



Community Woodlands Association

2020 Conference Report

2 & 3 October 2020
By Zoom



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Summary

The 21st annual CWA Conference took place via Zoom on 2 and 3 October 2020. Our conference plans, as with many other organisations, had been upended by the Covid-19 pandemic: when it became clear that it wouldn't be possible to hold a normal face-to-face event, we decide to move online, with some amendments to our usual conference format. One great advantage was the ability to record sessions, which are available on the CWA YouTube channel via the links in the text below.

The conference attracted 112 bookings from across the UK, representing 44 community groups and 15 other organisations plus some individual members and academic researchers. The conference included 5 sessions (plus the CWA AGM):

- Three workshops, focussing on Biodiversity, Fundraising, and Learning from Lockdown, each featuring four expert presenters and a facilitated discussion / Q&A session;
- A “breakout” session featuring four parallel themed groups: Woodland Crofts, Land Rights and Responsibilities, Small Woodland Certification, Saving Scotland's Rainforest;
- A showing of our Multi-trails films: Sustainable Visitor Management, Trails for All, Trails and the Rural Economy, with a Panel Q&A session.

Whilst the tech did not always run smoothly, we felt that overall the event was a great success and post-event feedback suggests that delegates agreed. Whether or not we will be able to meet in person next year is still unclear, however, we will definitely be holding more events online in the future.

Conference programme

Friday 2 October

- 2.00 Welcome by conference chair
- 2.10 Workshop 1: Managing community woods for biodiversity
- 3.10 Comfort break
- 3.15 Workshop 2: Fundraising
- 4.10 CWA AGM
- 4.40 Close for the day

Saturday 3 October

- 10.00 Welcome back by conference chair
- 10.05 Multi-trails films followed by live Q&A with presenters
- 11.05 Comfort break
- 11.15 Break-out sessions
- 11.40 Workshop 3: Learning from lockdown
- 12.35 Conference round-up
- 12.40 Close

Friday 2 October: welcome and introduction: Ian Ross, CWA Chair

Ian welcomed delegates to the conference: we've moved online this year: we'll all miss the face-to-face interactions but there may be advantages for accessibility. We look forward to hearing your feedback. Jon and Jo have assembled a great line-up of speakers covering a wide range of topics.

The Covid pandemic has underlined the importance of local control and community ownership, and CWA has remained fully operational during the previous difficult 6 months and we have in fact increased our capacity recently with new staff – Piers and Amanda – joining the team.

Workshop I: Managing Community Woodlands for Biodiversity

Presenters:

Gordon Gray Stephens (Native Woods Coop)

Eleanor Harris (Confor)



Gemma Jennings (Urban Roots)

Emma Sheehy (Scottish Wildlife Trust)

Host: Anna Lawrence

In recent years there's been a great deal of attention on the role of woodlands in tackling the climate emergency, with very significant funding directed to creating new woods, but we are also facing a biodiversity emergency, demanding better stewardship of existing habitats. Positive management practices in all types of woodland can enhance the biodiversity value of community woodlands and provide opportunities for greater public awareness and understanding of the ecological crisis.

Our presenters provided a great range of advice and contacts for managing for biodiversity: Gordon gave some basic principles for communities managing native woodlands; Eleanor highlighted the potential for well-managed conifer plantations to support a wide range of biodiversity; Gemma outlined Urban Roots' work managing urban woodland, wetland and meadows; whilst Emma discussed woodland management for red squirrels.

<p>What have you got?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be aware of the nature of your woodland<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check the history, as Ancient Woodlands and Ancient Woodland Sites tend to have higher biodiversity (https://maps.nls.uk is great for historic maps)• Native Woodland Survey (NWSS) also contains useful, but ageing information• Surveys of habitats and species and other features• Great opportunity to bring in local experts, and to engage members, schools etc in citizen science.• Find out what they value 	<p>What do you want?</p> <p>Some general principles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Need to balance biodiversity with your social and economic aims• Generally best to aim for habitat management over species management.• Intervene little and often 
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Common themes were the importance of understanding what you have in your wood, the value of introducing and maintaining structural (as well as species) diversity and the potential for biodiversity work - whether practical management or surveys – to provide opportunities to get people from different walks of life involved in the woodland.

There was active discussion after the presentations and on the chat, covering topics including the practicalities of biodiversity monitoring, deer, the division between native and non-native woodlands and whether climate change means we need to change our thinking on their relative values.

This workshop was recorded, the recording is available at <https://youtu.be/YIXnuNGOzcM>

Links and comments from the chat

Biodiversity recording

Local record centres: <https://nbn.org.uk/the-national-biodiversity-network/archive-information/local-record-centres>

NBN (National Biodiversity Network) Atlas: <https://scotland.nbnatlas.org/>

iRecord: <https://www.brc.ac.uk/irecord/enter-casual-record> to submit records to the NBN

Biodiversity and forestry

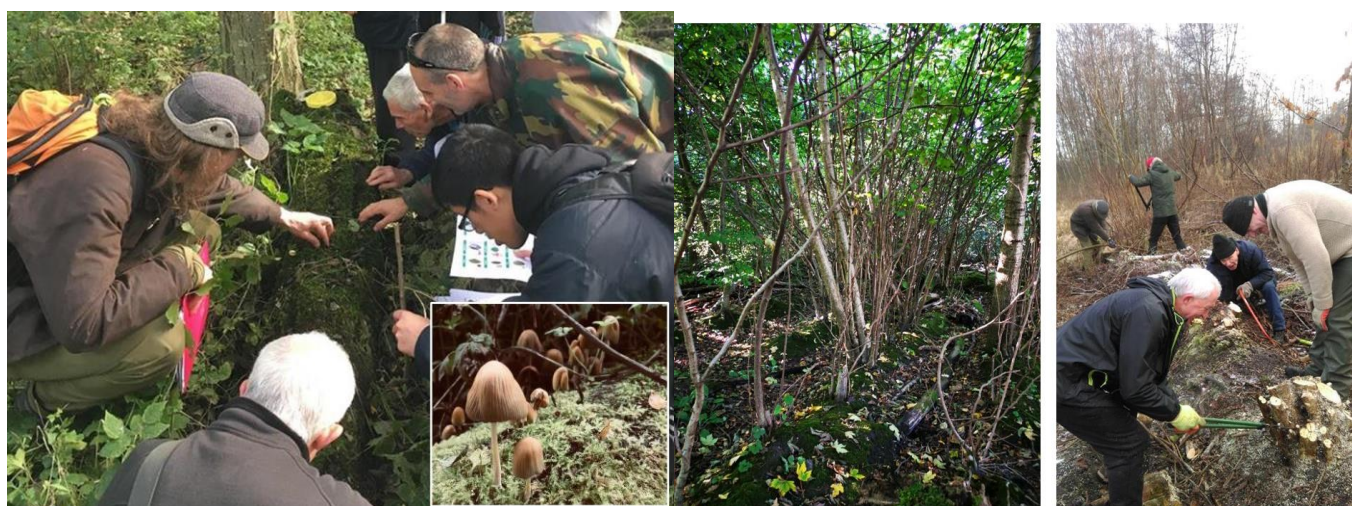
Confor report on Biodiversity, Forestry and Wood: <http://www.confor.org.uk/news/latest-news/modern-forests-can-work-for-carbon-and-nature/>

