



North West Mull Community Woodland Co Ltd
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Charity no. SCO37336 Company no. 287343

Summer Newsletter 2012

AGM

NWMCWC Ltd held their AGM on Thursday 1st March in Dervaig Village Hall. It was attended by 40 members and five non or associate members. Colin Morrison (Chairman) gave a brief resume of recent events and activities. This was followed by a more detailed, illustrated presentation by Ian Hepburn (Development Manager). The talk included information about the new road, the start of harvesting, forest crofts, micro-hydro and many other topics. It has been a busy year for the Company with extensive progress for many projects. The next item on the Agenda was the Election of Directors. No new candidates had been proposed so after all statutory retirements and re-elections the Board comprises: Colin Morrison, John Morrison, Ailsa Morgan, Catriona Duncan, Alex Duncan, Iain Thomson, James MacPhail, Andy Mayo, John Addy and Matthew Reade. Ann Evans retired as Company Secretary and was thanked for her hard work over several years. At the first Board meeting after the AGM Colin Morrison was re-elected as Chairman, John Morrison is Treasurer and Belinda Hale is the new Company Secretary. A Finance Report and the Annual Accounts were presented to the AGM by John Morrison. It was explained that harvested timber will pay for the new road and replanting, fencing etc but that the income from the Micro Hydro Project will be needed for regular overheads expenditure. Nick Turnbull thanked the Directors for all their hard work and spontaneous applause broke out. Draft (unratified) Minutes of the 2012 AGM are on the NWMCWC Ltd website.

Dervaig Public Toilets

As previously reported the toilet block is in such poor repair that it is not possible to keep it open. Argyll and Bute Council sent someone to survey what needed to be done and they have decided not to cover the costs themselves. A&B suggested that a local business might be prepared to allow the public to use their facilities. As this is not really feasible in a community the size of Dervaig A&B will be asked to reconsider other options.

Export of Timber

The first boat carrying c700 tons of saw logs and pulp wood sailed from the floating pontoon at Fishnish on Monday 14th May (see below). More details about the harvesting and transport of timber can be found on page 2 of this Newsletter and in our Harvesting Bulletin published in April.



Access

Although many of the objectives outlined in the Access and Amenity Report cannot be considered until after further clear felling has been completed, there are plans for two paths to be worked on this summer. Firstly, the start of the Minister's Path in our Langamull south woodland is very boggy to the point of being virtually impassable. There are also blockages by fallen trees a few hundred yards further on. We hope that a volunteer work party will be able to lay a 'log mat' across the bog to make it easier to cross. Volunteers with chainsaw certificates will also be asked to clear the fallen trees. This will make the part of the path that crosses our land much more accessible to walkers. It will not be possible at this stage to make the path 'all ability' as that would cost a great deal of money, but with some hard work from volunteers it will at least be useable. The other path will be a new route into the Kildavie settlement. Cost restrictions apply here too but we hope, with the help of volunteers, to create a walkable (not all ability) path from the haul road down to Kildavie. This will become the main access point to the site via a much shorter route than before. Once harvesting operations have moved on, the hammerhead at the end of the haul road will provide parking for several cars. To achieve each objective we will need volunteers to form work parties. Once completed the paths will be valuable community assets so the effort will have an attainable and worthwhile goal. No experience is required, just a willingness to work hard as part of a team. If you would like to volunteer to be in a work party for either or both of these paths please contact the Office.

Micro Hydro

Much of the background work for this project has now been completed and we will soon be inviting tenders to design the generator house and other essential works. We will also need to put in a planning application to Argyll and Bute Council, negotiate connection costs, agree a Feed in Tariff and build vehicular access for construction traffic. This track, once the Micro Hydro is built, will form part of the Waterfall Circular Walk that was so popular in the Access Consultation. It is hoped that the tendering and planning stages will be completed by the end of this year with construction (if approved) commencing in early 2013. If all goes well the Micro Hydro Plant could be commissioned and operating by the end of 2013. The income generated is projected to be sufficient to cover all ongoing overhead costs such as rent, wages, insurance etc.

