



Alstor 8 x 8 arrives



James Hendrie

Shifting some hefty timber

SNW Trading Ltd, our wholly owned trading subsidiary has just taken delivery of an Alstor 8x8 mini-forwarder, with help from the Scottish Government Third Sector Fund. The Alstor has eight wheel drive, is under 1.5 m wide, and weighs less than 1.5 tonnes. So it can work its way around trees on difficult terrain without damaging the site, and still be transported by a four wheel drive with trailer between sites. In the wood it can load and carry two tonnes of timber, giving it the capacity required to move a serious amount of material in a working day.

If you would like to **see the machine in action** we will be demonstrating it at Dalguise Wood as a part of the Highland Perthshire PAWS Event on the 20th of May.

Simon Lockwood, our Central Scotland Area Manager, researched various machines but it was a visit to see an Alstor in action that cemented the decision to buy. Its speed in the wood, the 60 tonnes of timber extracted and the use of less than 3 gallons of fuel made Simon sum up it up as a machine that "Makes economic sense".

The Alstor has the potential to make a big difference to the economics and practicalities of small scale woodland operations in Scotland. The machine is already proving its worth in Mauldslie Wood SSSI, where we are helping South Lanarkshire Council to gradually restore a Plantation on Ancient Woodland Site.

We will be using the machine to help with the management of our

sites, as well as hiring the machine to other managers. To encourage other contractors to consider using this type of machine we will also be arranging operator training days. ■

* **Contact enquiries@scottishnativewoods.org.uk or call 01887 820392 if you would like to attend the PAWS Event or if you want to know more about either hiring the machine or being trained to operate it.**



Easy to load

James Hendrie



Gateside Primary Forest School

Forest School Leader training places available

What is a Forest School?

An inspirational process that offers children, young people and adults, regular opportunities to achieve, develop confidence and self-esteem through hands on learning experiences in a local woodland environment.

The philosophy of Forest School is to encourage and inspire individuals of any age through positive outdoor experiences. By providing motivating and achievable tasks and activities in a woodland environment each participant is able to develop:

- * Self Awareness
- * Self Regulation
- * Intrinsic motivation
- * Empathy
- * Good social communication skills
- * Independence
- * A positive mental attitude, self-esteem and confidence
- * responsibility and reliability

School children are the most likely beneficiaries and will learn to take responsibility for their own behaviour, achieve a greater understanding of their emotions, raising their self-esteem and motivation to enable them to better function in society. They will be able to break out of the spiral of failure and achieve what they are capable of. These skills often carry on into the classroom and have a positive effect on academic performance as well as decreasing anti-social behaviour such as bullying. Documented evidence has shown that Forest School can succeed where other initiatives have failed.

Training Course

The Howe of Fife FEI Cluster Group is currently sourcing funds to set up a Forest School training course in Fife. We aim to have this in place by the autumn. This is a rigorous training course accredited by the Open College Network and equivalent to SVQ level 3 or higher.

Training for volunteers/teachers/NGO staff to become Forest School leaders will enable participants to gain confidence as leaders and provide a vocational potential for those out of work. Each leader will then be able to deliver, and set up their own, Forest School anywhere in the area and beyond. Showcasing Forest School encourages further uptake of training in the future. New leaders can come from all backgrounds and emerge to contribute greater expertise and leadership skills within the community.

Forest School in Scotland

There is a growing demand for Forest School throughout Scotland with very few qualified leaders or Forest Schools at present. Many schools see it as a way to meet Curriculum for Excellence capacities and government targets as it includes topics such as responsibility, confidence via self-esteem, initiative and problem-solving and teamwork in an outdoor setting. ■

* **If you are interested in becoming a Forest School leader, or would like your school to take part, or to help us raise funds for the training course, please contact Chris on 01337 832619 or email chris.childe@scottishnativewoods.org.uk**

Working farm woodlands

Recently we helped to complete the "Working Farm Woods" feasibility study for the Argyll & Bute Agricultural Forum. As many of Scotland's smaller native woodlands are on farmland Scottish Native Woods have always looked for new ways to interest farmers in managing their woods. One successful outcome of our work has been the recent introduction of a new Woodland Conservation Grazing Grant.