Outdoor learning resources

Learning Through Landscapes: <https://www.ltl.org.uk/>

Tree Tools for Schools: http://www.treetoolsforschools.org.uk/activitymenu/?cat=plant_ticksheets

FSC (Field Studies Council) publications: <https://www.field-studies-council.org/product-category/publications/>



Red squirrels

WWW.SCOTTISHSQUIRRELS.ORG

<https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/research/controlling-grey-squirrels-forests-and-woodlands-uk>

<https://www.nature.scot/scottish-strategy-red-squirrel-conservation-june-2015>

<https://www.ruralpayments.org/publicsite/futures/topics/all-schemes/forestry-grant-scheme/sustainable-management-of-forests/grey-squirrel-control>

<https://forestry.gov.scot/images/corporate/pdf/Guidancenote33Redsquirrel.pdf>

<https://forestry.gov.scot/publications/22-managing-forests-as-red-squirrel-strongholds>

Woodland grazing

<https://forestry.gov.scot/woodland-grazing-toolbox>

Native Woodland Survey of Scotland map

<https://scottishforestry.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=0d6125cfe892439ab0e5d0b74d9acc18>

Workshop 2: Fundraising

Presenters:

Ann Clark (Aulnaskiach Dell SCIO)
Jon Haydon (Moffat Community Woodlands)
Jane Rosegrant (Corra Foundation)
Iwan Thomas (The Vat Run)

Host: Piers Voysey

A perennial issue for many community woodland groups is how to raise funds to deliver small projects and cover basic costs such as accounts and insurance. Our workshop speakers presented their experiences of a wide range of routes to fundraise for community woodlands, from grants and sales to social events and online platforms.

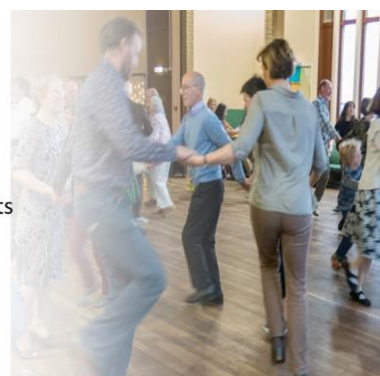


Garden Party

First Event, Family & Friends, Sponsorship, Raffle, Auction

Ceilidh

- A Celebration!
- Family, friends, contacts
- Raffle, wood products
- Adapt and survive



Ann related Aulnaskiach Dell's use of events such as a garden party and a ceilidh to raise funds and connect with the community; Jon reported on Moffat Community Woodlands' experience of using easyfundraising; Jane gave an overview of the current grant funding environment for smaller projects; and Iwan explained how the Vat Run has engaged with corporate, community service and other volunteers.

A common theme was that there is no single route to sustainable funding and that a successful fundraising strategy should incorporate a range of routes. Discussions and chat covered the groups' adaptations to Covid, experience of the Coop Community Fund, access to windfarm distributor funds, tool-sharing with other groups and using crowdfunder for specific projects.

The session was recorded and is available at <https://youtu.be/dpmhpWTZGOY>

Funding links

Easyfundraising <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/community-woodlands>

SCVO <https://scvo.org.uk/support/coronavirus/funding/>

Scottish Government's Community & Third Sector Recovery Programme:

<https://scvo.org.uk/support/coronavirus/funding/scottish-government/community-recovery>

Corra Foundation #ShiftThePower Coronavirus Response Fund:

<https://scvo.org.uk/support/coronavirus/funding/independent/a0R3z00000JdwWWEAZ/shiftthepower-coronavirus-response-fund>

Foundation Scotland—Community Response, Recovery & Resilience Fund:

<https://scvo.org.uk/support/coronavirus/funding/independent/a0R3z00000JIPZKEA5/community-response-recovery-resilience-fund>

Foyle Foundation—Small Grants Scheme:

<https://scvo.org.uk/support/coronavirus/funding/independent/a0Rb0000000Ng6LEAS/foyle-foundation-small-grants-scheme>

Saturday 3rd October

Ian Ross welcomed delegates to Day Two of the conference.

Session 1: Multi-trails films

In the first session we showed three short films produced through the [Multi-trails project](#), a transnational LEADER cooperation project between the Community Woodlands Association in the Highland and Cairngorms LAG areas in Scotland and the [Sjö, Skog & Fjäll LAG](#) in Sweden.

The objective of the project is to share innovative techniques and best practice for the construction, promotion and management of mixed-use trails. The project started in April 2019 and will conclude in November 2020. The three films focus on aspects of trail management and use, and were followed by a Q&A session with four of the site managers interviewed in the films.

The three films are available on the CWA YouTube channel:

[Sustainable Visitor Management](#)

[Trails for All](#)

[Trails and the Rural Economy](#)

Panel:

Marco Baglioni (Abriachan Forest Trust)

Adrian Clark (Evanton Wood Community Company)

Julia Duncan (Atholl Estates)

Paul Hibberd (Forestry and Land Scotland)

Host: Jon Hollingdale

Panelist discussed the impact of Covid and what might change in the future, their volunteer “catchment”, the potential environmental impacts of increasing visitor numbers in their woods, and the pros and cons of QR codes.

The panel session was recorded and is available at <https://youtu.be/Zc-xdwo8FmU>

Session 2: Break-out groups

Woodland Crofts (Jamie MacIntyre, Woodland Crofts Partnership)

Woodland crofts are an opportunity for individuals and communities to build lives and livelihoods based on a woodland resource. They are governed by a combination of crofting legislation and forest regulation, linking housing, local rural livelihoods and woodland management.

There is considerable flexibility for individual woodland crofters to manage their crofts to meet their own needs and aspirations, however, their approach to management is expected to deliver increased social, economic and environmental benefits. You can find more information [here](#).

