

## NEWSLETTER 2 — March 2007



Dear member/supporter

**Purchase completed!** The day we have all been waiting for finally arrived on 21st February when Leadburn Woodland became the property of the Friends of Leadburn Community Woodland. After two and half years there was little to mark the occasion with no keys to hand over, just a huge sigh of relief all round amongst the committee and all others involved in the transaction. I would like to thank all the committee who have stuck it out through all the times when little progress was being made and we wondered if we would ever be successful. I would also like to thank all those who have helped with advice and assistance over the past years.

We are especially grateful to our providers of funds, the Scottish Land Fund (£26,250) and Scottish Borders Leader plus (£8,000), who guided us through this delayed transaction. The final part of the purchase price/legal fees was made up of community contributions (£1,750), so thank you to all those who contributed to the planning and purchase. Special mention should go to Duncan MacKenzie, our solicitor at Stuart & Stuart, who took on a transaction that became a lot more time consuming than he ever expected. Thank you Duncan.

We can now start to make real progress with work on site. Our first priority is to put in our own access road from the layby so that other work can follow on from there. Planning permission has recently been granted for this road. Some small scale tree planting will take place in April so please come along to this event which more than anything marks the beginning of our community woodland. We also plan to start regular volunteer days – provisional dates for these are given in the events diary below.

Lesley Muirden (Chairman)

**First Volunteer Day. VOLUNTEERS WANTED!** Volunteers are required to clear ground prior to tree planting at Leadburn Wood on:

**Sunday 25th March from 10am to 1pm & 2pm to 5pm**

You will need warm, waterproof, outdoor clothing, working gloves, wellies and lots of enthusiasm. Meet in lay-by (NT236545) on the A703 Peebles road, a mile south of the Leadburn crossroads, at 10am or at 2pm.

Please bring a pack lunch and a drink. Whatever length of time you can spare will be very welcome, whether morning or afternoon or, for the energetic, all day! Any tools necessary will be provided.

Please note that the site is very rough underfoot and there are areas of standing water. For that reason we feel that it is not suitable for young children.

Contact: Des on 01968 676246 or Wendy on 01721 730390 with any queries. We look forward to seeing you on the 25th!

**Community consultation.** We have been working on a 5-year management plan. This plan is nearly complete and some of you will have seen earlier drafts at previous meetings. We intend to give residents in local communities a further chance to put ideas forward and make comments by visiting events in the area during April and May. Please see the events diary below.

**Railway building.** Do we have a member with some handyman/joinery skills? On site is an old railway building that has fallen into disrepair. For safety reasons we need to block off the doorways until it is decided what to do with this building. If you think you can help, or know of someone who would have some time to get involved, please give any of the committee a ring. A visit to look at what is involved can be arranged.

**Plant Sale.** The annual Eddleston plant sale has always been a great money raiser for the Eddleston Horticultural Society. This year, the society has agreed to Leadburn Community Woodland being involved as well. So it should be even bigger and better than normal! If you have surplus plants in your garden that could be potted up and sold to raise funds, please contact any committee member to arrange for delivery or collection. The sale is on 26th May.

**Fund-Raising.** Over the next ten years, we hope to buy and plant of the order of 20,000 trees! This will require a significant fund-raising effort.

We have been looking at a wide variety of potential sources of funds, but past experience tells us that we must target our applications accurately. We have divided the site up into 6 compartments and will be matching plans for each section to applications to specific private and public funds. We will also be approaching businesses in the area to support our project. From September 2007 there will be Forestry Commission grants for tree planting which are allocated on a first come, first served basis and paid per hectare of broad leaves; funding from this source may be used to plant denser parts of the site. Help in kind will also be sought and it is essential that anybody who puts in time on the project record the time spent. The reason is that funding bodies may request such information and take this into account by matching time with money.

The initial membership fee, which was collected in 2005/6, covered the period up to the AGM at the end of 2006. Most of those members who attended the AGM renewed at that time. We would be grateful if those who have not renewed could do so using the enclosed form. If you are a tax payer, please consider completing the Gift Aid Declaration form too, as this will allow us to reclaim your tax from the Inland Revenue. Single membership is £5 and family membership is £10. Cheques should be made payable to 'Friends of Leadburn Community Woodland'. Forms and payment should be sent to our membership secretary: Neil MacDonald, 2, Annsmill, Leadburn, West Linton, Peeblesshire, EH46 7BE.

**Edinburgh Marathon.** The organisers of this are seeking volunteers to help with the running of this event on 27<sup>th</sup> May. There are jobs available to suit everyone. You will get a t-shirt, lunch and a £15 donation to the charity of your choice, which we hope will be this one! If you are interested, further details are available on the web site: <http://www-edinburgh-marathon.com/?volunteer>

### Events Diary

- 25 March Volunteer day. Preparation for tree planting.
- 1 April Opening ceremony. Planting of the first tree by Jeremy Purvis MSP and volunteer day. We plan to plant some small trees in shelters on the higher ground in centre of the site. Note that this is a different date from that given earlier in the Peeblesshire News.
- 26 April Howgate Community Council AGM. We will be doing a display showing our plans for the site.
- 29 April Volunteer day.
- 26 May Joint event with Eddleston Horticultural Society in Eddleston village hall. Plant sale, display showing our plans for the site, tombola, refreshments.
- 27 May Volunteer day.
- 24 June Volunteer day.
- 8 July Joint meeting with the Botanical Society of Scotland who will be carrying out a botanical survey of the site. Come along and learn some botany! All welcome, no matter what your level of knowledge. 10am start at the layby. Protective clothing, packed lunch and stout footwear will be needed.

**Annual General Meeting.** Thanks to all those who came along to our AGM on 23rd November 2006. These meetings are not usually known for their large turnout but the committee was given a real boost by the number of members that came along to show that the project continued to be of interest. If any member would like copies of the minutes or accounts, please contact us and they can be sent.

Since the AGM, our treasurer Graham Young has indicated that he will need to resign in the near future because of other commitments. We will be seeking to co-opt a member to take over this role until the next AGM.

Our committee now consists of:

Chairman	Lesley Muirden (Eddleston)	01721 730215
Vice Chair	David Sales (Eddleston)	01721 730355
Treasurer	Vacancy	
Membership secretary	Neil MacDonald (Leadburn)	01968 674136
General secretary & fundraising	Heather Termie (Penicuik)	01968 677302
Fundraising & volunteer co-ordinator	Wendy Cunningham (Eddleston)	01721 730390
Fundraising & volunteer co-ordinator	Des O'Hanlon (Leadburn)	01968 676246