to be able to start using it in the next few weeks. In the meantime the floating pier continues to provide an effective and environmentally friendly way to transport our timber to the sawmill on the mainland. There has been a good response to the idea of Scavenger Licences for the clear felled areas in Langamull North but the scheme has had to be put on hold for the time being while we await the results of the tests on the larch trees (see Tree Health article).

Tree Health

In September FCS informed NWMCWC Ltd that there was a possibility that some of the larch trees in Langamull were infected with a disease called phytophthora ramorum. Rather than wait until the suspicion was confirmed the Board chose to put up notices on all the entrances to the woodlands and email the Members asking visitors to Langamull to observe some simple procedures to lessen the spread of the disease. These included asking everyone who visited Langamull to stay on the roads and to wash their footwear before going to other forests. Visitors were also asked to wash their dogs' feet on leaving Langamull. At the moment we are still waiting for FCS to carry out a full set of diagnostic tests, but even if our larch trees are found to be free of the disease it may just be a matter of time before they become infected. This is because the disease was identified at Tiroran over a year ago and the larch felled, and it has recently been discovered in Crannich Woodlands. Your continued co-operation with boot and dog washing would be much appreciated as a contribution to our efforts to minimise the impact of this horrible disease.

New Path to Kildavie

The Board have agreed that creating a new path to improve access to Kildavie is an important priority. A local contractor has provided a very reasonable quotation to carry out the construction and it is hoped that work will commence soon. Once the path is completed in December it will provide much improved access to the settlement. Interpretive signage has also been ordered so that all visitors to Kildavie can appreciate the extent of the settlement and get an insight into the length of time the village has existed. Although it is too costly at the moment to excavate the site, there is still a great deal to be seen and appreciated by visitors. The new path will also fill in a gap to create a circular walk in Langamull. Visitors will be able to leave their cars in the roadside car park, walk along the haul road to the start of the new path, explore Kildavie then follow the original path to the old track and return to the car park. There are plans to build a composting toilet near the top of the new path but this will be expensive and although several applications for funding have been made, to date none have been successful.

Scottish Hydro Community Work

Scottish Hydro has a scheme that encourages their employees to carry out a day of work for a community project each year. They offered to help us clear the hanging, windblown trees in West Ardu. Our chainsaw work parties are qualified to clear trees that have fallen completely but trees that 'hang' onto standing trees are more complicated to deal with. On 1st October a party of four Scottish Hydro workers spent the day in West Ardu clearing the hanging and fallen trees near to the Forest School area and down the dog walking path. This is an area used by a lot of local people and it is not always easy to keep it clear with volunteer labour so NWMCWC Ltd are very grateful to Scottish Hydro for allowing the Company and the community to benefit from their generous scheme.



Our Island Home

The 'Our Island Home' project is a Rural Housing Scotland initiative to investigate ways of making the building of new affordable housing a real possibility on Scottish islands. Designs have been invited from young architects to create new houses that are not only affordable to build but also affordable to run. The winning designs will be built on plots already designated as being for affordable new build. The NWMCWC Ltd plot at West Ardu meets the criteria so well that it has definitely been selected as one of the sites where a proto-type house could be built with the prospect of more to follow. The grants and government funding associated with this project make it a real possibility that NWMCWC Ltd will be able to deliver further on one of our key aspirations – the provision of affordable housing for local people (in addition to the delivery of 9 Forest Crofts). Ian Hepburn has been co-opted onto the panel that is judging the entries. The first phase of the competition will be in late November when all the entries will be considered. The winner of the shortlist of competitors will be announced at the Rural Housing Scotland Annual Conference in Late February 2014.

Christmas Trees

NWMCWC Ltd will be unable to sell Christmas Trees again this year due to the continuing shortage of trees of the right size and quality.

A Wood of Our Own/LEADER

The Community Woodlands Association (CWA) and Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) have been running a series of events to encourage the ownership of woodlands by local communities. NWMCWC Ltd were very pleased to be asked to host one of the whole day seminars on 27th August. The event was held in Dervaig Village Hall starting with beverages and home baked biscuits while everyone registered. The event was attended by around 15 people from off Island plus several from all parts of Mull including the Ross. There were presentations from FCS, CWA, Bute Forest Timber Project, Duchess Woods and Dunollie House Gaelic Interpretation Project. There were also updates from projects in Stronafian Forest and Kilfinian Forest. It was very interesting to hear about other community projects, to compare strategies and share fundraising ideas. After an informal lunch of homemade soup, sandwiches and cake the delegates were taken on a tour of the NWMCWC Ltd Woodlands. They were shown the new road, the Forest School, harvesting operations and the Forest Crofts. From the buzz when the group returned to the Village Hall it seemed that they had found the trip interesting and stimulating. Thanks to everyone who contributed to such a successful event including the volunteers who made and served all the food. We have also recently hosted a short visit by a group of delegates from LEADER Finland. Ian Hepburn gave a presentation about NWMCWC Ltd. Fortunately they had brought an interpreter!

World Wildlife Fund

In our Summer Newsletter it was reported that NWMCWC Ltd was the sole UK project chosen by the UK Forestry Commission as their contribution to the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) website for Social Case Studies. As a result of this our Development Manager Ian Hepburn was invited to speak at an international Delivering Sustainable Woodlands conference in Edinburgh organised by WWF. Other speakers delivered talks on sustainable forestry projects in Africa and South America. The NWMCWC Ltd project was by far the smallest being presented to the conference but the company's commitment to sustainable, ecologically sound forestry created a lot of interest.

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