

## Membership Campaign



Have you seen our new campaign? **Have you, your friends and family signed up for free membership yet?** We launched it less than a week ago and have already had a flurry of individuals, groups and schools signing up for membership and a chance to plant an ACT tree. For people who would like us to do the planting, we plan to have an event in Feb/March 2018 when we can start a new small patch of native woodland. To sign up please email [info@act-now.org.uk](mailto:info@act-now.org.uk)



Leaders day at Kilfinan Community Forest on 27<sup>th</sup> October was attended by ACT Team, Branching Out Leaders, Mental Health workers, funders, woodland organisers, Branching Out course participants and transport providers. The event was a great opportunity to discuss progress with Branching Out and the best way forward after the current funded period. Plus a chance to take part in some branching out favourite activities including mindfulness, string-making and sticks whittling. Filming was also taking place for our NHS funded “Benefits of Outdoor Activity Film”- we hope to have a rough-cut ready for the Board Meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> December.

Our project steering group met on 14<sup>th</sup> Nov. 10 Branching Out programmes have now been completed, new programme locations including South Kintyre are being developed and leader refresher training scheduled for early 2018. Sara has started compiling recipes, poetry and other ideas generated at programmes for a Branching Out Argyll publication.



Getting to the roots of Rhododendron ponticum



We are delighted that our Heritage Lottery/SNH/FCS project at “Getting to the Roots of Rhododendron ponticum in Glen Creran” is now fully funded and ready to go. The external support contract was put out to tender and awarded to Gordon Gray Stephens and Bob Black. Our project steering group meets mid-January, and we will meet with the Glen Creran community to formally launch the 3-year programme on January 25<sup>th</sup>. The project budget is £97K over 3 years.



Our Project Officer Elaine has been busy attending the Argyll and the Isles Tourism Co-operative mini summits. The contracts for leaflet design for Secret Coast Trails and removal of Japanese Knotweed at the Corran Nature Reserve in Mid-Argyll have been put out to tender. Elaine has also been working on project development proposals around Argyll’s long-distance routes and is continuing to support ideas with a number of community groups as part of ACT Hubs. ACT Hubs received £6856 from the Co-op Community Fund to invest in our projects.



We’re delighted to (finally) be able to announce the launch of Act Argyll in Helensburgh starting January 2018. With the support of £185K from the Social Economic Growth Fund (European Social Fund) administered by Scottish Government.

We will launch recruitment for a project co-ordinator, chargehand, 2 x trainees and 2 x work experience placements. Our aim is to equip our trainees and

assistants with the certificated skills and experience they need to move into full-time employment whilst providing our communities with services which enhance local areas.



Sarah and Deb on Islay have finalised details for a Deer Management Plan contract and have been working with SNH and landowners to progress CANN delivery plans. Sarah met with CANN partners in Ireland and is organising an Islay trip for Butterfly Conservation's BOG Squad in February 2018 which some of the CANN partners are due to attend. The trip will include work with local schools, training, and of course a distillery trip. And we have a new CANN logo. The CANN website is under construction, led by the lead partner Newry, Mourne and Down District Council. The administration and finance of the CANN project continues to be complex and demanding – but the first three claims have been submitted and cash advance approved so there is hope for smooth running progress as the wider partnership becomes established.

Further updates and options for all projects will be presented at the Board Meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> December

## **ACT ivity**

### **ACT Growth Strategy 2018-21**

We've been working with Just Enterprise to get our updated Business Plan/Growth Strategy ready for launch early in 2018. Our clear priority must be sustainable income, so we are now approaching our projects and trading options from the perspective of a social enterprise with charitable aims.

**Argyll Enterprise Week** – Business Gateway's Enterprise Week organised a range of events across the area. ACT attended the Digital Marketing Strategy workshop, Funding Day, Asset Transfer Workshop, and Tourism events.

**Argyll Social Enterprise Networking Event** organised by InspirAlba, UnLtd and Senscot on 30<sup>th</sup> November was well attended and hosted lively discussion as well as launching some very impressive new research on the huge positive impact that social enterprises have in Argyll.

**EDF Energy Renewables** – will now not be pursuing a planning application for a development at Cruach Brenfield.

**Community Planning Partnership** – full partnership meeting will be held on 5<sup>th</sup> December in Arrochar. ACT is a delivery partner for outcome 5 of the Single Outcome Agreement. Julie to attend.

**Local Development Plan 2** consultation – ACT has responded supporting the suggestion that an Argyll National Park be established and asking to be part of development discussions.

**Trustee and Advisor Training** – taking place after our Board meeting on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> Dec. David Rennie of A&BC Social Enterprise Team will host a short session on the responsibilities and opportunities with time for questions/mince pies.

### **Welcome!**

We are delighted to have some new recruits to our Board and Advisory Group: **Jan Dunlop** from Mull and Iona Ranger Service joins our Board, and **Lucy Sumsion** NFU, **Robbie Paterson**, **Robert MacPhail** of Tarbert and Skipness Community Trust, **Iain MacNicol** of Appin Community Trust, **Adam Harrison** of The Woodland Trust, **Mairi Coleman** of LiveArgyll, **Duncan MacLachlan** of Arrochar and Tarbert Community Development Trust and **Malcolm Sinclair** of Lochgilphead Pheonix Project join us as Advisors.

**Website** We will be updating our website shortly – we'd like to make it easier to navigate around, and for us to update. Anna will be sending out a quick survey shortly to get some feedback on your suggestions for changes. If you've any thoughts or suggestions for the website please email [Anna](mailto:anna@act-now.org.uk).

For any further information please contact:

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