The session was recorded and is available at https://youtu.be/eNWt6S_Gzdc

Small Woodland Certification (Owen Davies, Forest Stewardship Council)

The Forest Stewardship Council is an international, non-governmental organisation which runs a global forest certification system. Having recognised that they needed to do more to enable small

woodland owners and communities to access the benefits of FSC certification, they have embarked on a [project](#) to develop and test a standard tailored specifically to small woodlands in the UK.

The project group's approach has been two-pronged, developing a significantly shortened standard for low intensity management woods, which will hopefully be more user friendly for non-specialists. You can download the draft standard, with a brief introductory preamble, [here](#). Meanwhile the group continues to work on a separate, more radical standard for even smaller woods. A rough draft has already been produced, based on some of the key themes in the existing draft, which will be put out for public consultation soon.

The session was recorded and is available at https://youtu.be/V4ubyx_AKm0

Land Rights and Responsibilities Protocols (Emma Cooper, Scottish Land Commission)

The Scottish Land Commission is promoting and supporting change and good practice in the way land is owned and used in both urban and rural Scotland and has recently published a series of protocols around the Scottish Government's [Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement](#).

These set out practical advice on how landowners, land managers and communities can work together to make better – and fairer – decisions about land use; the protocols are intended to be used by everyone to improve the transparency, accountability and governance of our land. You can read the protocols [here](#).

The session was recorded and is available at <https://youtu.be/7kRyeVR9EDI>

Saving Scotland's Rainforest (Julie Stoneman, Alliance for Scotland's Rainforest)

Scotland's rainforest (also known as Atlantic woodland and Celtic rainforest) is made up of the semi-natural woodlands found on our west coast where high levels of rainfall and relatively mild, year-round temperatures provide just the right conditions for some of the world's rarest bryophytes and lichens. This kind of rainforest is very special and we have some of the best examples in Europe.

But Scotland's rainforest is in trouble: as little as 30,000 hectares remain, mostly small isolated woodlands, almost all show little or no regeneration, half the area is being choked with *Rhododendron ponticum* and a fifth has been planted up with exotic conifer plantations. The Alliance for Scotland's Rainforest, a voluntary partnership of twenty organisations, is working collaboratively to achieve their shared vision for the rainforest to thrive once again. You can find more information [here](#).

We were unable to record this session, however, Julie's presentation is available at https://youtu.be/lHi7-b3-_cs

Workshop 3: Learning from lockdown

Presenters:

Alison MacLennan (Broadford and Strath Community Company)

Shona Scatchard (Dunnet Forestry Trust)

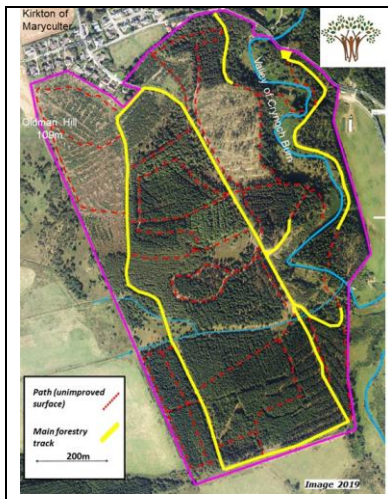
Ed Thorogood (Maryculter Woodlands Trust)

Stuart Whittaker (Cassiltoun Housing Association)

Host: Rob Borruso

The coronavirus pandemic has affected community woodlands in a wide range of ways, and stimulated diverse adaptations and initiatives. Presenters reflect on how their groups coped, what they've learned and what the long term impacts might be.

Alison described Broadford and Strath Community Company’s food share, community fridge and meal share projects; Shona explained how Dunnet Forestry Trust had developed and sought approval for protocols to allow them to restart log sales and volunteer working the forest; Ed discussed some of the challenges posed by the massive increase in footfall experienced at Maryculter during lockdown; and Stuart related how activities at Castlemilk Park have moved online.

 <p>MARYCULTER WOODLANDS TRUST Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation: SC044224</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 67 Ha • Acquired 2016 • 2km from Aberdeen suburbs • Several organisations rely on the wood • Limited parking (at bell mouth entrance) • Limited income (no stands in age range 30-50yrs) • All volunteers 	<p>MARYCULTER WOODLANDS TRUST Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation: SC044224</p> <p>More Visitors Arriving By Car</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Footfall >1,000 visits per week (peak x3 compared to 2019) • Not deterred by limited parking! <p>More Violations of SOAC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theft (orchids, primula, saplings, mushrooms, trailcam memory card) • Open fires (near to dry bracken or planted trees) • Unburied human waste (campers) • Vandalism (handrail on bridge, stone seat) • Litter/ flytipping <p>Woodland Management During Lockdown:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly workparties suspended • Projects deferred • Reduced fund-raising activity
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As with previous workshops there was active discussion on the chat; post-presentation questions covered what groups might have done differently with hindsight, whether community woodlands are more important than ever, key learning points, and whether their Covid-adaption projects point the way forward for groups.

<p>Events and Activities in Lockdown</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Castlemilk Explorers SWT Wildlife Club • Parents would collect materials during the week and then once a month meet online doing lots of different activities • Fun and activity based i.e. making apple bird feeders, sand print traps. • Want to keep the children engaged until safe to go back out into the park as a group in the near future.  	<p>Events and Activities in Lockdown</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual BatWalk using ZOOM, tablet and a dongle and a bat detector outside. • Worked extremely well. • Looking to do other walks and training in the near future like this live. • We knew we could reach more people however not everyone could be reached due to digital isolation – as a team developed a solution to this 
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The session was recorded and is available at <https://youtu.be/QCamB7YW6nk>

Conference round-up: Jon Hollingdale

Jon thanked the presenters from the workshops and breakout groups who had all done an excellent job and collectively showcased the capacity and innovation within the community woodland movement; the conference delegates, the CWA Directors and staff who had hosted sessions and Jo Rodgers, who managed the conference.

To sign up for the CWA monthly e-bulletin <https://communitywoods.us/0.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=149ed25320de536c745d3db55&id=a0bf90bb23>

To join the CWA e-group where members can ask questions, and share ideas and experiences: <https://groups.google.com/g/cwamembers/about>

Appendix I Event Feedback

Feedback received through Zoom chat

Thank you everybody for the presentations

Thank you for the presentations - very useful. Cheers

Many thanks to you all!

Thanks to everyone

Thanks to everyone. Very useful & interesting afternoon.

Thanks to all at CWA for all their support over the past year, always find Jon and all at CWA very helpful

Good day & thanks to Jon and Jo for organising

Thank you all...

