



Abriachan Summer 2022

Abriachan Forest Trust : Annual General Meeting
Abriachan Village Hall
Friday 19th August 2022 at 7.00pm

- Agenda**
1. Apologies
 2. Minutes AGM 2021
 3. Chairman's Reportwith forestry, conservation, outdoor learning, facilities updates.
 4. Finance report March 31st 2022
 5. Appointment of Independent Examiner
 6. Election Directors/Trustees to the Board (***New Volunteer Trustees must apply by 5/08/2022)
 7. Setting of Annual Subscription Fee
 8. AOCB
 9. Setting date of 2023 AGM

The short AGM will be followed by a shorter interval, refreshments and then a showing of the beautiful film by Scotland: The Big Picture at 7.45

Riverwoods : An Untold Story



All are very welcome to attend. Contact 07833964512 for more details ***



Don't forget the AGM on Friday night and please don't miss RIVERWOODS at 7.45!
This film is not available on the internet and features local wildlife experts. It was produced by Matt Larkin who was seen regularly in Abriachan last winter chasing courting crossbills in the snow !

The salmon needs the forest.
The forest needs the salmon.
Scotland needs them both!





Forest operations over the year 2021-22 included the harvesting of the west Rivoulich blocks of lodgepole pine and Sitka spruce. [Euroforest](#) completed their usual tidy job and, with timber prices holding well, the income generated testified that this had been sensible advice from [Sylvestrus](#) and gives a measure of financial security in uncertain times. The replanting of the area has taken into account some of the panoramic views visible from the trails, including areas of mixed native trees alongside the paths, but also prioritises the need to produce enough commercial crop, important for construction materials as well as the future sustainability of the forest trust. The next phase of the long term forest plan (2022-2042) has now been approved by Scottish Forestry and continues the sensitive management programme diversifying the age classes and tree species in the woodland. .



The area around the easy access paths continues to be managed as a Low Impact Silvicultural System (LISS) so the ongoing thinning of 110 tonnes of lodgepole provides firewood processed for local delivery and bags available for sale in the carpark. This provided a valuable service to the community at a low carbon cost. Dietrich says “The estimated annual volume increment of the standing timber in the forest remains at approximately 2,200 tonnes for the next year. This is equivalent to about 1,100 tonnes of additional carbon lock up. It should be noted that the spruce element of the forest has twice the carbon lock up potential compared to that of pine and four times that of birch.” The regeneration of a mixed deciduous woodland is now resulting in this area around the classrooms becoming a much better habitat for birds, invertebrates as well as providing pleasanter walks for all abilities. Abriachan was fortunate not to be significantly affected by the winter storms of 2022 so most windblow could be cleared by volunteers fairly quickly without blocking paths for too long. .





Teaching the 3 – 18 Curriculum Outdoors - Early Years - Young People

The Abriachan Forest School is still running at full capacity with a waiting list come rain, hail, wind or snow! The Care Inspectorate [report](#) for the nursery in September 2021 was extremely favourable, thanks are due to all staff members past and present as well as the enthusiastic children. Eleven children left to go to primary one this summer so they will be missed, however there certainly seems to be a long series of siblings signed up to attend....sustaining attendance until 2025! The recent family evening for the nursery had no less than sixty two participants aged from eight days to eighty years , all chasing round the trails and enjoying a barbecue afterwards!

Other groups we have supported over the year have included family groups from Home Start, Women's Aid, separated siblings, AspireNorth as well as a number of school classes requesting specific learning topics during the summer term. They came from as far off as Poolewe, Brora, Moray, Caithness and many in between.

The outdoor learning team were once again asked to deliver activities at Belladrum Our partnership with Moniack Mhor continues with us providing childcare for creative writers' families and will develop further next year when the Creativity and Care Experience programme begins.





