

FFYNONE AND CILGWYN WOODLAND COMMUNITY PROJECT NEWSLETTER, JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2010

This is the first newsletter, of which we aim to produce 2 or 3 a year, depending on what's happening. We hope it will explain what activities are planned and what is underway. There is actually a lot going on! This newsletter can only provide a summary – more information will be provided at the next community meeting (scheduled for March 22nd).

Update

We recently started our next phase of public consultations with a meeting in Bwlchygroes on Dec 14th, where those attending explored various topics of consultation, participation, and forest management, set within the context of moving towards Forest Stewardship Council certification (FSC).

Dr Gavin Jordan talked at the meeting about Calon yn Tyfu Cyf. (Growing Heart workers Cooperative) applying for Forestry Stewardship Council certification. His Powerpoint Presentation is now on our website www.growingheart.co.uk. As part of the certification process there will be a stakeholder consultation phase, where interested parties can contact the FSC certification body. We hope to be certified by mid summer. To read more about the FSC please go to website www.fsc.org

At the meeting we conducted participatory S.W.O.T. (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analyses of 3 key areas. The main “opportunities” identified from these are shown below. We hope to build on these through both discussion and activities.

Consultation

Better publicity, of events and activities
Inclusion of more diverse points of view, and developing how to act on them
Improved explanation of forestry activities
Communication boards at the entrances, showing walks, tracks and special features
Newsletters

Participation

Chances for people to get involved (see the website www.growingheart.co.uk for requirements)
Employment
Ideas of involvement included mountain biking, horse riding, foraging, an apiary
Walking groups, biodiversity study groups

Forest Management

Increased participation
Employment
Development of alternative forestry techniques
Retention of some areas of conifer to grow on
Improved access because of forest roads



Upcoming events

The continuing public meetings, which will be running 2 or 3 times a year, will hopefully provide a means for people to get involved, if they want to, and develop a communication system for the wider community to interact directly with the workers.

The newsletter will endeavour to keep people informed about what is planned in terms of forest management and social events.

We will be holding a **Walk in the Woods on Sunday, 7th March**, meeting at 11am in the car park near the waterfall, (take the cwm Ffynone turn between Newchapel and Abercych) to discuss and look at the next phase of forest management. This is an opportunity to both hear what we have planned and contribute your ideas and for us to discuss options.

We will be following up on the above, with a **meeting on Monday, March 22nd at 7pm, Bwlchygroes Community Hall**, to take these ideas forward. The main focus of the meeting will be 'Encouraging Participation' – please bring your ideas or contact us first if you have any suggestions. We will also be providing an update on FSC certification, and a presentation on the discussions held during the Walk in the Woods.

Moving things forward

The next phase of the forest management work is almost upon us, and we will be starting the planned thinning operations over the next year. This involves cutting some trees from each area whilst retaining the canopy. This will be designed to create room for the remaining trees to carry on growing, and also let light onto the forest floor to encourage natural regeneration of native species. If you would like more information or discuss management options please come on the Walk in the Woods described above.

We will be developing our range of educational courses (see the website for a full list), as well as volunteering opportunities for clearing invasive weed species (Japanese knot weed, Himalayan balsam) and dry stone walling. We are also hoping to make benches and hides where appropriate.

This Spring we will be planting a range of fruit trees along the tracks, with the help of local school children and other children's groups.

We will be exploring the feasibility and potential site of a mountain bike course.

A number of people have shown interest developing the following- walks to look at flora and fauna and an arboretum. Also, one opportunity for participation raised at the last meeting was an apiary, we would be very interested in taking this forward. There are 5 people already interested, we need 7 more to get Tivy Beekeepers to run a course for us. If you are interested please let us know by 28th February. Get in touch with Kate on 01239 841675

Please contact us if you want any more information, would like to receive following newsletters by email, or want anything included in the next newsletter or at the next meeting! growingheart@cooptel.net or our website www.growingheart.co.uk

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