

Penney's Wood Community Woodland

Chairperson's Report 21st November 2018

2018 has been a particularly busy year for the committee of Penney's Wood Community Woodland with much to decide, plan and organise; hands-on hard work; and adverse weather wreaking havoc and creating its own demands.

The trees are generally thriving although inevitable losses were sustained over winter and the late cold spell. There have been particular losses among the Scots pines. As the trees grow on there are signs of disease especially affecting some of the birch and crab apples. This situation will be monitored. Storm Hector wrought considerable damage in May with over 100 trees blown over which necessitated swift action. Fortunately only a handful was lost. To offset some of tree loss and to fill vacant areas, a free Wild Wood pack of 105 native species trees has been ordered from the Woodland Trust. This may be the last chance to introduce new planting before the canopy spreads, casting shade and the roots compete. Penney's Wood is now a member of The Community Woodlands Association which provides a common forum and access to expertise.

The Committee was delighted to secure funding from Fossoway and District Community Council Community Benefit Fund. This has been spent on planned projects to enhance the woodland experience and broaden access. Rustic benches, organised by Ewen Cameron, have been installed in a pleasing group to create a social area, with two outlying benches providing viewpoints. Handsome, durable signboards welcome visitors at each gate, with a noticeboard at the main gate allowing the display of information, art and creativity. The laser-etched oak boards were sourced from The Aberfeldy Workshop, a social enterprise, and the signs were designed and constructed by local craftsman Alan Tennant who donated considerable time to the project.

A grass cutting rota has been successfully implemented by Duncan Pritchard to spread the burden of maintaining the pathway network and next year this will be supplemented by judicious use of a strimmer around signs and benches.

Bulb planting around benches, signs and entrances was carried out with the assistance of Amanda James of Crook and Drum Growing Together and Perth & Kinross Council Unpaid Work Team. We look forward to seeing the results in the Spring.

Penney's Wood Community Woodland was represented at Fossoway Church Summer Songs of Praise where there was opportunity to share our aims and values.

A new firm bond has been established with Fossoway Primary School and Nursery. An initial outing to the woodland has been followed by many class and group visits, combining fun and learning. Penney's Wood is pleased to support Fossoway Primary as they embark on a Living Communities creative project. We are excited to host the finished artwork.

Finally the Constitution has been amended and upgraded to better reflect the responsibilities and activities of Penney's Wood Community Woodland. In accordance with the changes the next AGM will be in April 2019 and this is therefore an Interim Report.