Teaching the 3 – 18 Curriculum Outdoors - Early Years - Young People

On other days of the week the outdoor learning provision has continued to develop with the delivery of elaborated curriculum for pupils referred by the local authority, as well as employability and life skills' support for young people and adults including, on occasion, some Branching Out groups. School visits have slowly started up again although the rising costs of transport limits their frequency. The [Global Goals Trail](#) is providing sustainable development challenges for all ages created in collaboration with Brora Learning Centre, with gratefully received funding from [Great Glen Energy Co-op](#). The visiting school pupils participate in six thought provoking practical activities to raise awareness of how we must aim for a better world by 2030. The community garden continues to be an excellent resource providing learning opportunities for all – from planting, propagating, nurturing, harvesting, cooking and eating. We also continue to support the RoWan Growing Award in Highland schools by visiting school gardening classes and administering certificates for the pupils who take part. Abriachan Forest Trust is a signatory to the Carbon CLEVER Declaration and aims to reduce the carbon emissions from the organisation as well as encouraging those we work with to undertake to reduce their carbon footprints. All our learners, no matter what age, are involved in aspects of woodland management so even the 3-5 year olds will gain a Scottish Junior Forester Award and, as well as the SJFA, the older pupils will achieve some or all John Muir, Saltire, Duke of Edinburgh and Forest and Outdoor Learning Awards.



Training and skills' development

The Abriachan team have delivered a wide variety of training to outdoor learning practitioners since the pandemic restrictions were lifted. Some sessions were on behalf of Outdoor Woodland Learning Scotland and included the Lost Words (nature based words dropping out of use in the English language), Campfire Cooking, Christmas Crafts and storytelling workshops. These have all been well attended and repeats requested. The images on this page show participants writing circular poetry using charcoal they had made on bramble paper and playing an very competitive Lost Wordle game at the national event plus falafel, herby bread, koftas, saboob and trout en papillote all cooked over the open fire..



We also ran outdoor first aid and Branching Out training for NHS and greenspace workers from Caithness to the southern tip of Argyll.

Look out for Year of [Stories](#) being celebrated with some late summer events and alongside, our Dark Skies' Astronomer in residence [Stephen Mackintosh](#) throughout the winter. .





Nature Restoration Fund has supported the development of areas of wetland around the forest and has begun the creation of a bog forest behind the hide at Loch Laide. This block of moribund spruce was planted in 1973 and some was beginning to blow over so the funding enabled the plough furrows to be blocked, various wetland tree and shrub species to be planted, seeds of bog cotton, willows, alder and bog myrtle rooted cuttings scattered across the felled to waste area.



Riparian tree planting and ground preparation, chipping non native tree species beside Allt Lon na Fiodhaige, Abriachan March 2022.

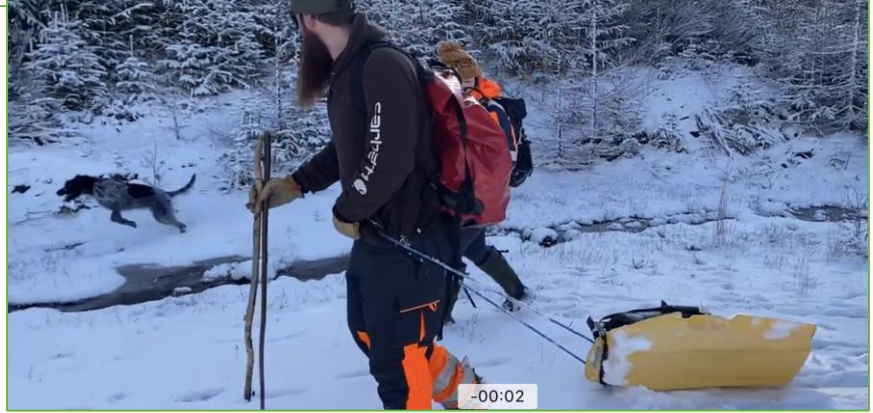
The trees were planted by Sylvestrus, Friday volunteers, Branching Out participants, John Muir and FOLA Awardees and children who attend Abriachan forest school and nursery. The translation of the Gaelic Allt Lon na Fiodhaige is burn of the bird cherry bog so it is intended to plant more cherries in the autumn as none were available this spring.

