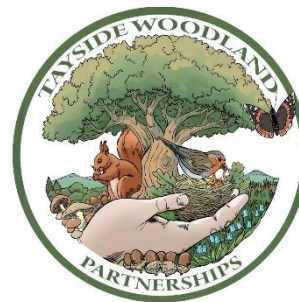


Tay Woods



No. 01 Summer 2026

The Newsletter of Tayside Woodland Partnerships (TWP)

This newsletter aims to give a brief, regular, overview of who we are and what we are up to. If you know of others who might like to be on this email list then please let us know (or indeed if you want your name removed!). Contact stevetaywoods@proton.me

Who is TWP

Formed in 2021 with the objective of promoting woodland habitat restoration across Tayside, working with woodland owners, groups, schools and other organisations. We have an active membership across Tayside, a small tree nursery in Pitlochry, and two brand-new, part-time members of staff.

News

Tradecoaters Field Tree Nursery

By O, the Nursery manager

Our tree nursery is currently a central focus of our development as we build the necessary infrastructure. Because the site is not open to the public and operates by invitation only, we look forward to hosting small, pre-arranged group activities once it is fully operational. Ultimately, this space will become a vital hub for cultivating trees for our partner woodland projects.

The construction of the nursery is progressing well. Several tonnes of gravel and stone dust have been delivered to the site, and groups of volunteers have worked hard to spread, level and compact the material, creating a firm, smooth floor within the mesh tunnel. Around the outside of the mesh tunnel, a half-metre-wide strip has been laid with weed-suppressing membrane and covered with gravel.

At the same time, work has begun on roofing the potting bench. Approximately half of the polycarbonate roof panels have been installed, a significant step towards completing the infrastructure.



Over the next month or so, we hope to install the first growing benches, on which the majority of our trees will be cultivated. This will mark the beginning of the nursery's operational phase and a major milestone in the project's development.

None of this progress would have been possible without the generous support of our volunteers, who have given their time and energy to help bring the nursery to life. We extend our sincere thanks to everyone who has contributed, and in particular to the Pitlochry Path Group, whose hard work and practical assistance have made a significant contribution to the project.

Working with our nursery manager and/or Education and Community Officer, there will be various ways to engage with this space in future: from working with seeds and young plants to assisting with site maintenance.

A great way to connect with TWP is to arrange a visit or to volunteer at our Tree Nursery in Pitlochry. Volunteers regularly meet up Friday mornings.

[You can contact us here.](#)



Volunteer days setting up nursery infrastructure

Education and Community Report

By Education and Community Officer, Steve Robertson.

A big part of this new role will be to connect with possible new members, to link with local schools and organisations across the region. During this start-up period, Steve took the opportunity to connect with the amazing *Dronley Community Wood*, just outside Dundee. [Click Here For Dronley Facebook Page](#)



Dronley Wood: Wind damage 'holes' like this one from storm Arwen (2021) are a huge risk in the transition to more stable continuous tree cover in woods originally planted and designed to be clear-felled

This guided woodland event, coordinated by the **Community Woodlands Association**, was led by Dronley's own forester, Dirk Sporleder, with a key focus of extolling the merits of *Continuous Cover Forestry* (CCF): managing for a permanently irregular structure within a woodland, selectively harvesting individual trees, to leave permanent cover in perpetuity without resorting to the environmentally and financially expensive clear fell systems currently favoured across the UK.

Dirk argues forcefully that CCF saves money overall (he even showed us his workings!) – and you also get huge benefits for people and all other forms of life, e.g.: lack of compaction from huge machines devastating soils; greatly reduced ecosystem shock for all creatures, and soil, water, air quality, etc. Rather like much mainstream agricultural practice, clear-cut forestry makes little sense if looking realistically at wider parameters: the trick is, don't include the wider parameters! Dirk, suggests that in Germany, clear-felling, as we practice it here, would be illegal due to the ecological and economic impacts.

It was, indeed, a technical (Germanic?) woodland walk, but totally understandable, with a mix of very experienced foresters and non-foresters in the group. Incredibly inspirational to see this very German system of tree management in this very Scottish, former *Forest and Land Scotland*, conifer plantation in transition to CCF. Great to see what is possible with all the challenges of this woodland's history, and of wind, weather and small woodland economics.

