

Castle Loch Lochmaben Community Trust

Newsletter

July 2026



SCO 044045

Editorial

A lot has been going on at Castle Loch over the past few months, as you will see from the articles by the Habitats Officer on tree planting and Dougie's articles on the Castle Road and new seats and benches. Both have contributed super photos to accompany the articles.

Also we are please to welcome Clare Whitney as our new Treasurer. Clare is recent new member and we are grateful to her for taking on this role. We also thank Will Smith for doing sterling work in this post for the past several years and are glad that he will remain a member of the Board. At the same time we are very sorry that Tony Hancock has decided to retire from the Board. The newsletter includes an article about Tony.

There have been several changes to the Board recently so we decided to show a photo of the current members...

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Brew and Bite

Everyone is welcome to join
CLLCT for tea/coffee and cake on
the following Sundays:-

July 26th

August 30th

If you wish to help out or provide
baking, please contact us via the
email address below.

**Thank you to all the contributors to
the newsletter. It would be great to
have articles from you, as well!**

In the photograph—Dougie Fountain (Chair), Fiona Robertson (Secretary), Clare Whitney Treasurer),
John Reid, Bill Coombes, Will Smith, Paul Beardon, Freda Seddon.

Rhonda Graham is in the picture, but the Habitats Officer is not a Board Member.

Contacts for Castle Loch Community Trust -

Website—www.castleloch.co.uk

Facebook CLLCT

Email— castlelochcommunity@outlook.com

Habitat Officer's Report



Volunteers at Castle Loch have been busy over the spring months planting 605 trees which were funded by D & G Woodlands and The Tree Council. While creating a food hedge, volunteers planted a mixture of Hazel, Wild Cherry, Elder, Yew and Aspen, linking Kirkhirst woodlands with the Lochfield Plantation. These tree saplings had to be in the ground by March which is prime planting season. You will also see many new saplings planted in and around the Castle, providing wildlife and insects with a variety of food and nectar.

Numerous volunteering groups were involved in this project, from pupils at Lochmaben Primary School, 'Step Together Volunteering' — and of course our very own team.



Over the summer months volunteers spend a lot of time keeping the three mile circuit clear of overgrowth, cutting the edges of the pathways and clearing excess growth from around various picnic areas. This keeps the nettles at bay and prevents overgrowth from leaning in over the path.

Ideally path maintenance should allow two walkers to walk abreast or one person and a wheeled user.

We use a variety of grass cutting equipment from push strimmer's, lawnmowers to hand strimmer's and hand tools. There is always a job for everyone. Along with the control of summer growth is the control of invasives that come with the growing season. Castle Loch has an element of Himalayan Balsam that requires yearly addressing, usually dealt with by hand pulling by the volunteers - not their favourite activity.



Rhonda Graham

CLLCT has been funded by:-



George Hunter Trust



And - many thanks to all anonymous donors

Castle Road Repairs

If you have walked round the Loch in recent weeks, and even more so if you have attempted to drive to the Castle Car Park, you will have noticed a marked deterioration in the condition of the castle access Road.

The Road from the cattle grid to the castle car park belongs to the Trust although the Castle itself is the property of Historic Environment Scotland. The short stretch of road between the Farm Entrance and the Cattle Grid, which is by far the worst, belongs to the farmer.

The Trust, through the efforts of the Volunteers, has attempted to deal with the potholes over the years by infilling the potholes with sub base and latterly mixing sub base and postcrete to attempt a longer lasting repair—however, as quickly as we filled them in, they reappeared again.

As a result of the heavy rainfall over the winter and in recent months, the situation has progressed to a point where our efforts are a waste of time and materials.

We used the services of a contractor 3 years ago which helped for a while, however our feeling is that the road requires to be re-sculpted and the edge of the road dug out to allow the water to drain off more effectively. Also, areas under trees are affected more adversely due to the constant drips from the overhead canopy.

To that end, we have received 2 quotations and are presently attempting to source funding and hopefully can then progress the work and achieve resolution in the near future.

In the meantime, please take care while walking, running, cycling, pushing your buggy or navigating your wheelchair on this section of the path. Thank you.

Dougie Fountain



Outdoor Furniture round Castle Loch

Castle Loch Lochmaben Community Trust recently applied for funding from Annandale and Nithsdale Community Benefit Company (Administered by Foundation Scotland) and we were successful in receiving £3328 which was used to purchase Outdoor Furniture.

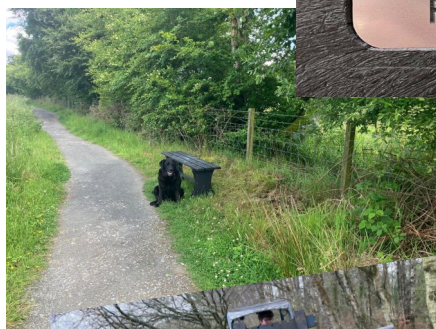
The Furniture was made from recycled plastic and was sourced from Solway Direct Ltd.

We were able to purchase 2 picnic tables (with overhangs at either end to facilitate Disability use) plus associated benches, 3 Benches with arms and backs and 2 plain Benches.

One of the picnic tables and 2 of the benches with arms and back look very smart sitting in the front garden of Lochfield Cottage and the other picnic Table is located at the Disability Access Pier, which is accessed from the B7020 Lochmaben – Dalton Road which is a beautiful location to survey the Loch and watch the Swans. The other bench with arms and back is sited in the Children's Play Area in Kirkhirst Wood to provide a bit of comfort for parents (and particularly grandparents!) to rest while the kids are playing. The other 2 plain benches are located along the grassland path towards the Castle where walkers can pause and enjoy the view.

These benches have all been fixed in place by earth anchors.

These items of Furniture are quite heavy, particularly the picnic tables, and the Trust is indebted to the assistance of Neil McPherson of McPherson Engineering, based in Lochmaben, who assisted in the unloading of these items and moving them to their required locations and their help was very much appreciated.



Dougie Fountain