The total area improved including the felled section, the banks of the burn, some planting beside the loch, as well as the various scrapes amounts to 2.5 Hectares. The bog forest will take at least 15 years to mature but the riparian planting will make a difference to the biodiversity within 10 years (alders and cherries planted 10 years ago are now fruiting – providing flowers for pollinators, food for birds, leaf debris for invertebrates which, in turn, feed the trout in the water.

Abriachan Forest is well managed by the community and maintaining these improvements as a result of the [Nature Restoration Fund](#) will be a logical continuation of the trust's original aims – to improve biodiversity through sensitive habitat management.

Volunteers: we couldn't do without them!

We have regular volunteering opportunities on Fridays, mostly with very familiar and enthusiastic participants who are sometimes joined by other groups who are keen to get involved in some corporate social responsibility and carbon offset. The tasks carried out have been ongoing maintenance of paths, playpark and boardwalks, weeding non-native and planting deciduous trees. Cutting down carefully selected, long lived lodgepole, absolutely needle secure, conservation Christmas trees available in the carpark each December. They have also built Leopold benches and all have been delighted to take their apprentice bench home. The volunteer programme is well supported by the [Volunteering Support Fund](#).



The Abriachan Forest Trust puts the interests of the local community at the heart of its decision making and continues to create employment opportunities. The charity currently employs the equivalent of 3.5 full-time staff working in education, recreation and maintenance. In addition there is 1 self-employed administration/book keeper and 2 self-employed in forest management. We are privileged to have a committed, flexible and expert team of professionals and enthusiastic volunteers delivering our varied social enterprise activities. These volunteers include corporate social responsibility groups such as Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) employees, Lifescan teams, Duke of Edinburgh pupils and, of course, local families.

The directors continue to be drawn from the local community and regular monthly directors' meetings are open to all members. These meetings have been taking place virtually due to the pandemic restrictions but, despite this, the trustees have continued to make well informed decisions to ensure the safety and wellbeing of staff, all our user groups and visitors.



Improving Public Access is one of the funds which will help pay for the Peat Path surfacing. Nature Scot oversee this fund and Marco has been a stalwart in marking carefully counted culverts. Hitrak have been resurfacing and draining it in stages with a view to it being completed by the end of the year. The mountain bike trails are also being improved after almost twenty years of use thanks to [SportScotland](#), Highland [Council](#) and [Great Glen Energy Cooperative](#). Mark Hedderwick subcontracted Ronan Taylor who, with excited, expert guidance from the local children, has also been busy crafting a pump track behind the carpark. This will ensure families with beginner cyclists can do some practicing away from traffic. The long dry summer is causing lots of impatience because the surfaces require some rain to help bind the dust before they are officially opened.



The other notable roadworks over the past year has been the constant presence of Pat Munro's many, and sometimes not so merry in wintry weather, men on the Blackfold Road and the road over the hill to Foxhole's Belladrum bridge. This was the local part of the Strategic Timber Transport Scheme across Highland. There have been quite a number of disgruntled views about the quality of the finish and some trepidation regarding the impact of frosty weather on driving conditions. The resulting large laybys and Great Glen views are perhaps a mixed blessing!

Deanntagan

An latha an diugh, chan eil duine uabhasach dèidheil air deanntagan. Thathar a' smaoinichadh gur iad dìreach luibhean mosach a th' annta, ach air aon àm bha deanntagan cudromach mar glasraich agus dhèanadh duine brot-deanntaig cuideachd. Tha deanntagan gu math blasta agus a thuilleadh air seo, tha iad cnàmhte gu furusta. Bha am brot air leth fallain air sgàth 's gu bheil deanntagan loma lan beòthaman C, beta-carotain agus a bharrachd air seo, tha cailceam is iarainn agus iomadh mèinnirean eile ann agus tha ìre àrd de phrotain aca.

As t-Earrach, b' abhaist do dhaoine air feadh na Gàidhealtachd a bhith a' cruinneachadh nan duilleagan òga airson tì a dhèanamh. Bhiodh an tì seo air a chleachdadh mar luibh-chridhe airson fuil a ghlanadh agus airson slàint' aiseag às dèidh a'gheamhraidh.

