

the woodland edge

Neroche Forest, Taunton, Somerset
Thursday 29th September to Saturday 1st October 2011

people and nature in our wooded landscapes, at a time of change

The woodland edge is always the richest ground, a transition zone where light meets dark. It's a place where things blend, and ecologies are in tension.

This conference seeks to harness the energy of the woodland edge. It will explore the interface where people and nature meet, in the context of Britain's wooded landscapes, at a time of uncertainty, change and new possibilities.

Our relationship with woodlands and the landscapes they occupy is changing. Questions about the ownership and public status of forests, and their accessibility to people, have generated huge public interest.

But behind the headlines, inspirational projects across the country are showing how woodlands and other natural landscapes can provide settings for learning, recreation, therapy and cultural activity, while generating fuel, food and materials, conserving their wildlife, enhancing the ecosystem services they provide, and still retaining something of their wildness.

Against this backdrop, this event offers a chance to reflect on good practice, to challenge conventional wisdoms, and to celebrate what we can achieve together in our woodlands and wider landscapes, both rural and urban.

How do we empower people and communities meaningfully to participate in our woods and wider landscapes?

How should project partnerships work and new resources be found in the new climate of Localism?

How do we join up wildlife habitats with one another, and with ecosystem services, economies and communities?

How do we create more inclusive, positive experiences for all ages in woodland settings?

How do we make better use of our forests as sources of energy and material, and as carbon sinks?

How do we bring new vitality to telling the story of the past and the present in the woods?

What is the full harvest of the woods?

"If there's one event to go to this year, for me this is it. Inspiring speakers, deep discussion, practical resources - and the great benefit of being in the woods is that we can deal with real examples, not just abstract ideas"
(A South West based community facilitator)

Tickets are £150 for the full 2-day programme. To book a place email info@nerochescheme.org for a booking form or phone 01823 680846

Follow progress on our blog site <http://woodlandedge.wordpress.com>



Wednesday 28th September

14.00 Arrival anytime from here on. Time to walk in the woods, dinner provided, informal discussion round the fire

Thursday 29th September

10.30 Conference opening
10.45 Tribal stories – Eric Maddern and Lisa Schneidau
11.30 Howard Davies – People, woods & nature in policy
12.00 Peter Taylor – Making connections
12.30 Debate
13.00 Lunch and opportunity to view fringe activities
14.15 Break-out session 1 on conference themes (see overleaf)
15.30 Tea break
16.15 Break-out session 2 on conference themes
17.30 Free time
18.00 Feedback and review of discussions
18.45 Free time
19.30 Dinner
20.45 Eric Maddern – a story
21.30 Continuing discussion & music around the fire

Friday 30th September

09.30 Opening
10.00 Jonathan Spencer – Old knowledge for new times
10.30 Speaker tbc
11.00 Questions and answers
11.15 Coffee break
11.45 Break-out session 3 on conference themes
13.00 Lunch and opportunity to view fringe activities
14.15 Break-out session 4 on conference themes
15.30 Free time
16.15 Tim 'Mac' MacCartney – Heart, mind, enterprise
16.45 Feedback and review of conference outcomes
17.45 Gavin Saunders – Conclusion
18.15 Free time
19.00 Dinner
20.15 Jay Griffiths – Wild spirit in the woods
20.45 Celebratory fire with music and entertainment

Key speakers and session leaders

Jay Griffiths
 Author of the profound book 'Wild: An Elemental Journey'
Howard Davies
 Chief Executive of the National Association of AONBs
Peter Taylor
 Ethos consultancy, author of 'Beyond Conservation' and 'Chill'
Tim 'Mac' MacCartney
 Founder of Embercombe
Jonathan Spencer
 Senior Ecologist with the Forestry Commission
Eric Maddern
 Leading storyteller and founder of Cae Mabon
Nigel Lowthrop
 Founder of woodland-based social enterprise, Hill Holt Wood
Doug Hulyer
 Natural England Board member and Heritage Lottery Fund trustee
Gavin Saunders
 Project Manager of the Neroche Scheme
Rick Minter
 Facilitator and editor of the journal ECOS
Mark Robins
 Senior Policy Officer for the RSPB in the South West
Jenny Archard
 Facilitator and bushcraft practitioner with Woodland Journeys
Alison Millward
 Advisor in the urban wildlife movement
Lisa Schneidau
 Director of Conservation for Somerset Wildlife Trust
Mark Broadmeadow
 Policy advisor for Forestry Commission on climate change issues
Simon Brenman
 Director of Programmes for the South West Wildlife Trusts
David West
 Development Manager for Forestry Commission, Peninsula District
Helen Townsend
 Policy advisor for Forestry Commission on quality of life issues
Bob Crofts
 Somerset County Archaeologist
Simon Shakespeare
 Experienced trainer and pioneer of the Forest School movement
Michael Fairfax
 Public artist, and lead artist for the Neroche Scheme

Fringe activities during the conference

- Live blogging with James Thomson
- Animal tracking and trail cameras with Rick Minter
- Bushcraft – practical informal instruction from trainers George and Maggie Yeomans
- Woodland sculpture and fire with Michael Fairfax and Gordon Field
- Evening music and entertainments
- Freedom to walk in the forest and meet the medieval Neroche oaks

Saturday 1st October

All delegates are free to stay on for a programme of FREE activities during Saturday, also open to the general public. Meals will be available (to be paid for separately) on Saturday, plus breakfast on Sunday.

