



North West Mull Community Woodland Co Ltd

Penmore Mill, Dervaig, Isle of Mull, PA756QS

Tel : 01688 400600 admin@nwmullwoodland.co.uk

Charity no: SC037336 Company no: 287343

## Autumn Newsletter 2011

### Visit by Cabinet Secretaries

You wait ages for a visit from a Cabinet Secretary and then two come along at once! Mike Russell MSP (Secretary for Education) and Richard Lochhead MSP (Secretary for the Environment) spent several hours with NWMCWC on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> August. With representatives from Argyll and Bute Council, Forest Enterprise Scotland, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, UPM Tilhill, Scottish Strategic Timber Transport Scheme, Argyll Timber Transport Group, the Director of Forestry Commission Scotland and local journalists, they enjoyed a presentation from Development Manager Ian Hepburn before driving to Langamull for the Official Opening of the new Haul Road. Mr Lochhead spoke about NWMCWC's achievement in delivering such a complex project before cutting the tape (held by Mr Russell) and declaring the road 'open'. During a light lunch in Am Birlinn, generously sponsored by Turus Mara, the first two Forest Croft leases were signed by Steve Maker and Iain Thomson. Mr Russell witnessed one lease and Mr Lochhead the other. This was a truly historic moment as NWMCWC have delivered the first Forest Crofts in Scotland. A third croft has also been signed over to Simon Proud who could not attend the ceremony. The visitors were then driven along the Langamull to West Ardu stretch of the new road, pausing to admire the spectacular views. At West Ardu we were met by teachers and children from Dervaig and Ulva Ferry Schools who showed everyone round the Forest School. Mr Russell and Mr Lochhead then left for another engagement on the island, bringing a very important occasion for NWMCWC to an end.

The visit was arranged at very short notice when a space suddenly became available in the Cabinet Secretaries' diaries. As it was on the first day of the school term the timetable was only finalised the day before the visit because Mike Russell was keen to see the Forest School. For these reasons we were only able to circulate details of the visit at the very last minute and we are sorry if this unavoidable situation caused anyone disappointment



MSPs Mike Russell and Richard Lochhead opening the new Haul Road

### Access Plans for the Woodlands

Many of you will have received a questionnaire about how you would like to see the Woodlands developed for leisure and other purposes. These are just the beginning of a feasibility study and consultation process that will last for several more months. Once this has been completed we hope to have a clearer idea of what the community would like and what is possible. We will also receive a fully costed and phased report and plan from the consultants which will help us find ways of turning ideas into reality. This will be a very long term Project, but it will be broken down into smaller parts each providing more and more access to the Woodlands as they are completed. Initial results of the questionnaires will be presented at meetings in Dervaig Village Hall on the evening of Friday 16th September and the morning of Saturday 17th September. Exact times have yet to be confirmed.



In the Forest School shelter



The visitors meet teachers and children at the Forest School

Steve Maker signs the lease for his Forest Croft, witnessed by MSP Mike Russell



### Forest Crofts

As reported on page one, three of the Forest Crofts have now been signed over to their tenants. This innovative and pioneering Project was supported by Mike Russell from the outset so it was very pleasing that he was able to witness the signing of the first leases and meet the Crofters concerned. NWMCWC are proud to be able to create new crofts for local people at a time when so many areas are being decrofted. We wish the new Crofters every success with their various plans.



The first vehicle down the newly opened road

### Felling

Now that the Haul Road is almost complete it will soon be possible to transport felled timber to the coast for shipment to the mainland. Felling is due to commence at Langamull in November and warning signs will be displayed near danger areas.

### 100 Club

The 3<sup>rd</sup> 100 Club Draw was made on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> August by Dougie Allen in Dervaig Post Office. The lucky winners were: 1<sup>st</sup>. Cath Mayo - £35.00, 2<sup>nd</sup> Tony Proud - £15.00, 3<sup>rd</sup> Barbara Hartley - £5.00 and 4<sup>th</sup> the Charrington Family - £3.50. The final draw of this year will take place on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> October. There are still some numbers left so if you would like to take part in next year's draws please contact Belinda in the Office and she will send you the forms to complete.

### Community Forum

There have now been two Forum meetings, one in Dervaig Church Hall on 27<sup>th</sup> June and a second in Dervaig Village Hall on 18<sup>th</sup> July. At the second meeting a Chairman (Dave Thomas) was elected and a committee formed. In future all meetings will be arranged by the committee. They have already put an information board and questions box up outside Dervaig Post Office. Any questions from the community will be passed to the Directors of NWMCWC a week before a planned meeting so they can give accurate replies to the Forum. The next meeting is due to take place in Dervaig Village Hall on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> September at 7.30pm.

### Christmas Trees

Just a little advance notice that there are still enough small trees in the Woodlands for NWMCWC to be able to offer Christmas Trees for sale again this year. As usual we will advertise collection dates and prices on posters, in Round and About, in the next Newsletter and by email. All the cutting, hauling and bagging is carried out by volunteers. If you would like to help out with this very Christ-massy activity, please contact us.

### Archaeology

The Mull Historical and Archaeological Society in partnership with Archaeology Scotland (Adopt-a-Monument) continue to make good progress in excavating and investigating the township at Kildavie. MICT have given the Project a grant of £380.00 towards a shed to store materials and necessary tools for the work in Langamull Woodland. The ability to store heavy equipment securely at the site will make a huge difference to the Group. Thank-you MICT for supporting this important local Project.



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