



THE BORDERS FOREST TRUST  
ANNUAL REVIEW  
2007



..rooted in the community

# The Borders Forest Trust

## Annual Review 2007



Dr Oliver Rackham at the Glenkinnon Oak

### FOREWORD

On a recent walk across land at Dryhope above St Mary's Loch I was pleasantly surprised to note the growth of sapling rowans, birch, oak and other species of native trees planted by Borders Forest Trust as part of their efforts to restore native woodlands to the Southern Uplands. For the last five years or so these trees have been tended and watched over by George Moffat, Hugh Chalmers and a small and dedicated band of volunteers who have kept the deer, mountain hares, voles and the odd sheep at bay whilst coping with blizzards, flood and, in April 2007, a scorching spring.

Getting trees and woodlands established in these remote and beautiful areas is rewarding for me as a landowner and I believe for nature conservation interest and more broadly for public benefit. In future years these areas of woodland will provide a seed source for trees in what I hope will be a mosaic of habitats which will include areas of heather moorland, montane scrub, wooded cleuchs and rich floodplain meadows. Willie McGhee and the Trust's vision of creating a rich mosaic of such habitats across the Southern Uplands has my whole hearted support and backing.

**SIR MICHAEL STRANG STEEL, PATRON**

### DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

2007 was a notable year for the Trust in a number of ways. It provided us with the best tree growing season on record. A wet summer meant a lot of happy trees. We were fortunate to attract Dr Oliver Rackham, the UK's most eminent scholar of the British countryside, its history and the role of trees and woods, to talk at our AGM. We were also privileged to be visited by the Scottish Environment Minister, Mike Russell MSP, who is to be commended for his enthusiasm and grasp of the issues relating to a community based non-governmental organisation.

2007 was also a difficult year for the Trust in that there was no Forestry Grant Scheme available for new sites which much reduced the Trust's tree planting activities. This is a blip which will be rectified when a new scheme opens in mid 2008. As always we are indebted to the local Woodland Officers and staff at the Forestry Commission Scotland offices who provided much support, assistance and guidance for the Trust's work across a range of our projects. Thanks are also due to Simon Hodge and Dominic Driver for their support from Forestry Commission headquarters in Edinburgh.



Mike Russell MSP, Environment Minister visits Borders Forest Trust

Scottish Natural Heritage is also praiseworthy for the support and assistance it gives to the Trust and a big thank you to Andrew Panter, Emma Hay, et. al. at the Galashiels office and Jonathan Warren in the Dumfries office. Special thanks to Jason Hedley and Jim Hogg of Scottish Borders Council for their enthusiastic support for Toni Coyle's post at Gala Policies.

We were very fortunate to receive two unexpected donations in 2007, one for £15,000 from an anonymous donor and the other from the Copley Charitable Trust, who were sadly winding up their business. A big thank you to both. In addition to these generous donations, the Trust received support from the Brown Forbes Memorial Fund who very kindly gave additional funding to improve the access at the Ettrick Marshes and the David Stevenson Trust who continued its invaluable support for tree purchase at Wildwood.

Lloyds TSB were our biggest corporate sponsor in 2007 and their financial support



Corehead – pastures new

enabled a hazel woodland to be established on Todcastles at Wildwood.

Our most exciting news came at the end of the year when we negotiated a legal option to buy Corehead farm, including the Devil's Beef Tub and much of Hart Fell, from John and Berenice Williams. We now have a year to raise nearly three quarters of a million pounds for this purchase and we are due

John and Berenice a huge thank you for giving us this opportunity.

As always a very big thank you to the staff, trustees, volunteers, members, donors, community groups, farmers, land owners, agencies and all the funders who make the Trust what it is.

**WILLIE MCGHEE, DIRECTOR**

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

There are a million business advice books in bookstalls and pub philosophers that remind us that "you have to change simply to stay the same". This is an area of discussion that is challenging for activists, volunteers, trustees and staff associated with BFT as we attempt to plan ahead for the next ten and more years.

We can recall our two themes- Living with Trees – benefitting people and communities - and Working with Trees - primarily benefitting the economy. Do they still have resonance on the walk towards 2020? Do the three points of "People, Place and Potential" still hang together? Are we able to champion that as we embrace the maze of funding opportunities that support our work and growth?

I can assure anyone who is interested that the debate regarding next steps is a lively one- the tension between where we have

been, where we grew from and where we need to go, where we want to go on the next stages of the journey keeps the climate fresh and challenging. Staff are aware of the challenges that present when moving forward- Trustees are proud to be associated with the staff team who deliver way above of what is initially asked of them – and their contribution to the change agenda...

The impact of the growing army of volunteers who do a little, who do a lot, is growing almost beyond measurement- what is clear is that this strand of community activity holds the soul of the Trust in its hands and as those of us hoped many years ago, when structures and systems move on and let us down- for they surely will – the local people will ensure something will continue to grow – as indeed a few did all those years ago.

We consider our work to include woodland conservation, people and using wood as

indicators of the way ahead – our exciting challenge presented by Corehead near Moffat takes us into new territories – more change – and the ground breaking work continues in schools, community woodlands, Wildwood and Woodschool...see our new website to catch up – so BFT will continue to grow and yet hang on to its roots. If you want to be a part of it, a bigger part of it, get in touch.

Be inspired and imagine how much we can achieve together in the next ten years...

**RORY MACLEOD, CHAIR,  
BORDERS FOREST TRUST TRUSTEES**



Community planting at the Haining, Selkirk

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# Carrifran Wildwood

The Carrifran Wildwood project aims to recreate, in the Southern Uplands of Scotland, an extensive tract of mainly forested wilderness with most of the species present in the area before human activities became dominant.

At Carrifran, there are now substantial areas of established woodland, which can be walked through rather than looked down upon. The trees planted on low ground and fertile soils have grown rapidly over the last few years, and with 2007 being such a wet year, they have seen some spectacular growth. Compartment 2b, planted in 2001/02, was inspected in 2007 by Forestry Commission Scotland staff to check that the trees had reached the 'established' stage. This 35 hectare area on the steep slopes of Carrifran Ganga had been problematic, with excessive deer browsing and thick grasses, but over the last few years we have replaced dead trees and increased deer control. The result is that this area has now passed muster, and the signs are that the succeeding area, compartment 2c (also 35 ha), will pass inspection easily in 2008.

