



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

Autumn Newsletter 2013

MSP Visit

In June the MSP for Highlands and Islands, Jean Urquhart, visited NWMCWC Ltd to learn more about our Forest Crofts. In the Scottish Parliament Jean is the Deputy Convener of the Cross-Party Group on Crofting so she has a very real interest in what we are doing here on Mull. Ian Hepburn gave a short presentation about the history of NWMCWC Ltd and more detailed information about the Forest Crofts project and how it has been developed. One of our Directors, Iain Thomson, is also the tenant of one of our Forest Crofts and he was able to give Jean a good overview of the opportunities the crofts give to local people. After the discussion in the Office, we set off to Langamull to show Jean the new crofting township. Steve Maker has already carried out a great deal of work on his croft and he had kindly agreed to give us a guided tour. Now that most of Langamull North has been clear felled it was easy for Steve to show us the extent of his croft and how he plans to develop it. There is an area of retained trees near to the road on this croft where much more light now gets in. Steve has cleared the brash and dead wood away and it was exciting to see tiny, self-seeded trees already starting to grow in the fertile ground. This is very promising for the natural regeneration of the rest of the woodlands prior to replanting. The improvements Steve has made to his Forest Croft in such a short time clearly impressed Jean and left her with a very positive view of the benefits of our project to the local community.

Harvesting and Transport

Harvesting in Langamull North is now complete apart from the power line corridor. As the power lines are the ones carrying electricity to Coll and Tiree the switch off for safe harvesting has to be carefully planned to cause the minimum of inconvenience to the Islands. Harvesting has started in Langamull South and the sawmill continues to be very happy with the size and quality of the timber we are sending them as saw logs. Our harvesting partners, UPM Tilhill, have discovered a new market which takes logs previously only thought useable as fuel wood to be processed into pulp suitable for high quality magazine paper. This will allow more than 2000 tonnes of previously low value timber to be sold into the pulp market. Annual maintenance repairs have been carried out on the new road which is wearing very well considering the amount of traffic it is supporting. Construction of the fixed pier at Fishnish continues to progress albeit a little behind schedule. We now hope to start using the new pier sometime in October and in the meantime will continue to export timber via the floating pier.

Producers Market Teas

The Village Hall Committee very kindly offered NWMCWC the opportunity to provide the teas at the August 4th Producers Market. This has always been a good fundraiser for us and this year was no exception. Many of our Members donated a wide variety of delicious home baking which was served to a steady stream of customers. Volunteers cheerfully helped with serving, clearing and washing up. Many thanks to all the cooks and helpers; as a result of your hard work we raised £209.45 for the Charity – a fantastic total!



Jean Urquhart MSP talking to Steve Maker about his Forest Croft

Scavenger Licences

NWMCWC Ltd is considering offering a very limited number of Scavenger Licences in a specified area of the clear felled Langamull Woodlands. Each licence would cost £50.00 for three months and allow a named person to scavenge wood for personal, domestic use in the designated area. No chainsaws, power tools or engine powered lifting equipment will be allowed and the licence holders will be required to agree to work in a safe and prudent way and to cause no pollution or damage in the scavenging area or surrounding woodlands. If you would be interested in applying for a Scavenger Licence please contact the Office for further details.

Treasurer

At the 2013 AGM in March John Morrison announced that he would be standing down as Treasurer at the next Board Meeting. Andy Mayo was elected by the Board as the new Treasurer and he and John worked in tandem for a couple of months to ensure a smooth transition. John had been Treasurer since the first days of the community purchase of the woodlands and is owed a huge debt of gratitude for his tireless work on behalf of NWMCWC Ltd. Andy has significant commercial experience and has already proved to be an enthusiastic and hard working Director. We believe John has passed the stewardship of the Company finances into a safe pair of hands.

