

# FOREST NEWS... SPRING 2015



## We're expanding!!

We're delighted to announce that the community will very soon be in ownership of **Upper Acharossan forest** (434ha), thanks to a grant of £750K from the Scottish Land Fund! KCFC has aspired to buy this neighbouring woodland since acquiring 127ha of Acharossan forest in 2010. The expanded area will bring about a range of local benefits, including employment, training and volunteering opportunities, new paths, and recreational facilities. Watch this space! In the meantime if you have any suggestions for developing the woodland, feel free to contact our Development Manager, Nikki – [nikki@kilfinancommunityforest.com](mailto:nikki@kilfinancommunityforest.com) / 01700 811159.

## Tree nursery progress...

Thanks to the volunteers who helped us prepare the clear felled site next to the primary school – we now have saplings planted and will shortly be installing deer fencing! £2,700 was raised towards this project, via crowd funding and a private donation; a tree nursery will do so much for forest regeneration and make it a nicer place to visit for years to come. Thanks to all who donated and continue to be involved.

## Forest Events...

As part of Kyles Festival, come along to the forest on 1<sup>st</sup> June, 11am, for a **guided walk** to the reservoirs, curling pond and Kilfinan Way!

We will also be holding our annual **summer open day** on 6<sup>th</sup> June (1pm-5pm). Promised to be a fun-packed day, planned events include music from local close harmony trio, Kantrio, as well as the brilliant two-man Ayrshire band Junkman's Choir! A storyteller from the fabulous Walking Theatre Company will be telling woodland tales; there will also be a barbecue, guided nature walk and woodworking demos. Come along and celebrate our wonderful community forest!

## Being part of British Science Week

In March we hosted a **'Compost, Food and Worms'** event with Cowal's "Crofting Triangle" schools (Strachur, Tighnabruaich & Toward). Pupils experienced a fun and informative day taking part in:

- "Grow Food Nature's Way" and "Worm World" workshops with ecologist Ron Gilchrist;
- An Allotment and Polytunnel tour led by members of Kyles Allotment Group;
- Plant ID Treasure Trail Activity, led by John King;
- Sawmill demonstration;
- Forest Store & Future Plans display.

**Thanks to all involved for a great day!!!**



**Timber from KCFC** Need **sawn timber** (untreated larch or spruce) for that garden shed? Spring/summer can be a perfect time to progress a construction project; contact Rob Borruso to discuss your requirements: [rob.borruso@kilfinancommunityforest.com](mailto:rob.borruso@kilfinancommunityforest.com) / 01700 811159.



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## Local Knowledge.... Exploring the past

Last year, extensive timber harvesting and rhododendron clearance revealed the **old curling pond**, which is believed to have been in use by the community until the 1950s. We're seeking local knowledge to find out more about the curling club in its heyday, as we're looking to document this information for visitors to the old curling pond in the forest. Please get in touch if you can help!

### Today's insight...

In Iain Thorburn's 1996 book 'The Kyles: A Celebration of 100 Years', there is a small chapter on 'Tighnabruaich Curling Club', contributed by Archie MacLeod, who we believe was the club's Secretary. He describes the founding of the club in 1878 and its affiliation with the Royal Club in 1895.

Then he writes: "The club had curled at various venues prior to 1899 when a proposal was put forward to build a club pond on Hafton Farm, Auchenlochan estate, the proprietor Laird being Malcolm of Portalloch. In due course a lease was concluded with the proprietors for the rent of one acre at the nominal fee of 1/- per annum. In due course an estimate of £60 was accepted from a Mr John O'Donnell, the pond was duly completed, and in 1901 a competition on the new pond was arranged with the Rothesay Club. The secretary records triumphantly in 1901, 'we have a pond equal to none in Scotland.'"

The book contains a photo of a group of club members. MacLeod also says that 'The new pond provided many happy days curling'.

### KCF curling pond in 2015...



## Work in the woods this summer...

This year's **youth skills development project** will be take place for four weeks over the summer, 13<sup>th</sup> July – 7<sup>th</sup> August. We're still accepting expressions of interest from young people aged 16-18 who are interested in applying, so hurry up and get your name on the list! There are limited spaces available so we will be asking candidates to write up to 200 words on why they think they should be considered and what they feel they would get out of this opportunity. If you are unsuccessful this year you can always re-apply next year. Contact Nikki: 01700 811159/  
[nikki@kilfinancommunityforest.com](mailto:nikki@kilfinancommunityforest.com) to discuss next steps.

## Froglife

We will soon be installing **three new ponds** in partnership with the Scottish Dragon Finder Project (SDFP), to increase biodiversity by improving habitats. The ponds will be made accessible to the public; a dipping platform and interpretation board will be installed (next to the largest pond), and volunteer days will be organised to create hibernacula from wood on-site and pond spoil. We will also be carrying out ongoing habitat work following completion of the ponds, and monitoring amphibian and reptile populations on site. Interested in getting involved? Contact us today!

## Contact Us...

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