The small enclosure built at 690m in 2002 to help determine which trees and shrubs were suitable for treeline planting at Carrifran is now producing results. The downy willow, which is a montane specialist, is growing well, along with hardy juniper. Rowan, birch, aspen and Scots pine are getting used to the challenging conditions, and are growing albeit slowly. This is as expected, and shows how the whole range of vegetation at Carrifran is responding to management for ecological restoration. Equally impressive

are the occasional rowan trees which have spontaneously appeared on steep heather slopes, as well as the bounteous crop of blaeberry all round the valley. This food and vegetative cover perhaps explains why Carrifran now appears to have a good resident population of Black Grouse. RSPB Species Protection Officer, Rebecca Johnson, visited the 'lek' site in spring and recorded 8 males displaying. Later in the year, John Savory, a volunteer with bird expertise, camped out close by the 'lek' and took some great photos, including the rare sighting of these birds mating. In summer at least three youngsters were observed in the valley and so hopefully they will help the population grow and spread as the woodland flourishes.

The planting of the main valley over seven years was completed in 2006, on schedule. The 2007 planting effort was concentrated on Todcastles, the area to the south of the valley above the main road. Lloyds TSB Bank generously provided funding for the planting of 10,000 trees and the David Stevenson Trust funded the purchase of the hazel woodland trees for Todcastles, as it has for all the trees planted at Carrifran. Todcastles was purchased a little later than the main valley and was thus not included in the original Woodland Grant Scheme application to the Forestry Commission in 1999,



Building a Dome Shelter at 650m for Montane Scrub Planters

but it was always intended to be planted. The offer of funding from Lloyds and the kind contribution from the David Stevenson Trust has enabled this planting to be carried out, which is very much appreciated.

Planning also got underway at the end of the year for further planting high up in the valley at compartments 3b and 3c. This planting had been planned long ago but the Scottish Forestry Grant Scheme closed in 2006 before the application could be approved. Fortunately an interim Woodland Creation Grant became available for a short period in 2007 and a successful application was submitted for planting the 11 hectares of 3b and 3c. The trees in these areas will provide a link between the woodland in the main



New planting at Todcastles



Wildwood volunteers

valley and the montane scrub now being established in Firth Hope. Preparation was carried out in winter 2007 with planting scheduled for spring 2008.

Volunteer effort at Wildwood has again been very high with an impressive 468 volunteer days recorded over the year from regular Sunday and Tuesday volunteers as well from groups keen to get involved with tree planting activities. Thanks to all the volunteers for their work and to Scottish Natural Heritage for grant support for the co-ordination of volunteer activities; both have been essential for the success of the Carrifran Wildwood project. Groups of volunteers who have helped out at Carrifran during 2007 include accountants Ernst and Young, staff from the Edinburgh International Conference Centre, staff from the Radisson SAS Hotel in Edinburgh, Bannerman High School pupils, John Muir Trust staff, Berghaus staff, Lothian Conservation Volunteers, the Dirty Weekenders (Edinburgh University students), Scotstoun Woodcraft Folk and Lloyds TSB Bank employees and families.

The Tuesday volunteer group has again been a constant source of inspiration, hard work and dedication. The annual Breeding Bird Census was completed, as well as a regular monitoring visit to Black Hope valley next door, which effectively acts as a 'control' compared to Carrifran. Stan Tanner surveyed butterflies, and found a previously unrecorded colony of Dark Green Fritillary butterflies, as well as a number of the scarce Small Pearl Bordered Fritillary. Many thanks to the regular group, John, Stan, Les, Doug, Jane and Robin for their efforts.

Sunday volunteer events have also been well attended, and in February, April and May these were supplemented by weekend planting camps on the montane scrub site at Firth Hope. These planting weekends are the idea of the Project Officer and are designed to save the time and effort of the 90 minute walk up to Firth Hope above the waterfall. To aid the volunteer planting, materials were transported to Firth Hope by helicopter and tractor, only possible thanks to funding gratefully received from the Scottish Mountaineering Trust, HBOS and a private donor. So far it has been very successful with the hardy volunteers – and later two of our planting contractors – withstanding the challenging conditions and planting over 3,000 juniper and a variety of other trees. Survival has been very good, and the planting of a further 5,000 trees and shrubs at Firth Hope is planned for 2008.

Volunteers have also been busy with a very successful aspen root cutting operation. Forestry Commission Scotland at the Northern Research Station, grew on 2,300 trees from these cuttings which were supplied from remote sites in the Southern Uplands. There are now 14 different clones of aspen at Carrifran, and the collection of cuttings from 2 new clones each year will continue for the next few years to increase the genetic diversity of the Carrifran stock.

Carrifran has continued to attract considerable education interest, highlighting the demonstration value of this project. Links were made with St Joseph's College school in Dumfries, where the Eco Schools group had raised £75 towards tree planting at Carrifran. Members of the Botanical Society of Scotland visited during a particularly wet July, and were impressed at how mountain species were appearing low down on the site by being washed down from above. Visits were also made by members of the Edinburgh Natural History Society and of FWAG Borders, as well as Borders College game-keeping students, all of whom were interested in learning about ecological restoration on a landscape scale.

This year's BFT sponsored walk focused on Wildwood and saw 21 walkers complete the 12 kilometre trek around the boundary fence and perimeter of the valley. Thank you to all the organisers, walkers and sponsors who raised an impressive £2,392 for the montane scrub planting at Firth Hope.



Members of the Wildwood Steering Group admiring tree growth



Juniper and aspen at Firth Hope

# Community Woodlands

This project aims to support community owned and managed woodlands in the Borders, encourage greater participation in woodland activities and re-ignite a woodland culture within the people of the south of Scotland.

