

Broughtonknowe Community Woodland.

SPRING NEWSLETTER June '26

On the 1st May we started our second formal year of community ownership with plenty of projects underway. The newsletter will outline these and attempt to bring you up to date with all that's happening in our woodland.

At the AGM on the 19th March in Broughton Village Hall the twenty plus present endorsed our ongoing management proposals. Our local councillor, Viv Thomson, stood down from the Board having helped us achieve our buyout objective. Despite our best efforts we have not managed to recruit a replacement. Additionally, although the post is presently covered, we are in need of a dedicated treasurer. In an ideal world a 'Woodland Manager' and a dedicated 'Community Liaison' member would complete the Board. Presently Ian Brooke, Alastair Leaver and John Hart divide all woodland matters between them.

My brief, as the founding member of the 'Friends of Broughtonknowe', is to continue to pursue the dual objectives of 'improving amenity and increasing biodiversity'. The emphasis in the newsletter will be on these ongoing objectives based on the regular postings made on the 'Friends of Broughtonknowe' Facebook. Facebook was originally used as means of gauging interest in the woodland. There are now over 500 names signed up but many of these may no longer follow our ongoing activities after the buyout. Over a hundred people took up interim 'woodland membership' as we needed to show our buyout funders that there was a strong commitment to community management. At the AGM our proposal to formalise membership with ongoing annual subscriptions was unanimously endorsed. Present membership stands at little over 20 following our email circulation. As pointed out by our acting treasurer I haven't paid my sub yet! (about to be rectified). This membership model is an important part of our ongoing funding - it is important we all commit. The necessary formalities are now laid out on our website:

broughtonknowe-wood.co.uk

I will summarise most of our ongoing activities using the information and photos used in my Facebook posts, if you want to check back for more detail join:

'Friends of Broughtonknowe'

Woodland Shelter:



After suspension of construction in the autumn due to issues with the planning department we are now almost there. Ross Robison has put in quite a shift with help from Alan Morton to complete the seating and cut and secure the pentagonal roof panels. It's functional now! - but still some roof work to do and finishing touches to the fixtures and fittings. It's brilliant!

The shelter will be a great asset for educational and other group activities, as well as a special place for our visiting community to meet up or for walkers just to 'take shelter' and contemplate!

STAN WILSON SCULPTURE TRAIL



BROUGHTONKNOWE WOODLAND



Sculpture Trail:

It was with great sadness that we heard from Jeff Wilson that his father, Stan, had died aged 88. Only a few months previously Stan had made his third sculpture donation, 'Helmet Head'. Stan had a great affinity with the woodland and our efforts to secure its future. His 3 differing sculptures showcase his talents, honed after gaining a place on the degree course at Edinburgh Art College when he was 50! We have a fitting location for each. They are brought together as a 'sculpture trail' that explains how we interpret their relevance - a pamphlet is available in the car park and a full archive of their installation and interpretation is on our website.

Tinto Lookout and Broughtonknowe 'edible fruits' Garden:



Stan's 'Helmet Head' looks out onto Tinto from a recently prepared clearing accessed as a walk through loop from just beyond the sheds on the top path. We have planted saplings and put in a bench. This is a great sunset vantage point. Something extra to appreciate in the autumn and winter. The loop path passes our iron age 'barrow' archaeological site and returns to the main path by our newly planted fruit trees and bushes - all clearly labelled!

Cub Scouts, 'Wanderings' and 'Welly Wanders':

Mindfulness 'Wanderings' and for parents and toddlers - 'Welly Wanders' continue to be led regularly by Nicola Campbell. Her contact details are on Facebook and on the carpark noticeboard.

Jeanette Manock has led the Biggar / Symington Cubs on their woodland adventures for the last time this spring, her role is to be taken on by Fiona Lombard. We offer our continuing support to this excellent use of our exciting woodland environment.

Nicola Campbell also leads the Biggar Kirk Youth Group who also enjoy regular summer visits to the woodland and fire-pit area.

Burnside walk:

This has now been extended to our boundary wall. 50 more mixed hardwood saplings have been planted to compliment the 100 Alders planted last year. Spot the kingfisher perch - wishful thinking! but I did spot a dipper flying downstream towards the lovely old bridge. There was what looked like otter 'spraint' by the bridge (pretty good!). At this point the path loops back through the plantings.... Take a visit, it makes a good start or finish to a circuit walk.



A lot of grass cutting is necessary to keep our path network looking good

Ongoing Tree Planting:

Our 2026 planting programme is nearing completion:

All this year's trees are marked with canes (cheaper alternative to stakes!) most are protected with recycled plastic tubes from Balfour Scott's original planting of the woodland - it's scary how long these plastic tubes can exist in the environment if not removed.

