

**Report from the Friends of Duchess Wood (FODW)**  
to the  
**Duchess Wood Local Nature Reserve Committee (DWLNRC)**  
meeting on 12th August 1013

FODW have carried out a number of routine and special actions since the last meeting of the DWLNRC.

1. **Monthly work parties.** These have continued, concentrating on culvert clearance, bracken control, removal of sycamore saplings and – especially at this time of year – cutting back growth intruding on paths.
2. **Litter control.** This is a constant function by several members.
3. **Dog fouling.** Replacement of notices when torn down, spray-painting of unbagged droppings and collection of bagged droppings left by paths.
4. **Liaison with the Fire Service.** Colin McColl of the Strathclyde Fire Service confirmed that the advice FODW gives to its members concerning fires remains appropriate and he commended FODW for completing the tasks he had recommended at his previous consultation.
5. **Wildlife studies.** A rook count showed 74 nests. FODW has obtained two simple bat detectors and will be using them. A guided flower walk was held and this will be followed by a FODW publication.
6. **Grant applications.** We await the outcome of a grant application to the Argyll & Bute Third Sector scheme. An approach to Babcock regarding support for an information board has been made but, despite follow-up, no feedback has yet been received. FODW will be applying for a grant from the SNH CSV scheme for a maximum of £500 available to Local Nature Reserves. A draft proposal for an SNH grant under the Community Action Grant scheme will be submitted shortly to seek guidance regarding creating glades in the Wood to improve biodiversity and to control the number to sycamore trees.
7. **Publicity.** Various with local press. Also, FODW mounted and manned a display at the AVA Information and Volunteer Recruitment Fair (12.6.13).
8. **FODW have accepted invitations to give talks about the Wood** at AVA (3.8.13) and for the Community Woodlands Association (on Mull, 27.8.13). FODW.
9. **Walking Theatre.** FODW will again assist if the Walking Theatre holds a further performance in the autumn.
10. **The next FODW newsletter** will be published in September.
11. **FODW Annual General Meeting** has been arranged for Monday 21st October, to be held in the Lomond School sports hall. The guest speaker will be Fiona Baker to speak on “The woods of Ardencaple Castle”, covering both history and archaeology.