In 2007, the Community Woodland work delivered through the Learning with Trees project, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Scottish Natural Heritage, Leader+ and the Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) Partnership, came to an end. Fortunately funding was secured from the Gannochy Trust which, together with smaller, short term grants from Scottish Borders Council and FCS, enabled the Trust to continue to support community woodland development, and provide new volunteering opportunities.

In spring 2007, Borders Forest Trust were approached by Scottish Borders Council to assist in the delivery of a Woodland Officer post at Gala Policies, Galashiels – a project funded through a Forestry Commission Woodlands In and Around Towns Grant. BFT happily agreed to deliver the latter part of this project, which aimed to promote responsible access and community engagement in the woodland. Both Lee Hollings (Community Development and Training Officer) and Anna Craigen (Community Liaison and Education Officer) started off by sharing different aspects of the project, which included, regular health & safety inspections, hosting events, making links with local schools and running regular educational activities. Later in the year, BFT contracted Toni Coyle to carry out the job in full, due to the departure of Lee Hollings from BFT and the resulting increase in work load for existing staff. One of the biggest successes of the project was the Gala Family Fun Day held in June. This event attracted more than 100 local people, who took part in a variety of activities including; fun run, pond dipping, traditional green working, geodesic dome construction and other arts and craft activities. Thank you to all who participated in organising this event.



Gala Policies Family Fun Day

During the early part of April, Borders Forest Trust teamed up with Scottish Woodlands to

help plant a clear-felled area at the Haining in Selkirk. Over two volunteer days, most of the schools in the town and keen members of the community helped to plant over 700 native trees on the site. In November, a class of planting pupils from Knowepark Primary returned to the site to check over the tree survival and feature on a promotional video being produced for the new Scottish Rural Development Programme. The trees had survived well and with the wet summer weather had put on an impressive amount of growth.



New interpretation at Glenkinnon

In 2006, the Community Liaison and Education Officer (CLEO) was successful in securing funding from the European Community Scottish Borders Leader+ 2000-2006 programme, Awards for All and the Forest Education Initiative to develop a Biodiversity Trail at Glenkinnon Burn Community Woodland near Caddonfoot. The project set out to; extend and improve paths around the site - creating a loop walk from the Yair Camp Site car park; design and install a variety of informative interpretation panels with interactive aspects; design and produce a promotional leaflet and also develop a generic biodiversity themed education pack for use in Borders schools and throughout Scotland. The project was completed by December 2007 thanks to input from Forestry Commission Scotland and although the overall process was lengthy and not without problems, the Trail now looks great and should prove to be an interesting and pleasant place for schools, groups and families to visit for years to come.

In December 2007, Borders Forest Trust worked with the local community and the First Tweeddale Scout Troop to plant over 900 trees in an area of Eshiels Community Woodland near Peebles that was cleared of conifer to make way for an access route

to the new recycling facility. It is hoped that these trees will soften the view to the recycling centre, provide a better habitat for local wildlife and in the long term, increase the biodiversity value of the area.



Tweeddale Scouts planting at Eshiels

The Community Woodland Groups supported by the Trust had another very active year. Venlaw Community Woodland Group completed an Awards for All funded project to improve path access, create a Tree Trail and accompanying leaflet, install benches and signage and hosted 2 successful events, a fungal foray and a spooky walk in the woods during the Tweed Valley Forest Festival. Gordon Community Woodland Group continued to improve access in the wood with the construction of a boardwalk, have hosted visits from the local primary school and held a number of events including a Dawn Chorus and Bat and Creatures of the Night walk. Jubilee Community Woodland Group have successfully fought to safeguard their small woodland from the threat of development and have also completed an Awards For All funded project to improve the footpath and carry out drainage work, and install visitor counters. In Kelso, the Community Woodland Group continued to plant and protect trees on Wooden Anna, held several clean up days at Broomlands Wood and organised a tree giveaway at a Farmer's Market to encourage local people to plant trees in the area.



Installing a bench at Venlaw Community Woodland

# Woodschool

Woodschool is the pre-eminent centre for hardwood design and utilisation in the UK.

It continues to develop four main business areas:- business support for furniture designer/makers in the workshop; timber processing and sales; hardwood product design for private, public and corporate clients; and support for local artist designer crafts from the Borders at buyDesign.



Teviot chairs in production



Teviot chairs and Wave table at buyDesign

2007 proved to be another challenging year for Woodschool, committed to demonstrating the economic viability of the business and trading without grant income. The buyDesign show space continues to be the greater income stream provider (37%) with Timber Activities (26%), Woodschool Product Range (19%), Designer/Makers Products (16%) and Consultancy (2%) making up the remainder. This has been fairly constant over the past decade and a change from the early years of grant income now being superseded by trading activity.

Two new recruits Andrew Patterson and Ross Ketteridge joined the workshop this year. Coming from diverse backgrounds in corporate finance and the paint industry, these new makers have bedded into a regime of self employment and more creative careers. This brings the bench space complement of resident designer/makers to seven.

Two part time placements, Kate McIlhagger-ng and Paul Squire, also joined the Woodschool product team. Kate is a 3<sup>rd</sup> year Product Design student from Glasgow School of Art and Paul an ecologist turned landscape gardener. Both are under the tutelage of Stuart McKinven and being introduced to the complexity of chair making for the Woodschool Teviot and Reiver Range.

There has been a growing interest in the Woodschool product range and an increase in customer spread. This year's clients appear to have placed the environmental, local and ethical benefits of Woodschool product very much higher up their list of reasons to buy.

Timber sales of the beautiful local species have once again been very active. Customer preference for elm is high, as is oak and ash. These particular species are becoming increasingly more difficult to source locally. As a result customers are being deliberately encouraged to use less utilised white woods such as birch and sycamore through the client base within Scottish schools, furniture makers and colleges.