Thanks to all at CWA, CWA membership fee is a bargain

Good day thanks

Thanks everyone and thanks CWA for your support!

Thanks to Ian, Jo, Jon and all speakers

Well run, efficient and informative. Thanks

Brilliant videos!

Utterly inspirational and insightful. So many great ideas. The breadth of creativity is what I have picked up on.

Be ambitious and aim high.

This may be the most inspirational conference I've ever attended. Amazing work, everyone!

Thank you for a great morning session. Whole conference has been impressive and inspirational.

Cheers all, good conference.

Thank you everyone and well done! Learned a lot and keen to visit some woods!

Thanks for a great conference

Thanks, inspiring conference

Thanks for the meeting...

Enjoyed the conference and lots of food for thought!

Great conference, thank you to you all

Thanks everyone, fantastic meeting :)

Great effort! I guess the problem is that rural broadband isn't brilliant. Although CW groups are! Well done

Jon and Jo - a great conference Thank you

Thanks to all involved - really inspiring and great speakers / presentations :)

Thanks to everybody for making this a success. I enjoyed participating!

It did go well, thanks - but too short! :) We could have talked for much longer. Amazing conference, though,

I'm so impressed with your range of speakers.

Thanks to everyone, really enjoyable. Thank goodness the CWA exists

40 delegates completed the online Survey Monkey, not all answered all questions or scored all sessions

Conference Organisation

	V.Good	Good	Fair	Poor	V.Poor
Use of online conference platform	23	14	3		
Organisation of conference sessions	29	10	1		
Information/communication from	31	8			

Workshops: content

	V.Good	Good	Fair	Poor	V.Poor
Managing community woods for	17	14			
Fundraising	12	11	4		
Learning from lockdown	13	9	1		
Multi-trails films and Q&A	13	12	2		

Workshops: relevance

	V.Good	Good	Fair	Poor	V.Poor
Managing community woods for	23	7	2		
Fundraising	17	7	3		
Learning from lockdown	13	6	2		
Multi-trails films and Q&A	11	6	6		

Breakout groups: content

	V.Good	Good	Fair	Poor	V.Poor
Woodland crofts	5	4			
Saving Scotland's Rainforest	4	3			
Land Rights & Responsibilities Protocols	4	3			
Small Woodlands Certification	2	2			

Breakout groups: relevance

	V.Good	Good	Fair	Poor	V.Poor
Woodland crofts	5	6			
Saving Scotland's Rainforest	5	2	1		
Land Rights & Responsibilities Protocols	6	2	1		
Small Woodlands Certification	4		1		

What were the main reasons you attended the CWA conference?

- *To be inspired by other groups and individuals. To learn. To be part of the CWA community.*
- *Have attended in the past and always came away inspired*
- *I always try and attend: to get a feel for the broad range of activities, groups and individuals working away in community woodlands.*
- *To see how the CWA functions at conference.*
- *Learning from others, seeing an online AGM was also v useful*
- *To get some sense of work going on in Community Forests elsewhere in Scotland, the way planting has been planned, funding secured and the kind of trails and activities on offer - also the relationship between the woodlands and other community initiatives.*
- *I work in community woodlands and great to catch up with others and learn from their experiences*
- *I am part of a community group that is in the process of taking over community ownership of a 14.3 ha woodland so we are looking for advice on pretty much everything!*
- *I'm on the board of directors*
- *I'm new to working in community woodlands, I hoped the conference would give me some back ground to challenges and opportunities as well as inspiration - it very much did that. thank you*
- *Inspiration, information, new ideas and general interest. Contact With / insight into other community woodlands.*
- *To gather knowledge and tap in to the experience of other community woodland groups so that we can transfer some of that for the benefit of Glengarry Community Woodlands.*
- *To learn - as I have done every year since 2005, my first conference.*
- *To learn from the other woodlands how they were managing with Covid restrictions and to learn about management for biodiversity.*
- *To gain new information, insights and inspiration*
- *We manage a private woodland and are looking to start a community woodland.*
- *Long term member keen to support and learn*
- *I was giving a talk in one of the breakout sessions (which I didn't rate!!)*
- *Involvement in UCT potential buyout of Lael Forest and Director of Badluarach and Durnamuck Community Woodland*

- *Out of direct interest in specific topics and solidarity (since we've only ever attended one before in person)*
- *My reason to attend was to better understand what are the main interests, concerns and challenges underlying community forestry projects in Scotland.*
- *The organisation I am a member of is a CWA member and I was asked to do a presentation.*
- *To get a current overview of the whole picture of Community Woodland ownership having lost touch because of Covid.*
- *Starting my own community woodland*
- *To learn of any new developments*
- *Information sharing and gathering*
- *Community woodland project that may be starting in our area*
- *Learn from existing community woodlands*
- *Personal interest*
- *To learn more about the issues community woodlands are facing*
- *To see what's happening nationally To see what other community woodlands are doing Network with other people*
- *Membership and participation to projects/activities*
- *Member of CWA*
- *Information*
- *To network and to support CWA*
- *Learning and networking*
- *I've become involved in a local community woodland group - I was looking for ideas and suggestions of what's worked at other sites.*

Did the event deliver your expectations?

Yes	34
No	0
Partly	6

Comments:

- *Perhaps the annual conference's greatest strength: face-to-face networking - was sorely missing for me. Typically this is the strongest learning and 'bonding' element of the physical conference. Obviously it was impossible to recreate this virtually this year (software limitation in the main). The site visits are always valuable too and sorely missed.*
- *Might need to tech train speakers a bit, two sessions had sound issues.*
- *I would have liked a bit more time for questions and answers from the floor after each session but understand that getting to grips with the zoom format is much more difficult than a live audience. I thought the speakers did a brilliant job.*
- *The technique of using the Zoom chat to ask questions was unsatisfactory because questions were either un answered or lost. It would have been good if speakers could have followed up in some way or there was a way for participants could follow up, especially since the shortness of the presentations prevented fuller discussions of some very interesting speaker contributions. A good point was of course that participants could save and download the chat sessions.*
- *The speakers had to rush through their talks. The 3 films were a bit too repetitive. The question times were not really related to the members attending on Zoom but to the speakers to comment to the group leader.*
- *It was good, but could have been better. The topics this year were not those I am personally most interested in.*
- *The IT issues were unfortunate*

What benefits did you gain from attending the event?

