



In this issue:

1. Report on 2004 activities
2. MCW – now a company
3. Achnaha Community Wood
4. Workshop update

Report on 2004 activities

In January, 5 members went up to the Scottish School of Forestry to receive training in the use of the Logosol chainsaw mill. The Logosol has since been used to mill a fallen oak at Uladail and to mill larch logs for a boardwalk at Achadh Forsa.



Allan & Logosol at the School of Forestry

Work at Achnaha moved ahead several steps in 2004, with Gordon ripping out some 4 acres of Rhododendron; Ali and Weeb building over half a mile of stock fence (with deer strainers, in case deer fencing be needed in future); and Sean Sinclair of Connel putting in the All Abilities path. Volunteers also started laying some of the spruce chipping done by Richard and Liam Livett; building a boardwalk; and preparing the site for the picnic table.



Gordon French ripping rhodies with his teeth

The Achnaha Open Day in May attracted over 60 people, with pole lathe wood-turning, Logosol demo, tree orienteering, Rhododendron weaving and a BBQ that raised over £50. The highlight was without doubt the hanging of the wood disks painted by Lochaline primary and nursery – a permanent woodland exhibition.

Committee members continued to work on ideas for a wood-processing workshop, with fact-finding visits to Ormsary & Barnluasgan (Argyll Green Woodworkers), Dunfermline (Scottish Wood), Loch Katrine (derelict Stenner saw, Scot Water) and Jedburgh (Buy Design).

In November, the association became a company and obtained insurance (see below).

Lochaline Primary visited the wood in December to put up affordable, ecological timber housing for the wood's birdlife in time for the Spring nesting.

MCW – now a company

Well, we got the ball rolling nearly 2 years ago ... and, after much to-ing and fro-ing, we are pleased to announce that the association finally achieved legal status as a Private Limited Company on 9 November 2004. The company goes by the name of MORVERN COMMUNITY WOODLANDS (though Companies House initially misspelt it MORVEN of course!!!). Being a company means that we can purchase and own communal equipment, trade, manage woodlands, apply for grants and seek Charitable Status to make this process easier. At present, company directors are Gordon French, Donald Kennedy and John Hodgson. We can have as many as 9 directors and hope others will join us in due course.

Also in November, the Company obtained a year of insurance cover through the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) scheme for Associate Groups. The money for this was raised through the May event at Achnaha together with the sale of a Larch picnic table built by group members from Fiunary Forest logs, using the Logosol and a generous contribution of John Hodgson's time and expertise.

The BTCV insurance covers volunteers working in the Community Wood and other woodlands in Morvern to further the aims of the company. This includes cover for use of the Logosol, quads, handtools, and two nominated chainsaw users (Donald and Ken at present). Users must of course have the up-to-date training certificates for power tools and machines, and anyone working in the woods has to be covered by a full risk assessment before going ahead with any work. But don't be put off if this sounds like it might restrict what members of our community can do in the woods – for example, you don't need to be certificated to use a wheelbarrow, a pole lathe or a hand saw.

Achnaha Community Wood

The responsibility for managing the 25-acre Community Wood is about to pass from a

public body, Forestry Commission Scotland, to us – the company directors have to sign some papers and then that's it! This means that we will have to produce a management plan that details any thinning, path-building, planting, etc. we might want to do over the next 5 years. Once the management plan is in place, we can get on with management work.

Workshop update

The proposed community wood-working workshop is getting ever closer: a draft business development plan has been written; rafts of letters of support have been gratefully received from many quarters; a proposed site layout and building design have been costed; initial contact with funders has been made. The next step is to conduct a feasibility study with the help of consultants, who will also advise on how best to put the ideas into practise. So what are these ideas? Well, the workshop will be there for locals and visitors to learn a wide range of wood-working skills by working on communal or individual projects, be it building a bench, a boat or bookshelves, with help available if required. The workshop itself will be large enough to allow people who want to take things a step further to eventually develop their own wood-working business.

**Next meeting (open to all members) –
Thursday 27 January 2005 at 8 pm,
Lochaline Village Hall.**

**From then on, we will meet in the Hall on
the 4th Thursday of each month.**



MCW members visit the cruck frame work
area with oak shingles built by Argyll
Green Woodworkers near Crinan