Almost a quarter of sawmill operator Keith Threadgall's time is spent out on contract with the Wood-Mizer mobile saw, cutting for local builders, farmers and estates. Addressing the never changing value added approach to timber the Woodschool Wood-Mizer was invited to demonstrate the first milling of ash butts on Touch Estate near

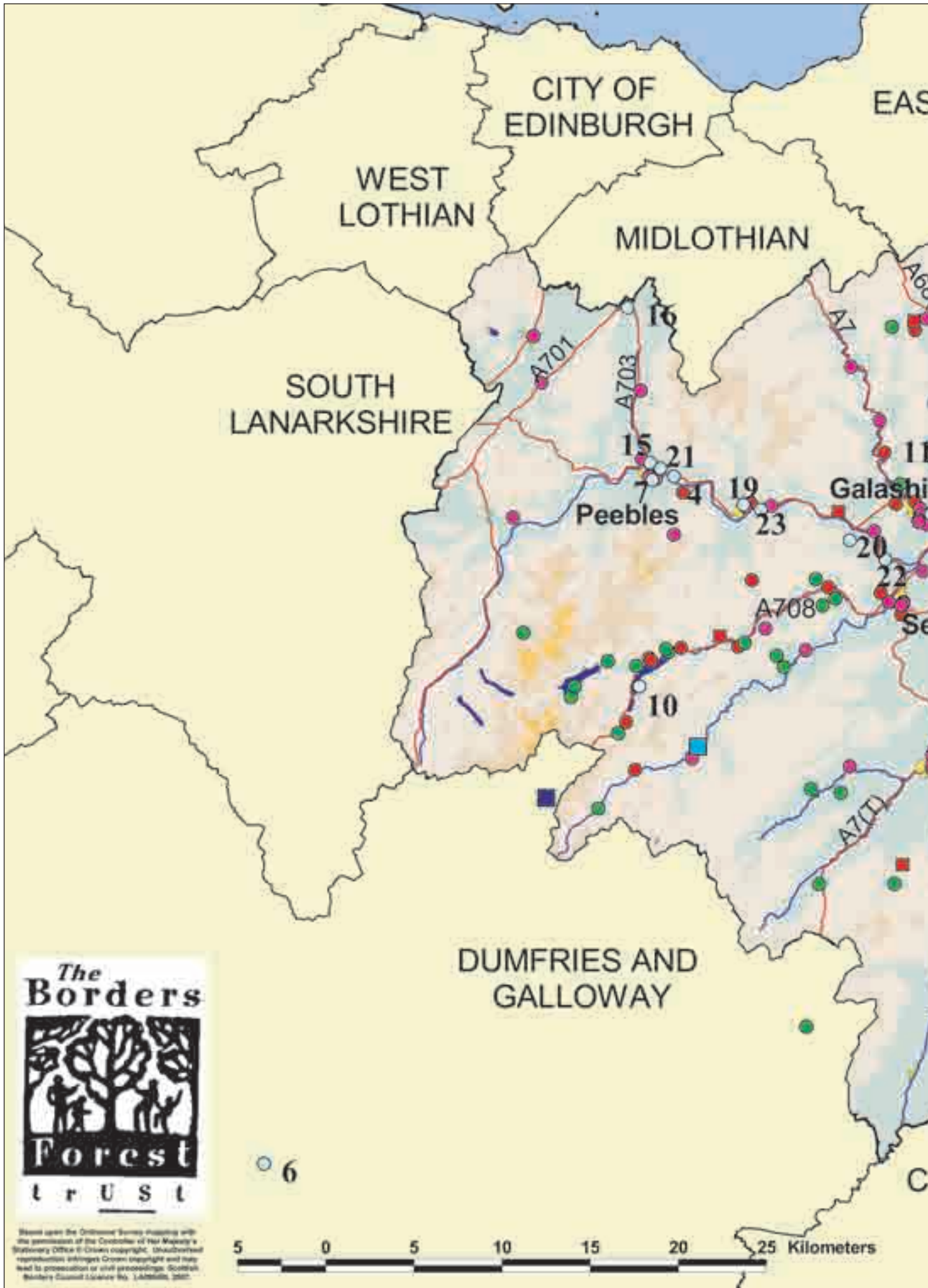
Stirling. This ash is being used in the manufacture of Hurley Sticks destined for the Irish/American market. There have been a further 12 processing demonstration days during the year for Forestry Commission Scotland, Woodland Trust Scotland, National Trust for Scotland and Association of Scottish Hardwood Sawmillers.