Plantings to look out for:

- Burnside path extension - 50 mixed species, mainly Rowan, Gean (wild cherry) and Hawthorn.
- New Tinto lookout - 20 Oak, cherry and Hawthorn.
- As standards in the new hedge alongside the road to the sheds - 10 Oak and cherry.
- To start replacing the diseased Ash below the old car park - 20 Downy Birch.
- Complementing the developing diverse understory among the thinned Larch at the south end of the woodland - 20 Rowan.
- For eventual coppicing adjacent to the quarry - 20 Hazel.
- Filling the gaps from last year's 'Beltane Jugglers' plantings - 20 Oak.
- In the clearing after the removal of the windblown Spruce* - 10 Oak



*Tidying up the winter windblown timber is important work undertaken for us by TreeSurv. We are hoping to extend this relationship.

Broughtonknowe Black Bees:

We have two active hives accommodating Jim Lindsay's 'special' native honey bees. They are much darker than their imported continental cousins. The hives are gaining in strength and hopefully we will have our first honey later in the year.



BROUGHTONKNOWE BEES

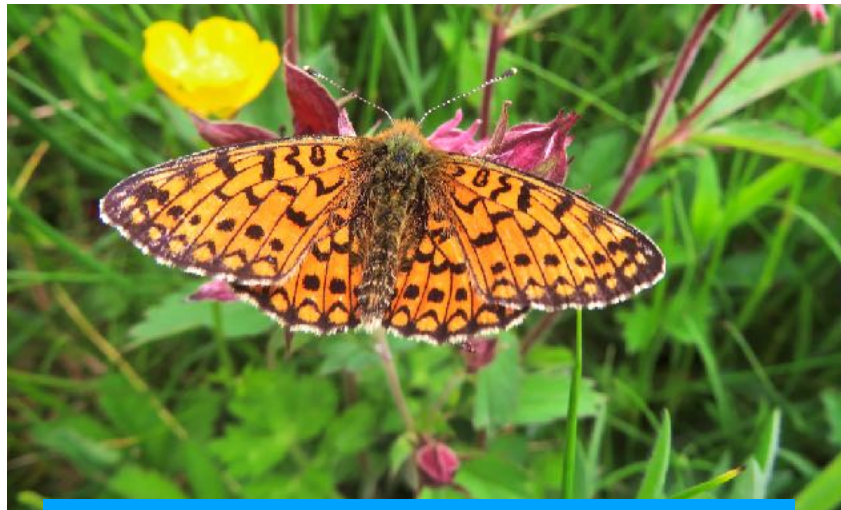
Wildlife Surveys:

Bumblebee and butterfly survey work is ongoing monthly. In addition we hope to also run a monthly moth trapping in the fire-pit clearing. I intend to also log dragonfly and damselfly sightings at the ponds.

The Blaeberry Bumblebee is a scarce upland species recorded here again this year. Another locally distributed species, the Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary, is expected to be on the wing any time now.



BEE-WALK SURVEYS



SMALL PEARL-BORDERED FRITILLARY
BORDERS PROJECT

MOTH TRAPPING
TRIAL PROJECT



Pete Carthy's Nature Journaling Courses:

A great early spring water colour painting course was run by Peter, based in Skirling Village hall and using Broughtonknowe for inspiration. Pete is running an autumn course this time from Broughton Village hall and again using our woodland. Free places available if you are an Upper Tweeddale resident - advertised on the car park notice board.

Nature Journaling with Pete Carthy

FREE - NATURE JOURNALING ART COURSE

Do you live in Skirling, Tweedsmuir or Broughton areas?

Interested in learning how to paint in watercolour and connect with local nature?

Instinctively Wild CIC has secured funding from SSE Clyde Borders Wind Farms, to be able to offer free courses for adults (18+) in nature journaling to local residents.

Scan the QR code to find out more and to book a place or phone/text Pete Carthy - 07555445605.



SATURDAY'S 10AM - 1:30 PM

Course Locations & Dates (Choose any one)

Course 1 - Skirling Village Hall
7 Feb - 28 Mar 2026
Wee local walks around Broughtonknowe Community Woodland.

Course 2 - Tweedsmuir Village Hall
25 Apr - 13 Jun 2026
Exploring Fruid & Talia Reservoirs areas and the source of the Tweed.

Course 3 - Broughton Village Hall
3 Oct - 14 Nov 2026
Wee local walks around Broughtonknowe Community Woodland.



Scan the QR code for more info, to see a bookings update and to book a place.



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