

Culag Enterprises complete contract at Knockan Crag NNR

As part of an upgrade to the visitor facilities at Knockan Crag, local sub-contractors working with Culag Enterprises have completed the new walling adjacent to the car park. This wall has been constructed to reflect the geology of the Moine Thrust at Knockan which will be the back drop to new interpretation material.

A new stone bench was also built next to the Rock Room. This bench will have a key pad fitted in the arm which will allow interaction with the interpretation of the geology.



Joining the Highland Council Rangers Fungi walk



Photographing Bolete mushrooms

The Highland Council Rangers held their annual fungi guided walk in Culag Woods this September. Rangers Roz & Gwen led a group of 12 through the fascinating and bewildering world of fungi. This is a particularly good year for fungi and the group was able to find a long list of species from Brown Birch Bolete, to beautiful speckled Puff balls, many different types of Russula, Angels Wings, Bracket Fungus and of course Fly Agaric.



Angels Wings



Puff Ball

Coigach & Assynt Living Landscape Project

Culag Community Woodland Trust is proud to be one of the founding partners of Coigach & Assynt Living Landscape (CALL), an innovative new project now underway in Assynt and Coigach. CALL is a unique partnership: a mix of private, community and charity landowners working together. On a large scale - the current CALL partners manage approximately 32,000 hectares of land in Assynt and Coigach - this is a new concept in land and conservation management in Scotland.

The current CALL partners are:
Culag Community Woodland Trust

Assynt Foundation

Eisg Brachaidh

John Muir Trust (Quinag)

Scottish Wildlife Trust (Ben Mor Coigach)

Tanera Mor (Summer Isles)

The aims of the CALL partnership are to:

Improve habitat condition and connectedness on a landscape scale.

Develop opportunities for training, apprenticeships and jobs linked to the land.

Encourage landscape-based arts and cultural projects.

The CALL partnership has recently appointed Viv Halcrow as Project Manager. Viv is working with the CALL partners to ensure delivery of the many and wide-ranging projects they have identified as being important in achieving CALL's far-sighted aims. She is looking forward to developing links with many people in Assynt and Coigach, and will try to ensure everyone is kept informed of progress. Other landowning partners are warmly encouraged to join the partnership to help it develop, and anyone interested in CALL is very welcome to get involved. Working on many different levels, it really is a project with something of benefit to everyone.

Viv is currently busy with development work towards two projects:

The construction of a commercial tree-nursery, which will underpin several jobs. An area of land has been identified for this, on Little Assynt field, and a decision on funding is expected by the end of October. Reinstatement of native woodland is

important to each of the CALL partners and to the project as a whole - local planting stock is urgently needed.

Hosting two artists-in-residence to work with school children and the community on a cultural landscape project. With one artist based in Coigach and one in Assynt, this is an exciting project that everyone can be involved in and enjoy. Funding has been applied for and a decision is expected by the New Year.

Viv would be delighted to hear from you if you are interested in the CALL project. Please feel welcome to contact her by email, phone or post, or via the CCWT office:

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The Project is currently funded by:



CCWT & Assynt Foundation host CWA visit to Assynt

Several representatives from community woodlands throughout the Highlands visited Assynt during the Summer in a joint networking day hosted by CCWT & Assynt Foundation. Among them were board members from Dunnet Forestry Trust who were keen to learn techniques for extracting timber. CCWT Director Jimmy Crooks

demonstrated a system with a winch whereby the fallen tree is dragged out following a zig-zagging line. After an extended guided tour of Culag Woods in the morning the group was shown around the walled garden at Glen Canisp and the wood chip boiler installed as part of the refurbishment of Glen Canisp Lodge.





Culag Community Woodland Trust

NEWS UPDATE

Mink monitoring at Little Assynt

A big thank you to all the mink monitoring volunteers who are continuing to check the raft along the Leitir Easaidh Path. There have been no signs of footprints in the clay, although there have been unconfirmed reports of mink sightings along the River Inver & Loch Assynt. With that in mind the new Highlands Mink Officer, Gunnar Scholtz, brought along another mink tunnel and clay pad to CCWT. The tunnel has been placed near the junction of the new Loch an-t Sabhail Path with the way marked Fisherman's Path and will be checked by the volunteers along with the raft. Please report any mink sightings to Gunnar at gunnar@rafts.org.uk 07825 184 080.



Checking the mink tunnel on the Loch an t-Sabhail Path.

Next Issue:

More on the Culag Woods Access Project

Little Assynt Tree Nursery Project

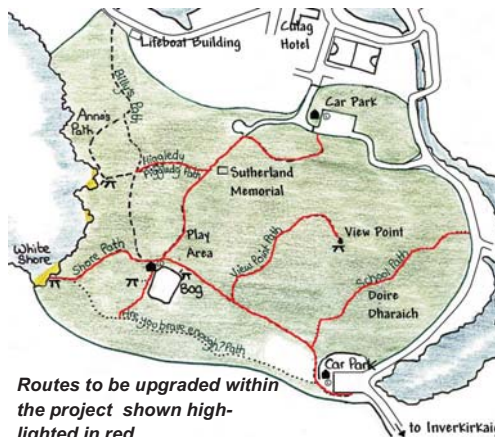
The completed shelter at Loch an t-Sabhail

Contact:

Get in touch with your news and views
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Work begins on the Culag Woods Access Project

Work to upgrade the path network in Culag Woods started in May this year and will continue through the winter months to be completed by March 2012. The project is being funded under the Scotland Rural Development Programme (SRDP) with further funding coming from the Highland Council Ward Discretionary Budget, Highland Culture Programme, The Brown Forbes Memorial Fund, Scottish Mountaineering Trust and the Hugh Fraser Foundation.



Routes to be upgraded within the project shown highlighted in red

The demand for improvements to the path network was highlighted in Community consultation in November 2008 and recommenda-

tions from the Highland Council Access Officer. One of the sections already completed is the White Shore Path which is now smoother and more accessible to those who are less able to negotiate the previously rough nature of the ground. A regular walker in the woods has commented that the improved path enables you to look around at the trees providing a new view of the woodland where previously you had to watch out for obstacles under your feet. However wilder paths, such as the 'Are you brave enough' Path will still be available to fulfil the desire for scrambling over rocks and tree roots.



The new and old sections along the White Shore Path

Learning the Gaelic alphabet in Culag Woods

Local author and poet, Mandy Haggith ran an A-B Tree session in Culag Woods for Stoer and Lochinver Primary Schools. Mandy has organised a series of creative writing events in community woodlands celebrating the International Year of the Forest. The events are based around the Tree Ogham, the Gaelic Alphabet, which associates a particular native tree species with each letter. The children in Culag Woods were looking at Heather which represents the letter U.

This is the poem from Mandy inspired by the children that day.

What's the weather today?

*The weather's a splash of scent.
The weather wears princess pink.
The weather feels featherbed springy.
The weather's a rusty bluster.
The weather is wet but it's yummy as honey.
It's heather weather!*



"A taste of heather honey will make you shrink so that the heather will be the size of a tree"