Cha loisg deanntagan idir ma bhios iad goilte no pronnte.

Bhiodh deanntagan air an cleachdadh an àite bhinid airson càise a dhèanamh. Chaidh snàthainnean nan deanntagan a chleachdadh airson aodach fhighie agus pàipear a dhèanamh. Bhiodh dathan uaine is buidhe air an tarraing à mullachan òga nan deanntagan. Chleachdte na dathan seo air clò-mòr.

Ann an Leòdhas, rachadh na duilleagan a bhrachadh ann am beirm gus leigheas-chasad a

dhèanamh. Anns an Eilean Sgitheanach, rachadh na mullaichean am measgachadh le gealagan ugh agus rachadh an cuir air mhaoil agus teampaill gus cadal a bhrosnachadh.

Sna laithean a dh'fhalbh, bhiodh badan deanntagan air am fàs faisg air gach taigh agus an-diugh chithear na deanntagan sin a' fàs taobh a-staigh na tobhtaichean aca.

Gràdhaicheamaid deanntagan a-rithist



The stinging Nettle is a much maligned plant but nettles provide habitat and for the larvae of many butterflies including the peacock and red admiral. Several species of moth larvae rely on them for food too including the beautiful burnished brass. In the Highlands, at one time every garden had a nettle patch which provided food early on in the year. Compared with cultivated vegetables like cabbage, broccoli etc nettles have a much higher protein content, are higher in calcium and iron and have significantly higher levels of vitamin C and beta carotene. Traditionally a nettle soup- cal-deanntaig, was made using the young growing tips which were harvested during the growth spurts in early spring and early autumn. A tonic made from nettles was taken early in spring to purify the blood and help relieve rheumatism. Heating and crushing the leaves renders the stings harmless. The stinging property of nettles was used to relieve the pain of arthritis. Nettles had also been a widely used fibre plant and although it is difficult to spin, nettle fibre is softer and more hard wearing. Garments made from nettles have the same texture as silk.

Having a nettle patch in your garden is an excellent way to provide valuable habitat for insects and help increase the biodiversity of this area. The nettle patch will also provide nutritious and very tasty greens which can be steamed, made into soup or pesto or added to home brewed beer. It is very versatile and as we approach early autumn we have the ideal opportunity to harvest it and experiment.

Nettles are covered in tiny hollow hairs (trichomes) when you brush against them the fragile silica tip breaks off and they then act as a syringe piercing the needle and injecting venom. At one time it was thought that the primary source of the pain was formic acid but it is present in too low a concentration. Histamine, acetylcholine and serotonin cause the inflammation while tartaric and oxalic acid.

ABRIACHAN PRODUCE SHOW : later than usual!...Sept 10th
12.00 -2.00 submissions ; 2-3.00 judging ; 4.00 auction & tea all @ village hall



Arts and crafts with an environmental twist.....
repurposed, upcycled, carved, painted, involving yarn, photos, , mini-garden etc.



Basket of produce ... flowers, fruits, vegetables



Root vegetables ... deliciously displayed



Important stuff ... bread, eggs, scones, oatcakes, pancakes, generally the basics



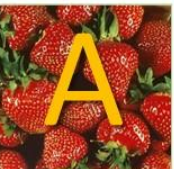
Abundance ... alcohol, vinegars, cordials, jams, preserves, chutney, honey etc.



Compost... involving a bucket or a barrow



Healthy eating....salads, herbs, healing produce



Any fruits....soft, hard, stoned, wild, tame. .



Naughty but nice... cakes, sweets, biscuits etc. .

Further details from 07833964512 or abriachanforest@gmail.com.

After a couple of pandemic years on fortunately sunny Saturdays with produce arranged at road ends the hall committee have decided to go back to the village hall for 2022.

Entries can be submitted on the morning of the 10th September or the night before by arrangement but multitasking folk have an extra couple of hours to finish off their cakes until 2.00 on Saturday afternoon! There will be children's classes as well as adult classes and the judge has requested lots of taste testing.

Abriachan Highland Games – Friday 23rd September, 4.30pm Tore field