Woodlands of Ireland conference

October 2024

Andy Rockall

Community Woodlands in Scotland



Community Woodlands Association

Community Woodlands Association

- Membership organisation, established in 2003
- What do we do?
 - support members to achieve their aspirations
 - represent and promote community woodlands
- Direct support: face-to-face, email, phone, virtual
- Training, networking and information provision, mentoring, exchanges
- Annual conference, Inverness 4th & 5th October 2024
- Consultancy
- Policy & research (consultation responses)
- Umbrella & collaborative projects (Native Woodlands Project, ASR)
- Normal staff: 1.9FTE (4 posts) + short term contracts.

Community Woodlands in Scotland

- ~200 community groups owning and/or managing woodland.
- First community woodland: Wooplaw (1987)
- CWA members own or manage around 40,000ha of land and woodland.
- Great diversity of woodlands, communities, objectives, activities.
- Common thread is that community woodland groups manage their woods to benefit their community.



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Community Woodland Groups

- Woodlands formerly in either public and private sectors.
- Variety of tenure arrangements: ownership, lease, management agreements, partnerships.
- Governance model: non-profit-distributing bodies with a geographically-defined membership electing a voluntary Board.
- Larger/busier groups employ staff, but most are run by volunteers.

Benefits (motivations)

- Physical and mental health benefits,
- Environmental (protection), biodiversity & climate,
- Opportunities for volunteering,
- Education and skills projects (young people),
- Venue for community events and activities and increasingly tourism,
- Community cohesion and confidence,
- (Economic).

Activities – a sample

Social: recreation facilities (car parks, paths, shelters and seating, mtb trails), volunteering, forest school / kindergarten, skills training, (mental) health and rehabilitation, arts & culture, sport, walking groups;

Environmental: creating new woodland, restructuring conifer plantations, ponds and watercourse management, control of invasive species, deer management, meadows and non-woodland habitats, squirrel bridges;

Economic: timber, sawmill, firewood/woodchip, renewables, forest buildings, affordable housing, cafe, tree nursery, camping & tourism, green burials, allotments, woodland crofts.

























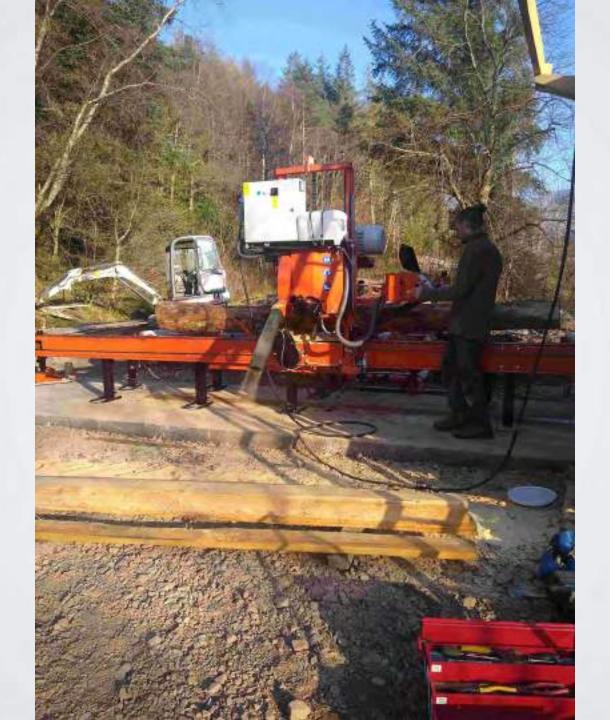




















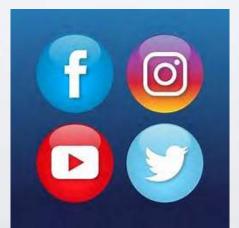




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Any questions?



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