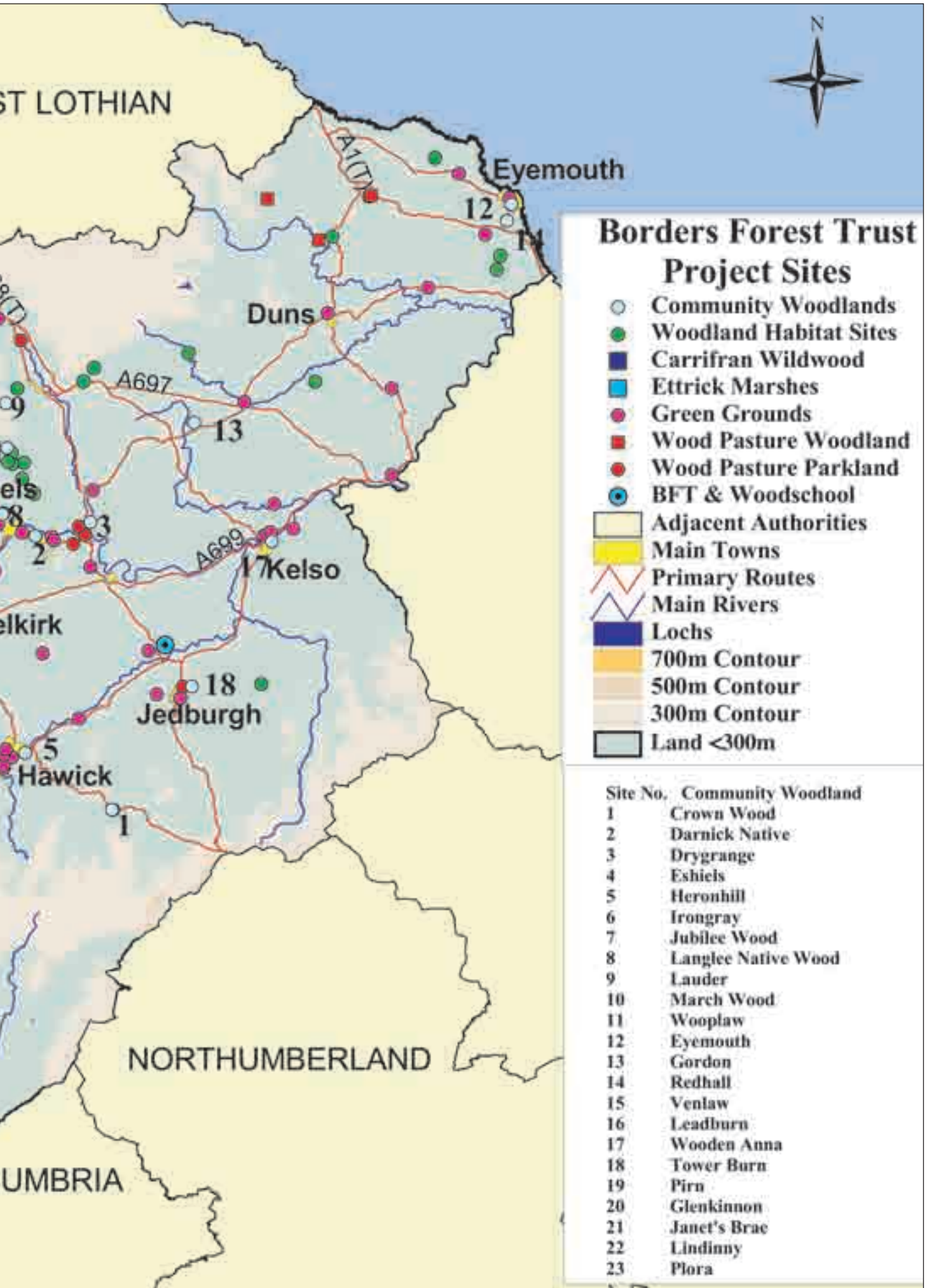
In addition to processing demonstrations, Woodschool has also been exhibiting and selling finished product at many shows throughout the country from as far afield as Dingwall and Dumfries. Over 40 days was devoted to promoting Scottish hardwood products from Woodschool and its designer/makers at these shows during the year.

In 2007, a project was also begun working with sustainable design architectural practices and former Woodschool maker Tom Roebuck looking at the structural and design properties of Douglas Fir and Larch in the manufacture of building trusses. The Centre of Timber Engineering (CITE) at Napier University was also involved with velocity grading of local timbers and Woodschool have joined in the process of practical shared knowledge with the Strategic Integrated Research in Timber (SIRT) team from the CITE at Napier. Adapting this technique Woodschool is looking at ways of grading timber at roadside to avoid higher value timber going into the wood fuel chain.

buyDesign visitor numbers have been down on previous years reflecting a national trend in the Borders and this seems to have affected trade. However the committed relationship built with new makers by Belen in the gallery has meant that she now has furniture makers from Shetland, Fife, and Argyll represented at buyDesign. The gallery now shows over 100 local artist/maker/designers working in textiles, ceramics, metals and glass.

Educational, political, institutional, commercial visitors from all over the UK and overseas have been given the Woodschool Tour. The time and energy spent in delivering, explaining and demonstrating the core model message by everyone at the Woodschool has to be mentioned. More than 1,500 people have now been introduced to this unique local timber utilisation and alternative enterprise model, Woodschool.





# Education and Green Grounds

The Education Initiative delivers a range of innovative educational projects aimed at raising awareness of our woodland heritage and the natural environment. Two main components of the Education Initiative are Green Grounds and Forest Schools. Green Grounds is a project which encourages and supports schools and pupils to enrich their playgrounds as places to learn, play and encourage wildlife and Forest Schools is 'an inspirational process, that offers children and young people opportunities to achieve, develop confidence and self esteem, through hands on learning experiences in a local woodland setting'.

In 2007, funding for the Community Liaison and Education Officer (CLEO) from Leader+ and the Heritage Lottery Fund drew to an end. Thankfully new funding was secured from Forestry Commission Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage and the Robertson Trust to enable the CLEO to continue to work with local schools and youth groups, develop and deliver projects and promote the use of local woodlands for both educational and recreational purposes. The new funding has a greater emphasis on the delivery and promotion of Forest Schools (FS) projects in the region, as well as supporting and leading general woodland educational visits and other woodland activities and events.

## FOREST SCHOOLS

In late 2007 the CLEO delivered four FS taster training sessions for over 60 teachers representing 20 schools in the Borders. This is the first step in BFT's plan to; further promote Forest Schools in the region; work towards keeping up with the demand for FS; devise a sustainable means of increasing the delivery of FS, whilst also ascertaining the level of teacher interest in FS training.

The sessions provided attendees with; a general overview of FS; an explanation of their benefits, emphasising the many curricular links and also allowed the teachers the opportunity to participate in a variety of cross curricular outdoor activities.



Duns Forest School – bright leaf

The courses proved to be a success, and as a result, BFT now has a list of 55 teachers who are keen to pursue FS training to a variety of levels. During 2008, the CLEO aims to deliver a series of basic FS training courses (OCN Level 1) and develop funding proposals for the first south of Scotland based FS Practitioners Course (OCN Level 3), which will cater for 16 prospective new teacher leaders.

In the future, BFT aim to encourage the development of a FS Teacher Network in the region, to; support one another; share experiences and ideas and in the long run, promote and create more opportunities for children to experience this valuable form of outdoor learning.

In addition to developing the teacher training programme the CLEO has delivered 3 Forest School projects at Sprouston, Gordon and Duns Primaries. All of these projects were particularly productive and thoroughly enjoyed by all who participated. The CLEO designed a varied programme of activities with class teachers to maximise the cross curricular benefits of each project and link with other important aspects of the Scottish Curriculum, e.g. Eco Schools programmes and enterprise projects. The P5/6 class at Duns Primary School also worked towards a John Muir Award throughout their Forest School. Their project started with a visit to the John Muir Birthplace in Dunbar and subsequent sessions contained a variety of activities aimed towards discovering and exploring areas of Duns Castle Estate; carrying out conservation work in their local area and sharing their experiences with the rest of the school, family and friends.

## ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

During 2007, woodland education has continued to be in high demand. Over the course of the year the CLEO has worked with more than 2,100 young people in a variety of educational and recreational activities with 25 local schools and 10 other clubs and groups in the area. This work included 6 walks with over 150 pupils to Venlaw Community Woodland during Kingsland Primary School's (Peebles) Health Week; shelter building activities for over 70 pupils during the St. Ronan's (Innerleithen) Eco-Action Day; a variety of environmental art activities with 135 pupils during Duns Primary Schools Eco-Arts Day and leading visits to local woodlands covering a variety of themes with Stirches Primary (Hawick); Burgh Primary (Galashiels); Melrose Primary; Balmoral Primary (Galashiels) and Coldstream Primary. The CLEO also worked with over 100 cubs and scouts from numerous troops to make bat and bird boxes and practise traditional fire-lighting during the Scouts Centenary Celebration weekend at Philiphaugh. A series of well attended summer holiday events were also held which included; Art in the Woods, Wild in the Woods, Fun in the Woods, Big Bug Hunts with Creepy Crawly Crafts and Woodland Wildlife Detectives in Gordon, Glenkinnon and Wooplaw Community Woodlands and Gala Policies.



Ish'uze Sculpture Project – DJ in the Woods

Funding from local business Emtelle UK Ltd enabled BFT to work with 200 pupils from 8 schools in Hawick and Jedburgh and make bird and bat boxes for school grounds, community woodlands and home gardens in the towns. Thanks to John Bathgate, Emtelle employee and BFT Trustee, who developed the project to encourage young people to take an active interest in the conservation of their local environment and also to help local wildlife by creating new nest box habitats.

More bird and bat box building was carried out in partnership with the Ranger Service at the Tweed Valley Forest Festival with more than 40 boxes being constructed by young people visiting the Wood Market. BFT was also involved in the co-ordination of the first ever Scottish Borders Conker Championship during the Festival. More than 50 people competed for the title in the adult, youth, child and rogue categories. Many thanks to all those who helped in making the event so successful. It is hoped to grow it in the years to come.

## YOUTH PROJECTS

2007 proved to be another successful year in the development of youth based woodland education, activities and pursuits. BFT staff worked with the First Tweeddale Scout Troop (based in Peebles) in a variety of projects including owl box construction; bat and bird box construction and installation at Venlaw Hill Community Woodland; tree planting at Eshiels Community Woodland and the CLEO also lead a series of Food for Free themed walks for the group.

BFT again worked with Ish'uze Youth Group (Peebles) in a woodland sculpture project at Eshiels Wood. The 6 day project consisted of a variety of different activities which included woodland maintenance

tasks to develop new skills, help the local Community Woodland group and benefit the local wildlife, e.g. learning safe tool use, litter picking and stacking timber into habitat piles. Participants then worked in teams to develop brightly coloured, innovative sculptures using found natural materials. The project culminated in a public open evening, where the youth group invited members of community groups, friends and families to join them for a tour of their work; a variety of dance and music performances and a prize giving ceremony to award those that had worked particularly well throughout the project.

Throughout the year the CLEO provided a woodland activity taster session for over 30 Youth Chex panel members representing a variety of youth groups in the Borders and also delivered a series of woodland Survival Skills and Food for Free sessions for 20 members of Coldstream Youth Group.

## GREEN GROUNDS

2007 saw a further 12 schools approach BFT for support to develop environmental projects to improve their school grounds and make the best use of them for educational purposes. The Green Grounds project, which is financed by Scottish Natural Heritage, enables the Trust to provide a full spectrum of assistance in the development and delivery of projects from designing plans with pupils and assisting with fundraising to organising work days and planting trees.

Scottish Natural Heritage Grants were awarded to Coldingham Primary's Nature Garden, Trinity Primary's Outdoor Classroom and Tree Planting project, Lilliesleaf Primary's Nature Garden and Parkside Primary's Outdoor Classroom. In addition to financial support, advice was given to St Joseph's and West Linton Primaries and practical support was given for a wildflower meadow and seating area at Ayton primary, tree planting at Edenside and Broomlands primaries in Kelso, the creation of a tree trail at Wilton primary in Hawick and the wildlife garden at Gordon Primary. Work also began at St Ronan's primary in Innerleithen to create a wetland garden and tree planting to celebrate the school's 50<sup>th</sup> centenary.

The Trust is extremely grateful to the Scottish Borders Council Community Service Criminal Justice Teams whose practical support is invaluable for delivering the hard landscaping required for the projects that the pupils are unable to do themselves. Over the year, the teams have built and filled planters, constructed paths, built fences and picnic tables and installed seating.

A re-structure in BFT staff at the end of the year created a part-time vacancy for a Green Grounds and Education Officer which was filled in January 2008 by Diane Bennett.



St Ronan's planting a hedge around their wetland



Duns Primary School Eco-Arts



Duns Forest School Minibeast Mime – A Spider

# Woodland Habitats

Woodland Habitats encompasses sites planted under Ancient Woodland, Riparian Woodland, Ettrick Woodlands, Wood Pasture and juniper restoration projects, together with new native woodland plantings. Woodland Habitat projects cover an area of 1,610 hectares contained within 65 sites.

## EXISTING SITES



Stoney Cleuch establishing woodland

Many of the riverside woodlands planted under the riparian woodland scheme reached their 5 year establishment check in 2007. Fortunately many of them passed thanks to considerable effort in providing additional protection from browsers and increasing the deer control in the area. The detrimental effect of hare and deer browsing was established in the spring so during 2007, 10,000 1.2m tubes and stakes were delivered to the following sites:- Linghope, Glengaber, Broadgairhill, Dryhopeburn and the Lakerknowe sites including Gorbons cleuch, Stoney cleuch, Cons cleuch and Ferny cleuch. The logistical challenge of moving the materials around the sites was overcome by helicopter and a six wheel tractor on the most remote sites and by man and quad bike on the more accessible sites. This effort paid off and as the trees emerged from the tubes, second stage payments of forestry grants were approved for most of the sites including Dryhopeburn, Sundhope, Broadgairhill and Stoney Cleuch. There are a few sites however where tree growth has been slow and the establishment delayed and grant postponed till subsequent years.

