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### De tha dol? What's doing?

#### Kiel wood-working & training centre

Following the decision not to proceed with the commercial sawmill, we worked with MCDC to resubmit the outline planning permission for the community workshop (through Morvern Community Council). The outcome of the application is expected by February. We are also working with MCDC to seek funding for the purchase of the Forestry Commission site and we are speaking to the Sgilean na Coille project to see how we can integrate training for community members into the design and running of the building.



**Birds in Woods course** – Donald Kennedy, Steve Hardy and Gordon French organised and ran a successful event in March with 9 participants

coming from various parts of Scotland to learn about identifying and surveying birdlife in our woodlands.

**Visitors** to Achnaha this year included a party of 27 community woodlanders attending the Community Woodlands Association conference in Strontian in November. We also had a work party from Ardnamurchan High School. The wood was also used for several training courses, including a rain-drenched posse of bryologists (moss-people) in October and a similarly dripping band of lichenologists in November, both from the Native Woodlands Discussion Group, and a tree climbing course for MCW members in August.



**Big Mill** – With what was left of the Morvern Woodlands Project grant, the group acquired the 'Big Mill' rail and clamp system that can be used with the Stihl saw unit from the Logosol M7. Members put it to the test on a 3-foot diameter ash log that Michael Brambell extracted from Abhainn Mungosdail. If you have an out of the way log that could yield some good planks (e.g. elm,

ash, oak...), contact Jake Willis 07909931352.

**Achnaha shelter construction** – volunteer time being a rare commodity these days, progress has not been as quick as hoped. We hope to have the roof on over the winter. Anyone wanted to turn their hand to a bit of timber construction, contact John Hodgson tel: 01967421242 or 212.

**Rhododendron** – the lever-and-mulch method originally trialled by Gordon French in Achnaha Community Wood is now being applied to eradicate this plant from oakwoods in Morvern. Gordon is working on Loch Teacuis side and hopes to do further work in the Savary and Fiunary areas over the coming year. Anyone interested to know more about the method should contact Gordon on 01967421222

**AGM** – Our Annual General Meeting will be held at 730 pm on 19 March 2007 at Lochaline Village Hall. All members and prospective members are invited to attend.

### **Woodschool placement**

Ken Henesy is about to complete the 6-month placement at Woodschool part-funded by Sgilean na Coille, the George MacLeod Memorial Trust, Highland Council, and MCW's own fund-raising. Woodschool is a unique collective of 7 (at present) bespoke furniture makers / designers that produce a vast range of furniture for private, corporate, and commercial clients. Ken says "Through my 6 months Skills Placement I have been fortunate to have gained an in depth knowledge of how Woodschool is managed, I have been taught subjects ranging from Milling to Marketing, and have made a simple garden bench to a Tambour door display case for Famous Grouse. The skills learnt here will help enable Morvern Community Woodlands to deliver the proposed woodworking facility at Kiel, and with our close links

with the Sunart Oakwoods Initiative and the Sgilean na Coille project we hope to be able to pass on many aspects of sustainable woodland management and timber utilisation.". Now, MCW is looking ahead to the next stage of professional development for Ken while, together with MCDC, we press ahead with the process of getting the community wood-working facility at Kiel in place.



### **Leader+ machinery grant**



In September, the group was awarded Leader+ funding to purchase a compact tractor, forwarding trailer and a logging winch, together with machine operator training for up to 6 persons. Match-funding was provided by Forestry Commission Scotland and MCW is contributing £975 from funds raised over the past year. Anyone interested in being trained to use this equipment should contact Jake Willis tel: 07909931352. The 5-day training will take place in Feb/March 2007 with assessment later in the year.

### **FCS tools & equipment grant**



Lorne Forest District has made funding available to assist MCW develop the Kiel project by acquiring vital tools & equipment. These will allow members to start gathering a stock of milled hardwood (for air-drying for 1-2 years) and develop green wood products that can be manufactured in a temporary workshop space until the Kiel facility is up and running.

