

2024 Broughtonknowe Woodland Review:

What a significant year this has been in determining the future of the woodland. 2023 ended with the woodland on the market and the 'Friends of Broughtonknowe' deliberating on a way forward and contemplating, with Christopher's approval a community buyout. The proposal was endorsed by a well attended community meeting in Broughton Village Hall at the beginning of January and followed by a media launch in the woodland. A headline emerged that 'dog walkers were contemplating a £900,000 woodland purchase' - although rather a demeaning tag it attracted a lot of further media attention, including a live interview with Nick Robinson on the BBC Radio 4 'Today' programme. Plenty of offers of support ensued, including financial donations to our rapidly established 'crowdfunder'!



A lot of hard work would be required if we were going to be able to apply for assistance with funding. The Scottish Land Fund (SLF) specialises in assisting community purchase projects, but they require significant criteria to be met. We had to become a limited company with a board of directors, a dedicated bank account, charitable status would enable us to obtain maximum benefit from potential supporters. We would also need viable management and business plans. Our objective was to continue Christopher's irregular forestry regime that had produced the aesthetic we all wanted to sustain. Extra community involvement would be required. The SLF granted us stage 1 funding that enabled us to appoint a development group to help with the management and business planning.

Meanwhile 'Friends of Broughtonknowe' continued to maintain the upgraded amenity with grass cutting, path maintenance work and protecting the regenerating 'native woodland' amongst the thinned Larch (the irregular forestry regime is working in slowly producing a biodiverse mixed woodland from a commercial forestry monoculture). Peter Young continues to run a series of Green Ash Chair making courses from the quarry throughout the spring and summer. A number of community events were also trialled working from the Green Ash Chair's yurt: an open afternoon / wildlife walk / pond dipping, Spring and Autumn foraging workshops and 'yoga in the yurt' - all great events and raising some money for the buyout funds.

BROUGHTONKNOWE WOOD

'FORAGING'

FIND OUT WHAT BROUGHTONKNOWE HAS TO OFFER

SUN 29/6 2:00pm at the QUARRY

WALK + YURT BASED ACTIVITIES

Recipes for cordials, jams & liquors - make hand cream



ALL WELCOME

BROUGHTONKNOWE WOODLAND

Free event for local community
Green Ash Chairs & Friends of Broughtonknowe



SAT. 17th Aug.

2:00pm. THE QUARRY.

- * **ALTERNATIVE TECHNOLOGY**
Peter will demonstrate how he has achieved electricity and water supplies.
- * **GUIDED WOODLAND WALK**
Nature walk - wildflowers & butterflies. Bring your camera /phone.
- * **TEA & REFRESHMENTS**

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Present



Yoga in the YURT

Easy YOGA with NORKA in a lovely setting - come along and try. Places may be limited so book and get directions through:

PAM HART
07748 008607

pamhart49@btinternet.com

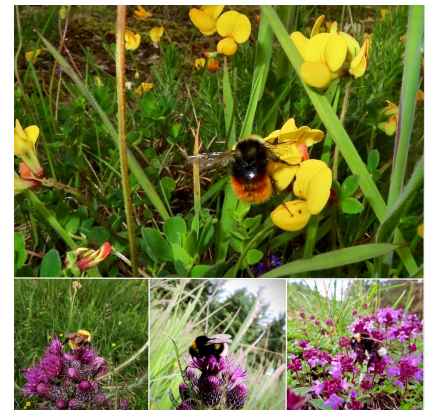
SAT. 31st Aug.
10:00am. THE QUARRY

REFRESHMENTS

A glorious day for yoga! - another lovely event in the yurt.



Wildlife monitoring continued throughout the year as a key indicator of hopefully increasing biodiversity. Bumblebee and butterfly records being submitted to national databases. The scarce Blaeberry Bumblebee was recorded again and a full habitat survey was carried out for the locally distributed Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary butterfly.



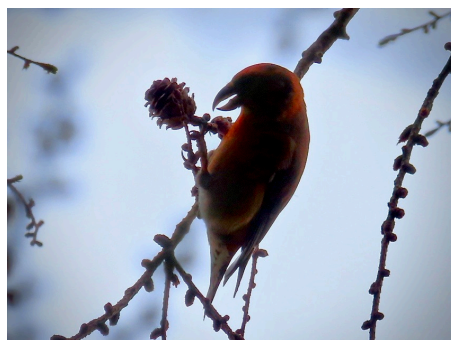
The ponds remain an amphibian Mecca in the spring with hundreds of frogs and toads gathering to spawn. The ensuing tadpoles in turn forming spectacular moving swarms throughout the early summer until they disperse as tiny frog and toadlets. A pair of Goosander were present for several days in the spring as was a visiting Little Grebe - unfortunately it did not stay to breed this year.



A 'swarm' of toad tadpoles.



Crossbills have been present again among the woodland birds.



It is great to see Biggar Cubs and Biggar Kirk Youth Group continuing to use the fire pit and dragon area for ongoing activities - shelter making, sausage sizzles, etc. Nicola Campbell has been leading mindfulness walks - 'Wanderings'.

Sausages and woodsmoke with Biggar Cubs.



We really appreciate being able to use the woods and the fire pit for our church youth group.



WANDERINGS

gathering to connect life and faith

As we approached the end of the year we got the great news that we had all been hoping for that the SLF had awarded us a significant percentage of the woodland's purchase cost! Still some fundraising to do but now the whole project seems doable - we aim to complete the purchase early in the New Year.

After the SLF's announcement we held our own 'event' at the fire-pit / dragon in the woodland. The local media were invited - again we featured on BBC Scotland Breakfast Radio and ITV Borders Evening News - we drank Prosecco! What a contrast to the January media circus when everything seemed so unreal!



broughtonknowe-wood.co.uk