The feasibility study used workshops, "Go see" visits and a telephone survey to investigate how to overcome the barriers that prevent farmers from getting involved in woodlands.

The farmers we talked to were interested in the benefits of woodland management and expansion, including shelter, timber and firewood, new sources of income and locking up carbon.

From Scottish Native Woods' perspective it was encouraging to find out that a high percentage of the farmers preferred to plant native trees, valuing the long term benefits that native woodlands can bring over the attributes of exotic conifers.

However, farmers also identified some of the things that prevented them from making the most of woodland opportunities. There is a lack of knowledge about how to manage woodlands, problems with the economics of farm woods, and a shortage of time and labour to carry out work. Participants believed that a "kick start" project officer could, in a couple of years, provide the help and advice that they needed to encourage taking on woodland management. ■



Still a place for horse logging



People's Postcode Trust

People's Postcode Trust is a subsidiary of the People's Postcode Lottery which can make donations to worthy causes outside of the big charities the weekly draw supports. We have been successful in winning donations for two fantastic projects.

Angus Purden, the presenter of the People's Postcode Lottery programme, helped us with some restoration tasks on our project to improve access within Flisk Wood. You can see a video of Angus in action at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4tgGEHiVp8y> or by visiting our website.

Parts of this video were also used to promote the work of the lottery at the Copenhagen Climate Change summit.

In the wood poor paths and contaminants were obstructing access forcing people to move off the paths which then caused erosion. We have been restoring footpaths, improving drainage and replacing dilapidated footbridges. We are also removing

invasive and non-native trees and shrubs and clearing up contaminants within the wood and on the adjacent beach. The path through the wood forms part of the Fife Coastal Path and is very popular with walkers. The work of our

volunteers has been

invaluable on this project. SEE our volunteer update is you would like to be involved.

People's Postcode Trust has also helped with a community project we are involved with in Aberfeldy. Camserney Community garden is a project run with help from the staff and pupils of Breadalbane Academy. The site has grown up very quickly and matured over two seasons, and

already needs to expand, which it will do by the autumn. The donation from People's Postcode Trust will buy a rotovator, a gazebo, some trees and hedging and install an electricity supply to the site. We are also establishing a propagation unit here to grow aspen trees from native Highland Perthshire sources; an interesting little experiment. Overall this is an intriguing site, with something different going on in nearly every single square metre. Well done to Peter Butter and the pupils. ■



Camserney Community Garden



PPT

Woodfuel initiatives

Oil prices are at an all time high and this cost can hit rural areas harder because of the limited infrastructure, but two new projects in Scotland aim to tackle this with a modern approach to a very old idea.

The Glenlyon Woodfuel Initiative in Highland Perthshire and the Lamancha Village Green Project in Midlothian, both funded by the Climate Challenge Fund, are community schemes developed to reduce the high cost of fossil fuel while reducing carbon emissions and encouraging the development and maintenance of the two area's native woodlands.

Both the rural areas currently rely on oil-fired burners to heat the dispersed homes that make up the communities and the running cost is having a direct effect on the populations' ability to continue living in the area.

Tom Beels, facilitator for the Glenlyon Woodfuel Initiative, said: "It's really hard for people to stay here at the moment because it's just so expensive to live with heating oil and fuel prices.

"We are hoping to offer people a much cheaper, more viable way of heating their homes and want to encourage the community to stay in the Glen."

At the Lamancha Village Green Project work has begun

to achieve their target of helping people reduce their personal carbon footprint by at least 10% in 2010 and some members of the community already have new wood burners in their homes and they are looking to create a community wood store for locals to use.

As well as providing cost-effective and environmentally sound heating solutions, the two projects have encouraged community spirit by creating jobs in the local area and working together to help achieve their aims.

Sally Bowie, project co-ordinator for the Village Green Project, said: "Everybody is helping everybody out; it's a very old-fashioned feeling. It's quite incredible really."

Scottish Native Woods have been helping out too by providing a report into the viability of the wood supply in the Lamancha area.

The native woodlands are at the heart of the projects, and Tom Beels is confident that they can supply his community with their heating needs.