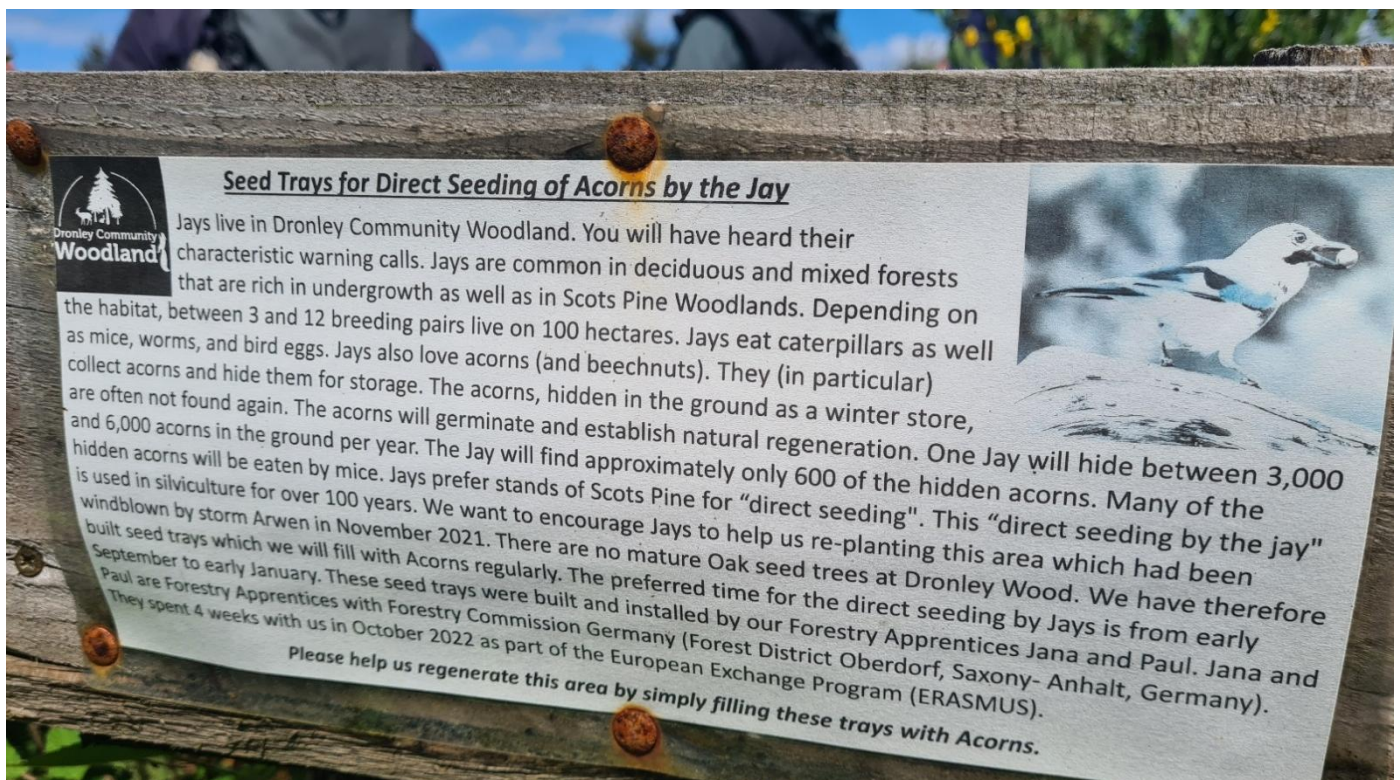
A further fascinating element of this 50ha community-owned plantation is the *continuous-cover-of-people*, that it engages with long term. The woodland benefits from over 3000 volunteer hours/year, and is heavily used by the public, with many dogwalkers and runners. Indeed, with summer joggers arriving from 4am, just after sunrise, the deer stalker culls animals on neighbouring farmland instead of within the wood itself, to increase safety (!!)

Perhaps one of the most amazing things

(above pictures) Jay planted oak and Jay Tray at Dronley (see over) about Dronley is that it employs 5 part-time workers, long-term (including Dirk), as well as various consultants and contractors. A huge indicator of getting something very right for this small woodland is the ability to get the economics of long-term employment happening. A wood that pays stays, as they say. It is doubtful clear-felling could hope to provide anything approaching this amazingly positive outcome for the local community and long term future continuity of people, of employment and training of young women and men foresters, some of whom accompanied us on our walk.