Tubing and weeding was carried out over the summer months and was completed by the planting season in autumn when the programme of "beating up" began on sites to replace tree losses. As more and more of the sites reach establishment the requirement for beating up is reduced. The sites planted more recently under the Wood Pasture

Woodland and Locational Premium projects were planted with tubes and received a pre-planting herbicide spray. Survival on these sites is very good and it is anticipated that future maintenance to reach establishment will be far less.

As with all fencing, maintaining water-gates and fence lines after winter and spring floods is a challenge. Fence inspections were routinely carried out and repairs made to ensure they remain stock proof. Despite the high rainfall there was no significant damage to the fences but despite this some sheep still managed to access the planted areas and provide exercise for the site officers in order to remove them.



Oak emerging from tube at Henderland Bank

The volunteer effort on the Woodland Habitats sites has been tremendous with many individuals and students working under the supervision of the Woodland Officer to help the new plantings establish into mature woodlands. Volunteer help is always appreciated by Borders Forest Trust and the Trust would like to take this opportunity to thank all volunteers for their help over the year who are too numerous to mention individually.

## NEW SITES

The lack of new forestry grants available in 2007 prevented the development of new woodland habitat project sites. However, two grants had been approved under the previous Scottish Forestry Grant Scheme for completion during 2007/2008 so some new planting work was carried out at sites

in the southern Borders – Arkleton and Priestthaugh.

Arkleton is located in the Ewes valley in Dumfries and Galloway, north of Langholm, and the planting area is comprised of 7 riparian (riverside) compartments on the Arkleton Burn. One compartment was fenced and planted in 2006 and during 2007 preparation for planting the remaining compartments early in 2008 got underway. Fencing was erected, bracken was sprayed and materials ordered for the planting of some 36 hectares of new native woodland in spring 2008.

Priestthaugh is another native riparian woodland planting on a farm south of Hawick which was awarded Locational Premium grant in 2006. The project site consists of 3 compartments covering 35 hectares along the Priestthaugh Burn. In 2007, the two larger compartments were fenced (5km) and planting work began with a mix of small seeded species to create an alder-ash woodland. Slightly delayed by the poor weather at the end of the year, the fencing and the planting of the 32,000 trees at Priestthaugh is set for completion by spring 2008.

The Woodland Habitat project sites are privately owned by estates and farmers and BFT would like to thank landowners and tenants for committing to the restoration of native woodlands in the south of Scotland on their land.



Growing trees at Dryhope

# Ettrick Marshes

The Ettrick Marshes project aims to restore the floodplain habitats of the Upper Ettrick and Tima Water – a 125 hectare mosaic of woodland, wetland, grassland and open water habitats of national conservation importance.

Borders Forest Trust were awarded a further grant from the Brown Forbes Memorial Fund in 2007 to enable further access improvements to the site. Through this funding a hardwood bench was installed, 150m of degraded path was re-surfaced, 105m of boardwalk constructed over particularly muddy sections of the path and a new dipping platform constructed on the main boardwalk which stretches out over the open water. Maintaining the access is a perpetual task due to the high levels of rainfall and popularity with local residents and visitors to the area. Receiving such funding is very much appreciated enabling the Trust to continue to provide access for the public to experience these unique habitats. Thanks also go to the Scottish Wildlife Trust Team for carrying out the practical work.



New boardwalk at Ettrick



Pond on the Ettrick floodplain

On the floodplain, wetlands, grasslands, open water and wet woodlands have largely been left to nature over 2007. Vegetation is flourishing and slowly willow is establishing throughout the wetland. It is being kept in check by the plentiful roe deer living in the surrounding coniferous forest. However this prevents the development of a closed canopy which would affect other habitats and is therefore not of great concern. The impact of the deer is apparent from comparison to tree growth in the small deer enclosure on the Marshes where trees are considerably taller and more abundant. In the drier birch woodlands at the Honey Cottage end of the site, the regeneration of birch and rowan is also very prolific, even despite some evident deer browsing.

At the Tima End of the Marshes, road work is still being carried out by Forestry Commission Scotland to create an extraction route for timber in the future. The road works have closed part of the Ettrick Marshes path network but with time new routes will hopefully be developed using the forest road to create new circular walks through the forest in 2008.

In November, an Irish community study group with an interest in wetland restoration and community projects visited the Ettrick Marshes. After a short excursion through the Marshes, the group retreated to the village hall for a presentation on the other work of the Trust.

## The Orchard Project

Through the Orchard Project a neglected orchard at Crailing is now flourishing and the Orchard Development Group (ODG), with support by BFT, are encouraging the restoration of orchards across the Borders.

Considerable work was carried out by BFT and the ODG under the Big Lottery Breathing Places grant awarded in 2006 - fruit trees were pruned, access was improved, wildflower meadow creation and haymaking was carried out, bee keeping was learnt by the group and bee hives installed at the orchard, a leaflet was produced and an Apple Day held. A survey of Borders Orchards was also carried out by local botanist Louise Seed and reports were produced on their condition and potential for restoration in the future.

Early in the year the ODG received corporate support from Emtelle UK Limited which enabled 40 new apple and pear trees to be planted. At the end of the year, the ODG was also awarded a Traditional Boundaries grant from SBC and FWAG for a hedge which was planted in December.

The ODG hold regular work days on the first Sunday of every month and welcome any new volunteers interested in orchard management.



Enjoying Crailing Community Orchard produce

# Staff Profiles

## Willie McGhee BFT Director

Willie is a forester who has worked with the Trust since its formation in 1996. He graduated from Edinburgh University with a degree in Ecological Science and Honours in Forestry and has worked in UK and international forestry since 1990 and in the environmental sector since 1988. He is currently a non executive Director of Woodschool, the Tweed Forum, and BioClimate Research and Development Ltd. and is a Trustee serving with the Scottish Forestry Trust and Scottish Power's Green Energy Trust.



