

Evanton Wood Community Company
Secretary's Report to AGM of 8 Oct 2014

General

This has been our second full year of operations as the owner of Evanton Wood which we purchased in August 2012 after a 5-year campaign.

Accounts

Accounts for Year ended 31 October 2013 have been duly completed, independently examined by Frame Kennedy & Forrest, submitted to and duly accepted by Companies House and OSCR. Our thanks go to Leslie Logan for completing the accounts.

Funding

We have been granted additional funding during the course of the year 2013-2014 as follows:

FEI – towards tools and cabin	2120
FEI – towards the cabin	5200

Also over 400 tree saplings from The Woodland Trust

Insurance

Public Liability for events to £10 million is provided through Highland Council's group insurance scheme with Zurich Municipal. Fire insurance to cover trees valued at £545k, plus property owner's liability (£5m limit) is provided through Scottish Woodlands.

Membership

Current (prior to AGM, paid up in last 18 months) = 7 individuals, 4 Life Membership, 18 family/couples.

Meetings

The Board has held 7 full meetings with good attendance by all directors, including occasional representation by Leslie Logan for Kiltearn Community Council for which we are grateful.

Directors:

- David Smith (Chair), Adrian Clark (Hon.Sec), Simon Hindson (Vice-Chair), Penny Gray (Treasurer), Kennie McCusker, Douglas Wilson (Membership)
- Standing down at this AGM (longest standing directors in line with annual retiral per the Articles of Association): Penny Gray, Kennie McCusker. They are eligible for re-election.
- Currently there are no co-opted directors
- Keith Kennedy has continued as Company Secretary; Project Management – provided by the Hon. Sec.

Publicity

- We have received coverage in the North Star and Ross-shire Journal; 2 features in KCC News.
- The website is regularly updated: www.evantonwood.com; active Facebook page with some 200 followers; also email contacts c.150; occasional Twitter.

Activities Report – Sept 2013 to end Aug 2013

Group	Visits/Sessions	Numbers
Schools and Education	95+	1173+
Volunteer Sessions	17	118
Events	13	366
Third Party Events	29	265
Survey Visits	3	3
Training	1	4

Volunteer sessions have continued on a monthly basis with numbers between 5 and 12 (lower than last year). Volunteers have helped in the planting of around 500 trees over the 12 months. A major event was the 2 day forestry event for schools and public in November 2013. David Smith has undertaken a 5-day chainsaw training certificate supported by EWCC.

Visitors

At start October there had been over 32,000 footfalls measured at the Chapel entrance since installation on 1.4.13; of which nearly 21,000 over past 12 months.

Education Report (*see separate report*)

Some Feed-back from Schools

'The kids thoroughly enjoyed their trip to the woods on Friday, despite the weather they came back smiling, having loved their visit.' (Coulhill Primary)

Some Feed-back from groups: 'I visited Evanton Community Woodland yesterday and was very impressed with ...the whole project' (Forestry Commission)

Interpretation and access

A visitor map has been made; a welcome board and 2 others have been made up and await installation

4 carved seats have been placed at various locations; also one upright post near the pond area.

Minor improvements have been made to some paths and stream crossing. A new 'real trail' mountain bike track is in the process of development.

The lower pond area has had its trees removed in preparation for the pond development project in conjunction with Froglife.

Wood Cabin

Volunteers (in particular David Smith, Adrian Clark and Kennie McCusker) have been busy since May 2014 in working on the cabin project which is now in its final phase of construction. School pupils and others have also lent a hand and picked up skills along the way. We will soon reach the volunteer hour target in year 3 of the 5-year project.

Consultants and Contractors

- Simon Harry , Education and Outreach Coordinator (c. 20 hrs. per week)
- Botanical and zoological surveyors: Stephen Moran.
- Interpretation, Map and Design: Toni Clark, Iona Finlayson, Iain Sarjeant, Helen Stirling
- Log Cabin and mill hire and training: Henry Fosbrooke
- Carvings: Iain Chalmers

Our Thanks to:

All funding bodies mentioned above; also earlier and ongoing funders including Heritage Lottery Fund, HIE, Garfield Weston Foundation, Kiltearn Community Council, EBSScotland Ltd, Forestry Commission, Robertson Trust, Scottish Natural Heritage, The Cooperative, Isleburn (Global) and Technip.

- Frame Kennedy & Forrest; Cornerstone; Community Woodlands Association; Ross-shire Voluntary Action; all contractors, in particular Simon Harry
- Bill Ingram for ongoing tools storage; John Martin and Russell Morrison for help with their tractors
- Novar Estate and Foulis Estate – support in kind with cabin building project
- Board Members - past and present & all those who have attended volunteer sessions and events and all individuals who have donated money and renewed membership or helped in any other way in helping to make the community ownership and ongoing management of Evanton Wood a reality - also to everyone, young and older, who have been enjoying work and play in the wood.

AC, Hon. Sec 8.10.14 (15.10.14)