NFLS Visit

A party of Directors from the National Forest Land Scheme (NFLS) paid a visit to NWMCWC Ltd in May. The Langamull and West Ardu Woodlands were the first to be purchased under the scheme and the visitors were very interested to see how much progress has been made. After light refreshments and a brief overview from Ian Hepburn in the Office, the group were taken on a tour of the woodlands. First stop was the Forest Schools area to show the shelter building and the new school orchard. The visitors were pleased with our commitment to young people and the idea of instilling a feeling of ownership of the woodlands in them. The group were very impressed with the new road and the work that had gone in to making it happen, particularly as it crosses land outwith the ownership of NWMCWC Ltd. Harvesting in Langamull meant the visitors could not be taken into that vicinity, but they were able to get a good overview of the area from the top section of the haul road. The Directors of the NFLS seemed very pleased with the way NWMCWC Ltd has managed the community woodlands since they were purchased and with the plans for the future.

Firewood

As mentioned in the last Newsletter we are hoping to increase our firewood supply business in the local area. All the preparation and delivery of firewood is carried out by our hardworking band of volunteers – many thanks to them. We are able to supply 2 year old timber for use as firewood in the following ways:

Poles	£31.50 per cu m
Rounds	£42.00 per cu m
Cut and Split	£52.50 per cu m
Bagged	£ 3.15 per bag

The above prices include delivery in the local area and VAT at 5%. For delivery to Tobermory and other destinations outwith the NW Mull area a minimum order of 2 cu m is required to help cover fuel costs. NB although our firewood is 2 years old it has been seasoned outside so may be wet externally if there has been a lot of rain but our moisture meter indicates that it is normally well below 30% moisture content which is the recognised level for woodfuel. Our prices are by volume rather than by weight so the size of the load we deliver will not be affected by this. If you would like to order firewood please contact the Office who will pass your request on to the volunteers.

Micro Hydro

This project continues to be delayed by negotiations with SEPA which is disappointing in view of the fairly minor nature of their queries. The delays mean the planning application to Argyll and Bute Council has also been put on hold. The Board are confident that all the outstanding matters can be resolved and hope to be able to proceed with their plans for the Micro Hydro development in the near future.

Archaeology Management

The Directors of NWMCWC Ltd have been trying to streamline and simplify the management of the archaeological site at Kildavie. A subcommittee has been set up and they have issued the following statement to clarify the current position:

"At a meeting of the volunteers from the archaeology group on 10/07/2013 it was agreed that the focus in the next few years should be on actions that are needed to meet the requirements of Adopt a Monument and the NWMCWC regarding Kildavie and other sites. These include:

- Signage and interpretation boards
- Developing a website and other means of disseminating information
- Furthering the involvement of local schools
- Creating access paths
- Maintenance of sites and paths
- Facilities for visitors
- Ensuring structures, finds and information are appropriately listed, registered and stored

Given the limited resources of the group, it was also agreed that it would not be possible to consider any further exploration of Kildavie in the near future."

As you will gather from the above statement any actions taken concerning Kildavie will be carried out by the subcommittee on behalf of NWMCWC Ltd and all correspondence will be handled by them via our Office.

Forest Crofts

There has been tremendous interest in the vacant Forest Croft that was advertised in our previous Newsletter and all the applications are being considered by the Croft Allocation Panel. The registration of the tenants for the other five Forest Crofts has been slowed down by an administrative error made outwith our organisation when the crofts were originally registered. They are in the process of sorting this out and it is hoped that the tenant registration process will start to move forward again very soon. The three crofters already in possession of their Forest Crofts have been very busy making improvements, clearing brash, building fences, securing a water supply and introducing livestock. It is very rewarding to see the beginning of a thriving little community at Langamull creating opportunities for local people.

100 Club

The third 100 Club Draw of 2013 was made by Colin Morrison. The lucky winners are: 1st Prize – Barbara Hartley, 2nd Prize – Arthur Brown, 3rd Prize – Neil Hutton and 4th Prize – Tracy Mayo. Congratulations to all our lucky winners. The final Draw of 2013 will be made at the end of October.

New Arrival

Many congratulations to our Chairman Colin Morrison and his partner Julie Thomson on the safe arrival of their second child Laurie James who was born on 28th July weighing 7lb 15oz, a little brother for Murdo.

North West Mull Community Woodland Co Ltd, Penmore Mill, Dervaig, Isle of Mull, PA75QS www.nwmullwoodland.co.uk