## Hugh Chalmers BSc (Agriculture) MSc (Nat Res Man) Site Manager

Hugh worked with the Edinburgh School of Agriculture on their pioneering farming and conservation project in the Pentlands and later planted banana trees in South America. On return to the Borders he met Tim Stead whilst working with SWT and FWAG and became chair of Borders Community Woodland. Over the last 7 years he has co-ordinated the planting of over 750,000 trees with BFT, at Carrifran and on a further 58 native woodland sites in the Borders.



## Anna Craigen Community Liaison and Education Officer

Anna started out with the Trust in 2002 as a part time Community Woodland Assistant and has since become the full-time Community Liaison and Education Officer. She graduated with a Masters in Landscape Architecture from Heriot Watt University and has experience in landscape design, property law and voluntary work in the conservation sector.



## Nicola Hunt Projects Officer

Nicola joined the Trust team in 2001 as the projects assistant. Now as Projects Officer, she is responsible for the general day to day running of the Trust and the development and delivery of projects. Originally from Hamilton, Nicola moved to Edinburgh to study Ecological Science at the University. From there she worked in a number of jobs including as a ranger in West Lothian before moving to the Borders in 2000 to a mammal research position.



## Claire Doig Marketing and Communications Officer

Claire joined the Trust in 2006 and works part-time raising the profile of the Trust and producing the Trust's publications. An Agricultural Science graduate of Edinburgh University with a Post-Graduate Diploma in Marketing, Claire has worked in a wide range of marketing and project management roles over the last 15 years.



## Eoin COX MBE Woodschool Director

A native of Fife, Eoin has been involved in communities, landscapes and heritage for more than 30 years. A chance meeting with the late Tim Stead saw the formation of the nucleus of local Borders people into what became the first community woodland in Britain in 1985. Committed to raising awareness of Scotland's new makers and users of local hardwoods and in traditional applied arts and crafts, he received an MBE in 2002 for his work in small business development in Scotland.



## George Moffat Woodland Officer

George's involvement with the Trust began in 1997 as the Community Woodland Officer. Since 2000 he has been involved in the woodland habitats project. He has been involved in environmental work since 1993 firstly as a volunteer, then he went on to study conservation and recreation management in Ayrshire where he gained an HND.



## Sandra Smith-Maxwell Finance Officer

Sandra joined the Trust in 2006. Having successfully completed an HND in Business Management at Heriot Watt University in 2001 she then worked for NHS Borders in the Finance Department for three and a half years. Her main role in the Trust is the day to day book keeping and membership administration.



## Diane Bennett Green Grounds and Education Officer

Diane joined the Trust in March 2008 to work on a part-time basis to help with school grounds projects. Diane previously worked for Tweed Forum as the Community Wildlife Officer for the Philiphaugh Salmon Viewing Project and the Tweed Valley Osprey Project. Prior to moving to the Borders in 2006, she worked as a Ranger for Wirral Borough Council, Warrington Borough Council and taught in primary schools in Liverpool.



# Financial Summary

Summary of Financial Statements for the year ending 31 December 2007.

## BALANCE SHEET

	2007(£)	2006(£)
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>		
Tangible Fixed Assets	480,267	486,333
Fixed asset investments	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>480,269</b>	<b>486,335</b>
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Stock	1,925	5,271
Debtors	110,727	121,758
Cash at bank	314,549	228,567
<b>Total</b>	<b>427,201</b>	<b>355,596</b>
<b>CREDITORS</b>		
Amount due within one year	(74,542)	(35,683)
Net Current Assets	352,659	319,913
<b>Total Assets less Current Liabilities</b>	<b>832,928</b>	<b>806,248</b>
<b>CHARITY FUNDS</b>		
Restricted Funds	769,195	750,422
Unrestricted Funds	63,733	55,826
<b>Total</b>	<b>832,928</b>	<b>806,248</b>

## INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>	<b>(£)</b>
Donations & membership	137,975
Activities for Generating Funds	61,912
Investment Income	11,505
Grants Receivable	271,736
<b>Total</b>	<b>483,128</b>
<b>RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>	
Costs of Generating Voluntary Income	15,648
Fundraising expenses & other costs	7,050
Charitable Activities	411,642
Governance Costs	22,108
<b>Total</b>	<b>456,448</b>
<b>NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS</b>	<b>26,680</b>
Fund balance at 1 <sup>st</sup> Jan 07	806,248
Fund balance at 31 <sup>st</sup> Dec 07	832,928

## GRANTS 2007

	(£)
Awards for All	8,000
Brown Forbes Memorial Fund	3,524
Forestry Commission Scotland	168,559
Heritage Lottery Fund	4,700
Gannochy Trust	6,000
Leader +	14,048
Robertson Trust	9,000
Scottish Borders Council	2,228
Scottish Mountaineering Trust	151
Scottish Natural Heritage	54,486
Sundry	1,040
<b>Total</b>	<b>271,736</b>

## OPERATIONS EXPENDITURE 2007

	(£)
Borders Forest Trust	54,924
Community Woodlands	71,578
Corehead	1,325
Education Green Grounds	16,869
Education General	14,932
Ettrick Marshes	4,882
Wildwood	75,738
Woodland Habitats	171,394
<b>Total</b>	<b>411,642</b>

The financial summary is taken from the Borders Forest Trust 2007 Audited Accounts, copies of which are available on request from the BFT office. The twelfth set of Borders Forest Trust Accounts has been produced in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting by charities. The Trust has a wholly trading subsidiary, Woodschool, which is excluded from the figures.



...rooted in the community

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Our vision of Scotland is a place where a rich network of native woodlands and wild places flourish, cared for by local communities. We work to conserve, restore and manage native woodlands and other natural habitats for the benefit of people and wildlife. We support community woodlands, habitat restoration, education and arts projects and develop woodland based economic activity. Our vision can only be realised with the participation and support of the people of the south of Scotland and beyond.

Borders Forest Trust Trustees: John Bathgate, Rose Clarkson, Neil Campbell, Rosalind Grant-Robertson, John Hunt, Daphne Jackson, Susan Lockett, Fi Martynoga, Rory Macleod, Brenda Robertson, Reuben Singleton, Jeremy Thompson

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