

Come along and join the Team:

FUTURE VOLUNTEERING EVENTS

TUESDAY 2nd DECEMBER

10.00am onwards.

Tree Planting

Stellage Wood Survey

Meet First field gate on left, past the telephone exchange, as you head up the Laurieston Road heading out of Gatehouse of Fleet, NX603567
Note: there is very limited parking on the Laurieston Road, so please park by the old garage site on Fleet Street

THURSDAY 4th DECEMBER

9.30am onwards

Rhododendron Clearance

Meet Kirkconnell Flow NNR
car park near Mabie Forest, NX932703

TUESDAY 9th DECEMBER

10.00am – 12pm

Footpath Maintenance

Meet Murray Usher Visitor Centre,
Cally Woods,
Gatehouse of Fleet. NX 605560

WEDNESDAY 10th DECEMBER

9.30 onwards

Tennis Court Redevelopment

Meet RSPB Mersehead Reserve

Visitor Centre, NX925561

TUESDAY 16th DECEMBER

10am onwards

Footpath Maintenance, Anworth Path

Meet Brickworks car park, Gatehouse of Fleet. NX595562

THURSDAY 18th DECEMBER

**VOLUNTEER ANNUAL REVIEW
AND CHRISTMAS BUFFET**

7.30pm - 9.30pm

**Murray Arms, Gatehouse of Fleet
BOOKING ESSENTIAL**

**For more information or to book for any of these events
please contact Ian Brown, National Scenic Area
Communities Ranger on 01387 260180,
mobile 07824708110 or
email ian.brown2@dumgal.gov.uk**

Implementing the Management Strategies for the National Scenic Areas



NOVEMBER 2008



VOLUNTEER ANNUAL REVIEW AND CHRISTMAS BUFFET

It has been a very successful year for the National Scenic Areas Project; with over 130 volunteering opportunities covering all manor of different work.

Because of this, it was felt that this years Christmas Event would be an opportunity to review some of the work that has been carried out in all three Dumfries and Galloway NSAs, to discuss next years volunteering opportunities, and for the volunteers from the Fleet Valley and the East Stewartry Coast and Nith Estuary to mix.

The evening will take place at the Murray Arms, Gatehouse of Fleet on Thursday 18th December 7.30pm – 9.30pm. During the evening there will be a volunteer tasks presentation and as requested a re-showing of my Guyana presentation. There will also be a buffet and free soft drinks provided.

It would be nice to have as many volunteers and reserve staff there as possible, however I do need an indication of numbers for the catering, so booking essential by the 12th December. Unfortunately as usual I am unable to provide transport, but I can help arrange lifts and car sharing if required.

Hope to see you there.

Ian Brown

Torr Point Tar Boiler

A crack team of four volunteers cleared the footpath down from Torr Point to Orchardton Bay at the beginning of October and then - fuelled by tea and cake thoughtfully provided by the Auchencairn Historical Society - made short work of clearing the tar boiler at the point.



Tar boiler hidden from view



Clearing the last of the ivy away

Sally Hinchcliffe

A meeting with the landowner, Auchencairn Initiative and Auchencairn History Society is planned in the New Year to discuss interpretation of this feature.

Hedge Laying at Torr Farm Continues

Another good section of the hedge has been laid this Autumn carrying on from the work in the spring - one chunk by the lads from the Borgue, the other at the hedgelaying weekend at the beginning of November. This last was blessed with two beautiful crisp cold autumn days - some compensation for the aches and pains that followed! Another hedgelaying session is being planned shortly - come down and have a go. It's hard work but there's no more satisfying sight than a well laid hedge.



The section of laid hedge now goes beyond the second gate.

Sally Hinchcliffe

Kirkconnell Flow Gets a Facelift

There have been four separate tasks at Kirkconnell Flow National Nature reserve since August, and it's beginning to make a visible difference to the site. The interpretation and notice boards have been refurbished and re-sited. Several bird boxes were taken down, cleaned, refurbished and numbered - this should make it easier to track them all down in the autumn. A number had their holes widened (it's not just the human population that's getting fatter) to make them more accessible to a range of nesting birds.

The last two tasks were rhodie bashes - including a bit of a mega bash on the 17th of November with 7 volunteers plus the Borgue lads and Beth and Ian making real inroads into the rhododendron. It was particularly nice to see that the cut rhodie from the last task had already been chipped and laid onto the very slippery main path: the only good rhododendron is a chipped rhododendron. A wet autumn and a wetter summer meant that it would take all we had cut and more to absorb the mud on the path; however the good news is that there is plenty more rhododendron to go...

Sally Hinchcliffe

A big thank you from Scottish Natural Heritage to all volunteers at Kirkconnell Flow National Nature Reserve in 2008

Kirkconnell Flow National Nature Reserve is a lowland raised bog of European importance, situated close to Mabie Forest Park between Dumfries and New Abbey. The Reserve is owned and managed by Scottish Natural Heritage and is home to a small but unusual community of plants and animals including Large Heath Butterfly, Snipe, Common Lizard, Adder, Bog Rosemary and Cranberry. Annual management work at the Reserve includes removal of scrub and Rhododendron colonising the bog surface and ditch blocking. This work is carried out to maintain the bog in favourable condition. This year work has also started to improve the footpath network and way marking in the hope that more local residents and visitors to Dumfries and Galloway will be encouraged to discover this special place.

I would like on behalf of Scottish Natural Heritage to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to all those volunteers who have braved all weathers to come and help at Kirkconnell Flow this year. Thank you for all your hard work, enthusiasm and energy. Much of the work carried out at the Reserve this year would not have gone ahead without your help. I very much hope to see you all back out in the New Year.

If you are interested in getting involved with work at Kirkconnell Flow there will be one more work day on the Reserve this year – Thursday 4th December - work will include removal of old way marker posts, scrub clearance around the Reserve entrance and Rhododendron clearance. Everyone is welcome. Contact Ian Brown the National Scenic Areas Community Ranger or Beth Wilson Scottish Natural Heritage (01387 247010) for more information.

Beth Wilson
Reserve Manager Kirkconnell Flow