

November 2007

Welcome to the first news bulletin of the Community Biodiversity Action Project at Sulwath Connections.

A Community Biodiversity Officer, Ruth Paterson, has been appointed to take forward work under this community action project.

Community Biodiversity Action is just one of Sulwath's twenty projects which cover a huge range of work on habitat management, disabled fishing access, creating better access and interpretation, protecting endangered species and conservation of historic churchyards.

Have a look at: www.dgcommunity.net/sulwathconnections for a truly amazing run down on the work to be done over the next three years.

Principally funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and working with a very wide range of partners Sulwath Connections covers the coastlands and river valleys of the Scottish Solway between Langholm and Stranraer.



Supported by the Dumfries & Galloway Biodiversity Partnership over the next three years, Ruth will be working with a number of communities to help create or improve green spaces for people to access and enjoy nature around their towns and villages.

In this bulletin we hope to bring you news of the Sulwath community projects and bits of information about similar projects, local nature, funding sources etc



Action in Rhonehouse Village

Rhonehouse Village is a pleasant village of about 180 residents near Castle Douglas in the Stewartry.

In the middle of the village, formerly known as Kelton Hill, is the Village Fair Green. It is known as the Fair Green for as far back as the 18th century it was the site of a famous fair. The Fair was described by a writer of 1792 : " From Ireland, from England and from most distant parts of North Britain, horse-dealers, cattle – dealers, sellers of sweetmeats and spirituous liquors, gypsies, pick-pockets and smugglers are accustomed to resort to this fair..... on the hill....tents are erected in rows....for the entertainment of the multitude. Through the whole fair day one busy tumultuous scene is here exhibited"

The current village community have re-instated the fair and are working to improve and conserve the Fair Green as a place of recreation and enjoyment.

On the 25th November Rhonehouse Fair Green committee will start work planting trees on the Fair Green. Planting a variety of native trees such as hazel, ash, rowan and hawthorn will add variety and plenty of food for the local birds and insects.

The Fair Green project will involve people of many ages getting involved in learning more about local nature and wildlife and how to help encourage and protect it. Over the next few months the group will also create interpretation boards for the Fair Green based on local history and biodiversity.

Spotlight on Spignel



One of the Fair Green's highlights is the plant Spignel. Dumfries and Galloway's Biodiversity Officer, Peter Norman says "This is a very rare plant south of Cumbria. It's more common in western Scotland but has recently declined and the colony at Fair Green is now one of the largest in the region. A member of the carrot family, it has feathery leaves but is easiest to identify from its powerful smell of aniseed. It is great that the Rhonehouse community will be carrying out work to benefit this important plant."

Big Lottery Breathing Places

Applications for grants can be made between the 12th November and 18th January

Grants between £1000 and £10,000 can be awarded. Projects must not cost more than £25K in total and must meet two of the following criteria

*the natural environment of the breathing place is developed to encourage plant life and animals
People in the local community make more and better use of the Breathing Place*

People in the local community are more engaged in developing and maintaining the Breathing Place

www.bbc.co.uk/breathingplaces

Big Lottery Fund Enquiries Line

Telephone: 0870 240 2391

Email:

enquiries.Scotland@biglotteryfund.org.uk

O2 It's Your Community awards

Awards of up to £1000 can be made to communities for the following types of project:

Community Places: reinvigorating community, amenity and recreation areas – e.g. installing new equipment for a playground

Community People: helping bring people together – e.g. promoting personal safety to young people

Community Pride: restoring a sense of pride – e.g. clearing litter or graffiti

Community Landscape: improving your natural environment – e.g. planting trees

Check out this link

www.itsyourcommunity.co.uk

hello@itsyourcommunity.co.uk

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