- *To see what is possible. To be impressed by the range of creativity in CW projects. Morale boosting.*
- *Sharing good practice, motivation to push projects further*
- *I always like to hear how CWA projects are progressing as well as get a brief synopsis of (lots of) individual groups' progress, achievements and learnings.*
- *Useful to hear about ways of recruiting volunteers. Not mentioned in the questions above. Probably the most interesting section of the conference.*
- *Seeing how others manage their community woods, better understanding of what help is available, presentations by technical experts*
- *Unable to attend the whole conference but learned a lot from the events I attended particularly about trail options, volunteering, land rights and community alliances but also about the variety of projects - and the people who run them - also felt cheered and encouraged - felt that was part of the purpose - interviews with those who worked in woodland and poetry etc really helped that.*
- *Shared information*
- *Seeing everyone's faces. Hearing what others' are up to. Getting advice and links which we can follow up in our own time.*
- *Kept abreast of what members have been doing since last conference, which has been even more important this year than usual.*
- *knowledge, inspiration and introduction to the community - knowing we're not alone as a woodland*
- *Ideas and inspiration to take a fresh look at our own community woodland. Concerned that the Confor talk on biodiversity gave mis-information and made many inaccurate claims on the biodiversity of commercial mono cultures. This talk felt out of place and imbalanced at this event.*
- *Genuine interest and motivation for continuing to realise the benefits possible from a community woodland. I gained an appreciation of the breadth and depth of expertise that is accessible within all involved around CWA.*
- *Updates - the latest thinking on everything to do with comm woods, other woodland people sharing their good practice, how to keep going through the pandemic.*
- *Feeling of solidarity with others like me who love woods. the speakers were inspirational in their resilience and forward thinking in difficult times.*
- *Very interesting and inspiring. Very informative and enjoyable too.*
- *Contacts and knowledge of many aspects to woodland management*
- *Part of the CWA family; networking; learn new things*
- *As someone outside of the Association, but co-ordinates an Alliance which CWA is part of, it was really interesting to learn more about what CWA does and who is part of it*
- *Information and enthusiasm. Sometimes the process is so slow it can be jading but to hear of positive experiences re-boots.*
- *interesting background and perspective on specific issues*
- *For me it was very beneficial to understand how communities address some of the main challenges, share experience and knowledge, and create innovative ways to support each other and improve resilience during difficult times.*
- *Ideas from other organisations were not only interesting but useful.*
- *+ Better insight into a number of important topics - A better idea of the capabilities and deficiencies of Zoom*
- *Seeing examples across Scotland*
- *Rainforest information most useful*
- *just seeing what other groups have achieved, and funding advice*
- *Networking and new knowledge*
- *I learned about how I can help community woodlands*
- *Some good case studies, insights into small scale fundraising*
- *Sharing common experiences, known others activities*

- Information and support
- Information
- A little more knowledge & understanding.
- CPD, knowledge transfer
- Inspiration.

Would you recommend others to take part in such an event?

Yes	40
No	0

Comments:

- *The breadth of reference which can be gained in developing one's own project. The value of knowing so many other people are involved and achieving wonders in the sector. Tapping into experiences and knowledge of very skilled and enthusiastic people. To hear of other experiences without attending a conference.*
- *Very useful & no other forum like it.*
- *Very useful to us as grounding introduction to setting up a community woodland, encouraging us with a sense of being part of a larger initiative, and offering connections to different areas of interest that can then be followed up; for example biodiverse planting and trail planning*
- *Nicely organised and timed well. Easy to attend and follow*
- *It's a great way of finding out what others are doing and can give you good ideas for your own group. It also is a good way of getting access to people in relevant organisations and agencies.*
- *Sharing information and ideas is helpful to bring home to one's own woodland. Learning more about community woodlands in other areas and the benefits they provide for their communities is heart-warming and is part of the community woodland experience.*
- *The CWA conference was hugely informative, thought provoking and inspirational. I really enjoyed the positive nature of all the contributors and the ways that they overcame the technical challenges of a live online presentation was entertaining and endearing.*
- *They are a great source of information and ideas, good practice, inspiration.*
- *Because there is a lot to learn from others*
- *I think it's a great idea for anyone involved in community woodlands to come to this*
- *It is encouraging to hear what can be done and successful initiatives.*
- *It is much cheaper than travelling long distances and safer, especially during a Covid 2nd Wave. It also demonstrates how vital CWA is as a centre for the exchange of ideas and experience. My only question is why is there not (say) a monthly programme of meetings/seminars/working parties on specific topics ?? CWA has clearly demonstrated the technical ability and I expect that it would get a good response.*
- *Useful opportunity to learn, given current restrictions*
- *Yes, as you can learn from others experiences - but Zoom not as good as a live conference.*
- *Networking & knowledge*
- *It's important to know there are many other community woodland groups out there*
- *Knowing others problems and solutions makes our charity more efficient*
- *Provides support and encouragement*
- *Not as good as a real CWA conference, but the best available this year!*
- *If you are involved with community woodlands, it is essential.*
- *Helpful to share ideas and find out what's going on around the country.*

What other training / seminar opportunities you would like CWA to organise?

- Covid-compatible community consultation methodologies. Planning and managing a CATS journey for efficient use and co-ordination of volunteer time.
- Smaller seminars on zoom throughout the year would be great.
- More on volunteering and fundraising.
- I'd like to hear how others have navigated planning applications & how they have met any planning fees. I am staggered that community woodland groups have no permitted dev rights for charitable activities such as social benefit & biodiversity. Perhaps sharing some case studies would determine how, or if, legislation should be improved
- The selection of areas felt appropriate and good but they could be expanded in detail and allow more dialogue - perhaps for example into day seminar on trails, biodiversity etc
- Community engagement and communications
- Carbon capture and carbon trading - an understanding of the system, the benefits and pit falls.
- More workshops like the break-out sessions
- I think CWA has it all covered already.
- More on biodiversity management.
- process to doing a community woodland project from purchasing to ideas for use
- Don't know at present.
- urban woodlands; community orchards addressing common constraints (tenure, vandalism, drought etc)
- I think I have answered this in my response to 7) above. CWA could do much more to facilitate a whole Scotland approach to the complex issues of awareness, knowledge and experience and expertise and change through Community ownership of woodlands.
- Coppicing management designing a woodland for community use
- Real funding opportunities explained by the funders themselves...
- Working with partners (government; NGO; private sector, etc.) . This would be aimed at community groups.
- Something on governance - what the board's role is and how to be an effective board member without being too involved with operations
- Community capacity
- An in-depth session on woodland / forest design planning.

Should CWA consider virtual conferences in future years?