He said: "We have here, potentially, an entirely sustainable supply of woodland if we can manage it properly. We can also add value by sustaining it, and not just economically but create value for wildlife as well. It's planning for the future which is what forestry should be about." ■

Scottish Native Woods conservation volunteers

Our volunteers carry out a wide range of woodland management activities. Our regular monthly events take place throughout Fife and occasionally adjoining counties. We have a pool of 90 volunteers and a further 90 on the mailing list.

Tasks volunteers have undertaken have included:

- * Brushing and burning conifers
- * cutting and burning Rhododendron ponticum
- * Treeplanting
- * Dry-Stane Dyking.
- * Building a tree nursery
- * Thinning Sycamore
- * Tree-planting after-care - Weeding tree tubes.
- * Clearing brash
- * Bridge building and path clearance.
- * Hedge-planting



We have some new sites throughout Fife including the beautiful Falkland Estate, and Flisk Wood on the North Coast. The latter is a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and very popular with walkers. (See our People's Postcode feature)

Where do our volunteers come from?

Anywhere and everywhere: from our website and other linked websites; local companies; volunteer centres, particularly Kirkcaldy and Cupar, provide a large proportion of our regulars and we also attend local events such as Big Tent Festival where people can register interest and learn about our work. Some people are just passing when we are working and want to find out more.

- * Most workdays are on the first Sunday of the month.
- * All tools, training and any safety equipment will be provided.
- * We do not provide transport (although we encourage car-sharing).
- * We meet on site.
- * The day runs from 10:00am to 4:00pm.
- * Over 18s only, unless accompanied by an adult.

What is expected of volunteers?

We are often asked this. Really it's about turning up with enthusiasm and a willingness to take part. There are regular breaks and you can do as little or as much as you choose. Volunteers come from a wide range of backgrounds and we expect everyone to show respect for the environment and other people.

How do I get involved?

- * Check our website www.scottishnativewoods.org.uk or call Chris on 01337 832619 or email chris.childe@scottishnativewoods.org.uk.

We look forward to meeting you

After the freeze

As the memories of the harsh winter fade with the arrival of the swallows, save a thought for many woodland owners who are left to deal with the damage. Out and about Scottish Native Woods' managers are seeing a variety of tree damage as a result of the quantity and longevity of the snow fall this winter.

In a large number of woods the weight of snow has resulted in breakages in branches, loss of stem leaders and fallen trees. However, some fallen trees such as rowan can re-grow from lower down the stem where the root plate is still attached to the ground. Also, with little available food during the winter months, mammals such as rabbits have survived by feeding on tree and shrub bark above the snow line; in some cases ring-barking and killing even mature trees.

Whilst the tendency could be to clear up the woody debris; in areas distant from access, damaged tree trunks and branches retained on site will decay naturally over time, adding diversity to our woodland ecosystem by enhancing the amount of deadwood habitat. Where damaged trees must be cleared for access and safety reasons then retaining as much of the cut wood, in as large sections as is safe to do so, elsewhere in the woodland will be of great value.

Many developing native woodlands planted in the last few years have also seen damage in areas where heavy and drifting snow has pushed over staked tree tubes as well as broken tree ties. It is important remedial work such as renewing tree ties as well as replacing and firming stakes is undertaken this spring so that the years of tree growth are not wasted. No grant aid is available for "repair" work in new woodlands, however, its completion will ensure that future grant commitments and payments due on the scheme are not jeopardised. ■



Damaged birch trees

You can help us protect our precious woodlands

I would like to become a 'Friend' and make regular donations to Scottish Native Woods

Each month I would like to give: £ _____ (€5 or please specify other amount).

Title: _____ First name: _____ Last name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Tel: _____ E mail: _____

Please debit my credit card (VISA / Mastercard) each month, starting on: _____ (dd/mm/yyyy).

My card number is: _____ Start date: _____ Expiry date: _____

Name on card: _____

Please apply Gift Aid to this and all my donations to Scottish Native Woods: (please tick). Thank you.

Please cut out and post to: 'Friends', Scottish Native Woods, 1 Crieff Road, Aberfeldy PH15 2BJ

If you would prefer to give online, please go to www.scottishnativewoods.org/index.asp?lm=30

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