Activities on Saturday will include:

- An introduction to green woodworking with Tim Beazley
- Letter carving in wood with Michael Fairfax
- Family bushcraft and nature awareness with Jenny Archard
- Animal tracking and wild food from the forest with George & Maggie Yeomans
- Explore the mysterious hill fort amongst the forest on Orchard Hill
- Meet the Neroche Longhorn cattle
- Plus a special BANC-sponsored discussion on 'New Creatures of the Forest? – the case for beaver, lynx and wild boar reintroductions'

Staying

Delegates can camp on site at no extra cost (showers and breakfast provided) or book B&B accommodation nearby. Transport will be provided from Taunton railway station and to and from accommodation nearby.

All meals are included in the price, inclusive of Wed evening and Sat morning.



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Session themes and content

<p>ALL TOGETHER NOW Meaningful community participation and empowerment in our woods</p>	<p>Leader: Jenny Archard, Woodland Journeys</p> <p>Speakers: Alison Millward, Alison Millward Assocs (Thurs only); Tim 'Mac' MacCartney (Embercombe) (Fri only)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why the hassle of involving communities? What are the pros and cons to be had from people being empowered in their own environments? • Working with communities takes time and skill: how do we learn the science and art of effective community engagement? • Practical participation through environmental volunteering: why do people volunteer, and what are the best ways of sustaining their involvement? 	<p>➔</p> <p>And bring this back to the woods: what do woodlands, in particular, bring to questions about community participation?</p>
<p>NEW ORDER Partnerships and resources in the new climate of Localism</p>	<p>Leader: David West, Forestry Commission</p> <p>Speaker: Nigel Lowthrop, Hill Holt Wood, Lincs Dr Diane Beddoes, OPM Consultancy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Big Society in a woodlands context: should we be working towards shared governance between communities, NGOs and Government? • Effective partnership working: can environmental partnerships be genuine and productive? • Financing environmental action – can social enterprise and other sustainable models help pay for future landscapes? 	<p>➔</p> <p>And bring this back to the woods: what do woodlands in particular bring to questions about localism and sustainable finance?</p>
<p>BIGGER, BETTER AND JOINED Connecting wildlife habitats to ecosystem services, economies and communities</p>	<p>Leader: Simon Brenman (SWWT)</p> <p>Speakers: Mark Robins (RSPB) Peter Taylor (BANC/Ethos)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does 'joined-up' really mean? Exploring the idea of habitat, ecosystem, economic and social connections in landscapes • Paying for nature: how will habitat conservation progress as public spending declines? • Acknowledging wildness: is there common ground between Living Landscapes and re-wilding? 	<p>➔</p> <p>And bring this back to the woods: how does connectivity, finance and wildness play out in woodlands, in particular?</p>
<p>WELL BEING IN THE WOODS Creating more inclusive, positive experiences for all ages in woodland settings</p>	<p>Leaders: Helen Townsend, Forestry Commission (Thurs only); Alice Goodenough, Silvanus Trust</p> <p>Speakers: Simon Shakespeare, Forest School Training Co (Fri only) Doug Hulyer, HLF Trustee (Fri only) Alice Goodenough, Silvanus Trust</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well-being in the woods – what it is, why it matters, what works and how to measure it meaningfully • Woods and wild places in education: where we go next with Forest Schools, and what is the role for other approaches – bushcraft, walks and journeys, wildlife study etc • Woods and wild places in health: how do we build the relationship with the health sector? 	<p>➔</p> <p>And bring this back to the woods: what are the consequences of seeking greater human well-being, for the woods themselves?</p>
<p>GROWING TREES Making better use of our forests as sources of energy and material, and as carbon sinks</p>	<p>Leader: Tbc</p> <p>Speakers: John Greenshields, Blackdown Hills & East Devon Woodland Assoc; Mark Broadmeadow, Forestry Commission (Fri only)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The profession of forestry – how do we maintain and improve forestry skills in the UK, both public and private? • Woods for timber and fuel – What are the most practical ways to make best use of existing woodlands and create new ones? • Woods as carbon stores – how do we reconcile long term carbon storage versus short term harvesting? 	<p>➔</p> <p>And bring this back to people in the woods: what is the consequence of greater presence of people and communities in woodlands, for these issues?</p>
<p>HERIT-EDGE New vitality for telling the story of the past and the present in the woods</p>	<p>Leader: Bob Crofts, Somerset Count Council Historic Environment Service</p> <p>Speakers: Eric Maddern, Cae Mabon (Thurs only); Michael Fairfax, Public Artist; Tanya James, AC Archaeology</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cutting-edge environmental interpretation– how do we amplify nature without the interpretation getting in the way? • Nature as metaphor – how can we use story to connect people to the land? • How the past informs the present: what are the best ways of sharing historic landscapes with new audiences? 	<p>➔</p> <p>And bring this back to the woods: what is particular about woodlands in the pursuit of interpretation, story and historical study?</p>