Yes	37
No	2

Comments:

- It is essential for sound quality and volume to be adequate and consistent throughout a presentation. Signal strength can be a factor, but so are directional microphone issues, proximity to microphone and speed and clarity of speech. One or two presentations were a little challenging to make out for these reasons. As we all get used to on-line meetings, training and conferences, it has to be good for sustainability, by cutting down travel and accommodation costs etc. However, something will be lacking if there are no in person gatherings.
- Yes, if needed by circumstance. Zoom worked really well for session presentations - possibly better than in a conference room. But the conference missed out on the interactions and meeting people in person - always a great part of the conference.
- Only hold a virtual conference if impractical or illegal to hold a real, physical one. The benefits of making new contacts, refreshing old ones and the spontaneous learning and networking opportunities cannot yet be recreated online with software available. Suspect many potential attendees also put off by connection limitations (speed or access to PC/tablet for conference duration) or simply expecting a less immersive and inclusive melting pot experience.
- Saves travel and awkward arguments etc.

- Virtual conference worked way better than i expected. Only real downside was the inability to have individual chats between sessions. Longer comfort breaks would have been better - plan for 15 mins, then would still get a reasonable break even if the earlier session was overrunning by a few mins.
- Allows attendees to dip in and out not only according to interest but also availability - particularly appropriate as conference straddled a work day as well as weekend. Was greener, given transport costs to a general destination.
- It's a good way to be a part of it but missed being able to network and visit others, great alternative given the situation.
- Possibly, but I really miss the ability to see people in person and chat informally in and around the sessions.
- Ideally it's better to have face-to-face sessions because it's often in the breaks between items when a lot of ideas are exchanged and you can catch up with friends. But it's a lot easier to attend if you don't have to travel and also a lot less expensive for everyone, including the environment. There were one or two technical hitches but even in a regular conference these glitches happen.
- A mix would be great, virtual allows many more to attend given so many people are volunteers taking time out their day jobs.
- It was unfortunate not to meet up with people face to face, a few frustrations with the technology but great saving in time, energy and carbon footprint not to be travelling.
- I really liked having the opportunity to be able to attend as I would not usually be able to commit the time / expense of travelling to physically attend one.
- It was great, but there was zero opportunity to NETWORK. Or socialise. If we need to do virtual conferences next year again, can we PLEASE set up a session of about an hour, with break out rooms, with up to 6 people in them, changing every 10 minutes, just so that people can chat about what their woods are doing? I'm thinking of the conference where Diane Campbell set up the 'speed dating' tables. it might have been Strontian, but maybe not. I was always sorry that 'experiment' was never repeated, I thought it worked so well. By the time it came to the ceilidh, people were already old friends.
- Better to meet face to face but virtual a good alternative if there is still a pandemic.
- I did miss the site visits but the virtual conference made things much more focused. Also not weather dependent !!
- Less travel and more members of our group can access the conference
- Every second year
- Yes and no... online conferences are far more accessible to folk, and the chat box can hold enlightening discussions you might not be privy to normally; but I should think a group like this would also want to meet socially. I'm facing the same issue myself in the Alliance for Scotland's Rainforest, and I'm coming to the conclusion that once restrictions are lifted, I will continue with quarterly zoom meetings, but supplement them with site visits to discuss specific issues.
- So much more efficient use of time and no travel although we all miss the networking and catching up possibilities.
- With such a diverse membership, it's difficult to alight on many common experiences and issues
- Virtual events might allow more people to participate, broadening and diversifying the public that takes part in the debate. However, virtual conferences should not replace face to face events completely as it does not allow the same level of network/relationship building.
- The major omission was the ability to discuss issues more fully with both the speakers and with other participants. Oh and of course, the problems of slow, inadequate and patchy broadband but that is only to be expected as long as Scotland remains locked into its current state.
- I do prefer in person ones
- Only whilst we are in the Covid-19 situation, Zoom is the only way forward. It was nice not to have to travel but one misses interaction and networking. The Chat facility is not a satisfactory alternative. Members should be able to ask questions, live.
- I would never have attended if I had to travel from Skye, I had intended joining on Saturday but unfortunately wasn't able to..

- *Would like to see more community discussion peer to peer or in small groups to balance against speaker only format*
- *Compliments to the organisers*
- *There are pros and cons, I wouldn't like to see the conference being online all the time, but there are certainly benefits. Nothing beats actually meeting up with people and watching a presentation being delivered right in front of you, however, online has the potential to connect with a broader and new audience. I also miss the catering and bar!*
- *Makes meetings easier to attend, less travel = less env. impact, less costs*
- *Possibly explore a blended version.*
- *Thought this was a well-run zoom thing. However some things work better than others on zoom. Meeting new folk and re-establishing connections is a big part of the CWA conference story.*
- *Saves transport, obviously. But not everyone has a good connection. A blend of virtual and real could be the optimum.*
- *But only if Covid rules require*
- *It was my first experience of a CWA conference and the virtual format appeared to work well, I did not have any previous experience to compare against.*

How did you find out about the CWA conference?

