

Insh Community Holdings SCO49955

Autumn Newsletter 2024

The nights are fairly drawing in as winter approaches and so it seemed like a good time to fill you in on what has been happening. Enjoy! Isobel

Summer BBQ



Despite the overcast weather our end of summer BBQ was a success with lots of good chat! Thanks to all those who brought food to share and gave their time to help set up and clear away.

Notes from the woodland

We have begun the implementation of our Forest Management Plan as we take the next steps towards a more amenity style of woodland.

Over the summer we held three work parties that made good progress removing non-native Spruce and Lodgepole Pine in the clearing. We have thinned some of the Birch, Rowan and Willow to allow more space for them to develop. There are also some oak saplings coming through. Our thanks to Pamela for donating the picnic bench. This area still has over 40 Lodge Pole Pine which will be a source of firewood as time goes on.



Wildlife continues to be encouraged, and some brash and log piles have been left as well as some standing dead for invertebrates, small rodents and birds. Some brash burning has taken place to allow us to open the forest floor for regeneration and reduce the potential for wildfires.

Log deliveries have started but it's not too late to request a load. The cost is a donation of a minimum of £30. This can be transferred to the Charity's Bank account. Insh Community Holdings, sort code 80-05-40, A/C no 00262965.



Storm Ashley damaged an old Rowan tree by the Right of Way past the white gate. This has been tidied up by the core work team.

Our thanks to members of the core work team for repairing one of the bridges in the woodland. Further repairs will be made this winter.

We are thinking about making some boxes for tawny owl and bats to help boost their populations. If you would like to be involved in this let one of the trustees know.

The Church

We plan to investigate the next steps for undertaking a feasibility study which would support the possible purchase of the church. This would hopefully be funded by a grant from Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) but will require ICH to provide an outline vision and ideas for how the church could be used as a community asset, once in our possession.

Finances

A wayleave agreement is in place with SSEN for underground cables which are on our land. This will amount to just under £200 per annum and a backdated payment dating to June 2021 is already in our account. Our thanks to Dan for all his hard work in putting this in place.

Our thanks also to Dan for submitting a successful bid to the Co-op for their support through the Local Community Fund. Details of our cause is listed on this webpage.... <https://membership.coop.co.uk/causes/93604>.

Further information about the nationwide initiative is available here: <https://causes.coop.co.uk/>.

Copies of this document will also be available on the noticeboard. If you would like a paper copy, let me know.

Your support is much appreciated.

Christmas tree

This year we are planning a community event around the Christmas tree in the woodland.

Tuesday 3rd December 7pm at Spindrift

Painting decorations with Liz. RSVP lizjohnston@hotmail.co.uk . Anyone wishing to paint a decoration at home contact Isobel on isobelpaterson10@gmail.com .

Sunday 8th December 4pm in the Community Woodland

A gathering in the woods by the picnic table to switch on the lights and decorate the tree. Mulled wine and mince pies will be provided.

Seasonal Wildlife, Flora, Fauna and Fungi

by Colin McPherson

With Winter looming we are experiencing unseasonal warmer temperatures for this time of year – some confused wildflowers are blooming, which is great for late insects on the wing – as well as bats, which should be going into hibernation soon. You may see an increase in the number of Robins and Blackbirds in your garden as they are more tolerant of each other with the breeding season well and truly over. Some of them may even be migrant visitors from as far away as France, increasing numbers. Local, stay at home birds like the secretive Jay and Greater Spotted Woodpecker will visit feeders at this time of year to collect and cache peanuts. More noticeably, this year, the Rowan or Mountain Ash is laden with deep red, ripe, juicy berries. This is known as a mast year – when a tree or shrub produces an unusually large amount of fruit, nuts or seeds. It is not only stunning to look at, especially when the leaves have dropped, but a larder feeding mammals and attracting a huge number of migrant birds from Europe and Scandinavia. These include Redwings (call a tseep) and Fieldfare (call a churring noise), which have already arrived. Waxwings will arrive later. Insh is full of Redwings and Fieldfare now. They fly in small flocks, so listen for their calls.



Jay



Waxwing



Redwing



Fieldfare