One small, final example of the simplicity and humility that helps make Dronley a success are the **Jay trays**. Whilst most establishment work in Dronley still involves ‘conventional’ tree planting in plastic tubes, bird-planted-trees are also strongly encouraged. As described below, Jay (or acorn) boxes are placed on a high stump or post in an appropriate location (here in the middle of a recent windblown area), the boxes are periodically topped up with bagged acorns from a suitable source by volunteers or the public – and, as they have done for 10’s of thousands of years, the birds do the rest.



Info on the Jay Trays at Dronley: engaging with the amazing symbiotic relationship between tree and bird.

If you would like TWP to attend an event you are organising, or if you would like us to help your school or group connect with seeds, trees, or woodlands (or with our wonderful Tree Nursery), then please get in touch with us, e.g. stevetaywoods@proton.me

Taymount and Five Mile Woods: Stanley, Bankfoot, Murthly

West Stormont Woodland Group (SCIO) is proud to be a member of *Tayside Woodland Partnerships*. Our principal objective has been community ownership of Taymount Wood and Five Mile Wood near Stanley but WSWG (pronounced Wizzywig!) is currently working with Forestry and Land Scotland to develop a Management Agreement through which WSWG's core Vision of Nature Recovery and



Community Wellbeing and Resilience in Taymount and Five Mile Woods will strongly influence how these woods are managed in future. If you would like to be involved in this new direction for the WSWG Project, it would be great to hear from you. There are so many ways you could help. www.weststormontwoodlandgroup.scot

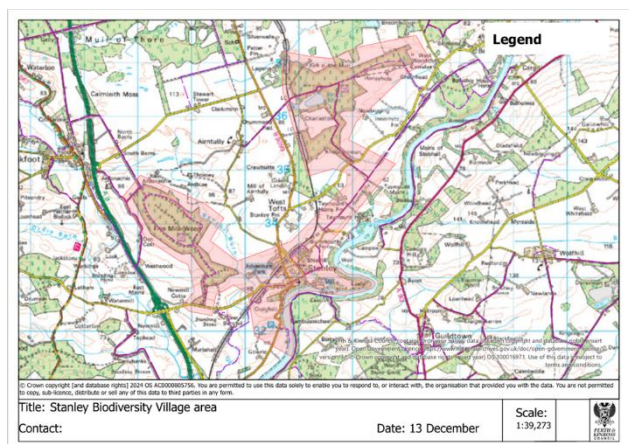
Children's bushcraft in Taymount Wood

Woodland path

Wildflowers and pollinators

Stanley Rookery Wood

At local level, we are also very interested in improving how the woods relate ecologically and culturally to their surrounding landscape in the Stanley, Bankfoot and Murthly area. In this regard, under our Outreach and Connectivity theme, the WSWG Project is also part of the Stanley Biodiversity Village Project, including a community plan to assure the long-term protection of Stanley Rookery Wood through a Management Agreement with the PKC Greenspace Team. A few local people have



carried out a simple site survey of this micro-woodland (0.56 acres) and begun putting thoughts and ideas together but we now wish to develop into a dedicated group to take the lead going forward.

Stanley Biodiversity Village area including Taymount & Five Mile Woods

Rookery Wood at dusk – Stanley's covid HQ!

Rookery Wood boundary – Perth Road, Stanley

This is a wonderful opportunity to take positive and meaningful action for this precious wildlife habitat on our doorstep so if you think you would like to help build something really exciting and valuable for nature and local people, please, please get in touch. contact@weststormontwoodlandgroup.scot

Twinning Trees: from Tay-side to Zambezi-side

We've twinned towns. We've even twinned toilets. So why not trees?

Tayside Woodland Partnerships and **The Re-Green Project** are hoping to work together on a 'Tree-Twinning' project that will see trees planted in Tayside being linked with trees planted in Zambia's Zambezi Valley. Whether they be fruit trees at community orchards or native species to restore lost habitat, the program will be a reminder of the links we share through our relationship with the natural world and the connected nature of our ecologies. We will be inviting businesses, schools, churches and community groups to contribute to our endeavours either through donations or provision of planting sites.