Facebook	3
Twitter	5
CWA e-bulletin	21
Word of mouth	12

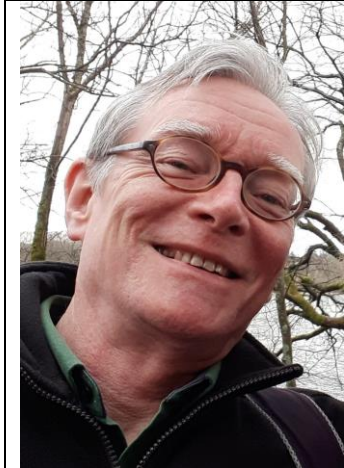
Appendix 2: Speaker Biographies

	<p>W. J (Ian) Ross OBE, FICFor, FRSA, CWA Chair</p> <p>Ian is a Chartered Forester and a graduate in Forestry from Aberdeen University. A past chair of Scottish Natural Heritage, he was also a Highland Councillor for 13 years and chaired the Council’s Planning, Environment and Development Strategic Committee. Ian was a senior lecturer at the Scottish School of Forestry, where he led on the development of its first degree in Forestry and continued to lecture at the University of the Highland and Islands on a part-time basis until 2014. Ian has been active on sustainability and community engagement issues within both the local authority and forestry sectors.</p>
	<p>Gordon Gray Stephens, Native Woods Coop</p> <p>Gordon grew up on a wooded west coast farm, and has spent most of his life either in the woods, or (increasingly) at his computer or at meetings dealing with them. Mostly his focus has been on native woodlands, however for the last 25 years he has also had a keen interest in community woodlands. This has involved help for developing and established groups, as well as trying to make a difference at the national level (for example as a founding director of CWA). He is a member of the Native Woods Cooperative and sits on Scottish Forestry’s Customer Representative Group (as a CWA representative).</p>
	<p>Eleanor Harris, Confor</p> <p>Dr Eleanor Harris is Policy Researcher for Confor – promoting forestry and wood. She is a historian of nineteenth-century Scottish history by training, and previously worked in environmental campaigning.</p>
	<p>Gemma Jennings, Urban Roots</p> <p>Gemma is an ecologist with interests in biodiversity and community engagement. Since completing a PhD in seabird ecology, Gemma has worked for a number of environmental charities in and around Glasgow. In her current role with Urban Roots she coordinates greenspace activities in Malls Mire Community Woodland and is working with local partners on a green infrastructure project that will create a mixed use park, enhance existing wetland and woodland and create sustainable transport routes in the area.</p>
	<p>Emma Sheehy, Scottish Wildlife Trust</p> <p>Dr Emma Sheehy is a mammal ecologist and Conservation Officer with Saving Scotland’s Red Squirrels in the North East of Scotland, where the project aims to eradicate the “island” population of invasive grey squirrels. Prior to joining the Trust, Emma’s research focussed on the relationship between recovering pine marten populations and their impact on red and grey squirrel populations in Ireland and Scotland.</p>



Ann Clark, Aultnaskiach Dell SCIO

Ann grew up in rural Morayshire and has lived in the Highlands for over 25 years. She has had a varied career in the Third and public sectors and ran her own policy and research consultancy for ten years. Since volunteering for a Citizens Rights Office while at University in Edinburgh, she has held many different roles in community organisations as a volunteer and as a Board member, including most recently Highland Brook, Partnerships for Wellbeing and Canine Concern. She was one of the founding trustees of Aultnaskiach Dell SCIO, her local community woodland and has served as Secretary for 8 years.



Jon Haydon, Moffat Community Woodlands

Jon Haydon has been Treasurer at Moffat Community Woodlands since its inception as a SCIO in 2016. The group bought Gallow Hill in December that year, and are due to complete re-planting as a mixed broadleaf woodland by March next year.



Jane Rosegrant, Corra Foundation

Jane lives in the Scottish Borders and is passionate about community-based projects, woodlands and wild places. A past CEO of Borders Forest Trust, she is now a Trustee of BFT and a volunteer with the Woodland Trust. She has worked for several grant-making foundations, both in Scotland and abroad, and now works for the Corra Foundation in Edinburgh.









Iwan Thomas

Iwan lives in Fife with his wife, two daughters and a Westie called Luna. He has worked in Edinburgh's parks and greenspaces for nearly 14 years as a Park Ranger and more recently as a Community Payback Supervisor. For ten of those years he has been involved in developing an old brownfield site as a community resource of woodland, wild play space and mountain-bike trails, named The Vat Run; in reference to the nearby, long-demolished, Vat69 whisky bottling plant.



Paul Hibberd, Forestry and Land Scotland

Paul Hibberd is the Regional Visitor Services Manager for Forestry and Land Scotland. Prior to this role, he worked for 10 years as the national Interpretation Officer for Forestry Commission Scotland, and before that worked for 15 years as a countryside recreation ranger at various sites in England.

	<p>Marco Baglioni, Abriachan Forest Trust Marco Baglioni is a Trustee and current Chairman of the Abriachan Forest Trust. He was born in Italy and has been living in Abriachan, Inverness since 1990; he has been involved with the Trust for the last 15 years.</p>
	<p>Adrian Clark, Evanton Wood Community Company The 64ha Evanton Wood was bought for the community in 2012. EWCC run regular volunteering days and a great variety of educational and health related projects. Evanton Wood was recently declared Scotland's first dementia-friendly wood.</p>
	<p>Julia Duncan, Atholl Estates Atholl Estates has 145,000 acres of hills, woodlands and open countryside just waiting to be explored. Recognised as an area of natural beauty with plenty to see and do, the estate was admitted into the Cairngorms National Park in 2010.</p>
	<p>Emma Cooper, Scottish Land Commission Emma Cooper is the Head of Land Rights and Responsibilities for the Scottish Land Commission, a new position which seeks to put into practice the Scottish Government's Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement. The Scottish Land Commission is driving a programme of land reform spanning both urban and rural land, to improve the productivity, diversity and accountability of the way Scotland's land is owned, managed and used. Previously Emma managed the community-owned forest on Bute from 2011-14. She became CEO of Scottish Rural Action in 2014, leading three successful Scottish Rural Parliaments, and developing a strong voice for rural Scotland.</p>
	<p>Owen Davies, Forest Stewardship Council Dr Owen Davies is Forest Standards Manager for Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) UK. His most important task is to ensure that we have an FSC-approved national forest stewardship standard fit for voluntary certification of woodland management in the UK. Owen has worked previously in harvesting, planning and plant health roles for Forestry Commission Wales, and as a silviculturist at Forest Research, specialising in conifer silviculture. He lives in North Wales, and spends as much time as possible walking his dog and working on his veg patch.</p>
	<p>Jamie MacIntyre, Woodland Crofts Partnership Jamie is a freelance forester and community development worker. He has worked in community and rural development forestry for over 20 years, as community forester/project manager for the Sunart Oakwoods Initiative from 2000-2008, and as woodland crofts officer for a government agency. When that role ended, he returned to self-employment and is currently main contractor to the Woodland Crofts Partnership. He is a Director of Sunart Community Renewables and Chair of Strontian Community School Building Ltd.</p>



Julie Stoneman, Atlantic Woodland Alliance

Julie Stoneman started her post as Saving Scotland’s Project Manager in February 2020, after many years with WWF in campaigning. Her post involves co-ordinating the collaborative activities of the Alliance for Scotland’s Rainforest, which spans the west coast of Scotland. In her early career she also worked in direct nature conservation on Scotland’s west coast – training volunteers to survey and monitor butterflies and moths with Butterfly Conservation; working on nature reserves on Islay with RSPB; and at Rahoy Hills, Morvern and Handa Island, Sutherland with Scottish Wildlife Trust.



Alison MacLennan, Broadford & Strath Community Company

Alison is Chair of Broadford and Strath Community Company. She has 25 years’ experience with RSPB, with responsibility for all aspects of research, advisory, habitat management, interpretation, project planning and management, staff management and fund raising in Skye & Wester Ross. Alison has a Master’s degree in Natural Resource Management and a PhD in Geology / Palynology.