Haul Road Use

It is a matter of concern that the new forest road is being used by a number of unauthorised vehicles. Although parts of the road run across land belonging to NWMCWC Ltd, much of it is built on land owned by third parties. These landowners have only given rights of access to vehicles engaged in harvesting and other forestry related activities. This means that no unauthorised vehicles are permitted to use these parts of the haul road for any reason. Access on foot is allowed under the Right to Roam legislation and as long as safety notices are complied with walkers are very welcome to use the road. Please will all our readers help us by making visitors and residents aware that they are not allowed to take vehicles down any part of the road outwith the woodlands.

100 Club

The second 100 Club Draw of 2012 was made on Monday 23rd April by Frank Dewhurst. The lucky winners were: 1st Prize £35.00 Emma Gardiner, 2nd Prize £15.00 Ian Lowe, 3rd Prize £5.00 Ian Hepburn and 4th Prize £3.50 Bill and Jackie O'Neill. The next Draw will be made near the end of July.

Community Land Scotland AGM

In March NWMWC Ltd hosted the CLS AGM and Annual Conference. More than 70 delegates attended the event which included talks and workshops as well as the usual business of an AGM. The main events of the Conference and Annual Dinner took place at the Western Isles Hotel where many delegates stayed. Others were accommodated elsewhere in Tobermory and Dervaig. Feedback has been very positive. On the last day of the Conference around 25 delegates were taken in minibuses to see the NWMWC Ltd woodlands, new road and harvesting. Thanks to Turus Mara and David Woodhouse for providing transport at short notice so the tour could go ahead. CLS are an influential group who have lobbied the Scottish Government on a wide range of issues including crofting, Crown Estates and accessible funding for community groups.



Delegates from Harris, Eigg, Kyle of Lochalsh and Knoydart arriving in Tobermory by water taxi for the CLS Conference and AGM

Harvesting

Harvesting of mature trees is now well underway. Having first cleared the windblown trees in West Ardhru the contractors are now active in Langamull. Early indications are that the timber being extracted is of very good quality. Whilst harvesting is taking place there will be large piles of stacked logs around the woods waiting to be transported to Fishnish. It is important that walkers in the area look out for and comply with warning notices about the timber stacks and harvesting machinery. In the short term this may restrict access to certain areas but it is essential that every care is taken to ensure the safety of visitors to the woodlands. The temporary floating pier is now in place at Fishnish and harvested timber is being exported from Mull to Kilmallie by boat saving thousands of road miles. Planning permission has been granted for the permanent pier at Fishnish and FCS is in the process of getting tenders for the building work. If all goes well, the new pier should be ready for use by October. More details about harvesting and transport appeared in our Harvesting Bulletin published in April. If anyone missed out on this and would like to see it please contact the Office.

Help for Heroes

Our Administrator, Belinda Hale, will be trekking across Jordan in October to raise funds for H4H. The charity has given tremendous help to Belinda's son Wyn who was very seriously injured in Afghanistan in 2010. If you would like to help Belinda reach her fundraising target of £3000 please go to: www.bmycharity.com/belindatojordanh4h. Cash and cheques are also very welcome.

First Aid Course

Due to changes in Health and Safety regulations, and to maintain our valued UKWAS accreditation, it will soon be necessary for all our regular volunteers to have a First Aid certificate. As many of our work parties involve the use of chainsaws it seems sensible to tailor the course to likely forestry related injuries including chainsaw trauma. As the course is being put on specifically for our volunteers it has been possible to obtain a grant from Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) Community Seedcorn Fund to meet the full costs of the training. The one day course, which is accredited by FCS and HSE, will probably take place in June. There is a possibility that in the future we may offer first aid training in addition to our popular chainsaw courses but candidates will have to meet the cost themselves.

Five Year Review

The Consultants for the Five Year Review are completing the final stages of their report and hope to publish it very soon. Once the Directors have had a chance to study it the report will be available to the public. At this stage we have no idea how big the file will be so cannot say if it will definitely go on our website. However, we will try to have at least one hard copy available to be read in the Office. There will also be a CD version that people can borrow, look at on their home computer and return to the Office. As well as reviewing the first five years of the woodland project, the report will look at strategies and plans for the future sustainability of NWMWC Ltd.



Harvested timber is loaded onto a boat from the floating pontoon at Fishnish. The boat will carry it all the way to the sawmill at Kilmallie

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