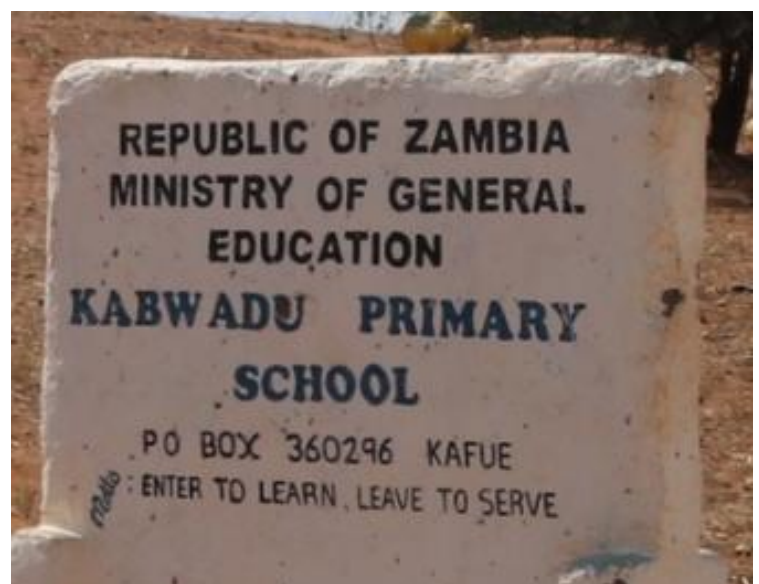
Watch this space.



Mr Moffat Mwita, deputy head of Gota-Gota school planting an orange tree



The road past Kabwadu primary school



Possible New Partnerships

Member of the group also recently visited another amazing Community Woodland at **Dun Coillich** at Glengoulandie, between lochs Tay and Tummel, looking to investigate possible ways to connect, interact and boost the activities of both organisations. Managed by the **Highland Perthshire Communities Land Trust**, Dun Coillich is a community-owned landscape regeneration and rural skills training project. <https://www.duncoillich.org/>



Dun Coillich woods at Glengoulandie

Recent TWP Successes and other Thanks

Recent funding successes include:

The National Lottery Fund

Enchanted Forest

Basil Death Trust

Nature Restoration Fund

Pitlochry Rotary Club

Thanks to all of these funders for their support with various projects which we are developing at present – all very much appreciated. Also thanks to all of our volunteers and contractors in helping make all of this fundraising actually happen, particularly **Marion Young**, and also special thanks to **Morag Boyd**, who has now moved on to working-pastures new. Morag has done amazing fundraising work over the last period, with TWP benefiting greatly from her enthusiasm and expertise.

Also, sticking with money things, thanks hugely to **Ron Taylor** for his sterling work in running our books as our outgoing Treasurer. Greatly appreciated (and see advert below seeking a new Treasurer!).

Upcoming Events

Blueberry Picking

TWP has accepted two fundraising slots at

Thomas Thompson Farm, Ashgrove Road, Blairgowrie PH10 7EX.

A fundraising event for us, free blueberry picking for all comers. And a chance to learn about TWP and chat to our volunteers.

Friday 4 September 12-3pm
Tuesday 13 October 1:30-6pm

Pick all you want and make a donation to TWP. If you are able and willing to help on either of these days, it would be very much appreciated, contact Charlie taysidewp@gmail.com

Other Things

New Treasurer Wanted

Would you like to help us re-tree Tayside? And are you good with numbers and bookkeeping things?

We currently have a vacancy for a Treasurer. We are a small charity so the workload is relatively low. Main responsibility is maintaining the bankbook and giving the accountant the necessary information to audit the accounts at the end of the year. This doesn't require expensive bookkeeping experience (but absolutely brilliant if you have this), the role just needs a reasonable level of numeracy. Please contact us if you are interested in helping us with this.

Please do forward this newsletter to others who you think might be interested.

We are always looking for new members.

If this is of interest to you, please contact our membership secretary,

David Young twpmembsec@gmail.com

For newsletter things, contact steveTWP01@proton.me

Or taysidewp@gmail.com

You can also find us at

<https://www.facebook.com/people/Tayside-Woodland-Partnerships/100078558141772/>

<https://taysidewoodlandpartnerships.org/>