Shona Scatchard, Dunnet Forestry Trust

So, as my husband is fond of saying, 'I blame Trees for Life'. When we got married, we asked friends and family to contribute to a 'wedding grove' of trees at Trees for Life. For a honeymoon, we hit on the idea of going on one of their work weeks and asking if we could plant our trees, so that's what we did. When we moved to Caithness, we started to plant trees and seven years later we have planted about seven and a half thousand in hedges, shelter belts and various exclosures as well as on the banks of a burn that flows through our land. At a Dunnet Forestry Trust log sale we were persuaded by Jean Barnett to become volunteers: seven years on and we are both on the board and I am treasurer of the Trust.



Ed Thorogood, Maryculter Woodlands Trust

Ed trained as a geoscientist (D.Phil Oxon, FGS) & spent his career working in the oil industry. He is one of the founding Directors of the Maryculter Woodlands Trust which since 2016 has owned a 67ha community wood in Aberdeenshire.



Stuart Whittaker, Cassiltoun Housing Association

The Cassiltoun Trust is a multi-award winning regeneration project that has been in operation since 2003. The Cassiltoun Housing Association and partners have transformed Castlemilk Park from a perceived no-go area into a much loved community asset.

Appendix 3: Delegate List

Delegate	Organisation
Marco Baglioni	Abriachan Forest Trust
Katharine Sharp	Abriachan Forest Trust
Gordon Gray Stephens	AGWA/Native Woods Coop
George Hogg	Aird Community Trust (Kirkhill & Bunchrew CW)
Sandra Hogg	Aird Community Trust (Kirkhill & Bunchrew CW)
Megan MacInnes	Applecross Community Company
Roslyn Clarke	Applecross Community Company
Gary Servant	Arkaig Community Forest
Julia Duncan	Atholl Estates
Julie Stoneman	Atlantic Woodland Alliance
Ann Clark	Aulnaskiach Dell SCIO
Gina O'Brien	Aulnaskiach Dell SCIO
Serena Mason	Badluarach & Durnmauck Community Woodland
Rob Asbridge	Barhill Community Woodland
Alison MacLennan	Broadford & Strath Community Company
Shirley Grant	Broadford & Strath Community Company
Gavin Mitchell	Bushcraft Scotland
Stuart Whittaker	Cassiltoun Housing Association
Allen Armstrong	CLEAR Buckhaven & Methil
Jo Rodgers	Community Woodlands Association
Jon Hollingdale	Community Woodlands Association
Amanda Calvert	Community Woodlands Association
Piers Voysey	Community Woodlands Association
Eleanor Harris	Confor
Douglas Locke	Cormonachan Community Woodlands Ltd
Murray Ferguson	Culduthel Woods Group
Fiona Chalmers	CWA / Future Woodlands Scotland
Ian Ross	CWA Chair
Syd House	CWA Director
Jane Rosegrant	CWA Director
Anna Lawrence	CWA Vice-Chair/Eshiels Community Woodland
Mark James	Dunbar Community Woodland Group
Isobel Knox	Dunbar Community Woodland Group
Fiona MacDonald	Dunbar Community Woodland Group
Shona Scatchard	Dunnet Forestry Trust
Carole Inglis	Dunvegan Community Trust
Jason Bold	Dunvegan Community Trust
Maressa Munro	Dunvegan Community Trust
Cathy Swire	Dunvegan Community Trust
Stuart Adair	Eshiels Community Woodland
Nicole Ponta	ETH Zurich
Kavita Sharma	Eth Zurich / University of Edinburgh
Adrian Clark	Evanton Wood Community Company
Ariane Burgess	Findhorn Hinterland Trust
Bianca Ambrose	Forest Research
Owen Davies	Forest Stewardship Council
Chris Marsh	Forestry & Land Scotland
Paul Hibberd	Forestry & Land Scotland

Sarah Nicholas	Forestry & Land Scotland
Nim Kibbler	Forth Rivers Trust
Amelia Heath	Forth Rivers Trust
Nick Molner	Friedns of Kennel Wood
Tom Cooper	Glengarry Community Woodlands
Colin Grant	Glengarry Community Woodlands
Bruce Kocjan-Briggs	Glengarry Community Woodlands
Tony Crosbie	Highlands & Islands Enterprise
Mary Scott	Huntly & District Development Trust
Derek Noble	Individual member
Maura Lee	Individual member
Nicholas Berry	Individual member
Mike Lee	Individual member
Dorothy Jackson	Individual member
Donald McPhillimy	Individual member
Tom Andrews	Individual member
Frank Corcoran	Isle of Cumbrae Initiative Community Company
Becca Long	Isle of Eigg Heritage Trust
Rob Borruso	Kilfinan Community Forest Company
Yvonne White	Kingsburgh Community Forest
Pam Noble	Kyle & Lochalsh Community Trust
Zena Wilmot	Llais y Goedwig
Sasha Ufnowska	Llais y Goedwig
Cara Wilson	Llais y Goedwig
Maria Wilding	Llais y Goedwig
Ed Thorogood	Maryculter Community Woodland
James Littlejohn	Mid Deeside Ltd
Jon Haydon	Moffat Community Woodlands
Sian Williams	NatureScot
Wendy Reid	North West Mull Community Woodland Company
Nancy Macqueen	Organic Growers of Fairlie
Amy Davidson	Polbeth and West Calder Community Garden
Wilma Harper	RSFS and SFWA
Emma Cooper	Scottish Land Commission
Emma Sheehy	Scottish Wildlife Trust
Henrik Micski	Sleat Community Trust
Damon Thompson	Strathnairn Community Woodlands
Jamie MacIntyre	Sunart Community Company
Iwan Thomas	The Vat Run
Alice Brawley	Three Hares Community Woodland
Michael Foxley	Treslaig and Achaphubuil Woodlands
Sandy Underwood	Ullapool Community Trust
John Menzies	Ullapool Community Trust
Brendan O'Hanrahan	Ullapool Community Trust
Matthew Logan	University of Edinburgh
Jessica Vian	University of Strathclyde
Jasmijn Sybenga	University of the Highlands and Islands
Gemma Jennings	Urban Roots
Lindsey Duncan	Urban Roots
Paola Perez	Urban Roots
Libi Newall	Valley Renewables Group

Phil Knott	West Highland College
Bob Talbot	West Stormont Woodland Group
Elsbeth Coutts	West Stormont Woodland Group
Catriona Gill	West Stormont Woodland Group
Margaret Lear	West Stormont Woodland group
James Ogilvie	Woodland Trust
Patricia Durham	
Simon Teesdale	