

Happenings at Glenlude



2024: a year of rebuilding and looking forward

Glenlude Manager Karen Purvis shares a summary of some of the many highlights and happenings of the past 12 months at Glenlude.

Volunteer work parties

Core volunteers

Re-starting in March, after a break over the colder months, we held **15 Thursday work parties this year, with 25 of our core volunteers giving over 85 days**. Conservation work included keeping up with essential tasks, and further tree planting and maintenance in our young woodlands. This included checking 5,500 trees on the south side of Glenlude that were newly planted the footprint of our old larch compartments after storms tore through the area early in the year. We continued tending to our young woodlands and removing shelters from established broadleaf trees along with necessary maintenance of the brash hedges and buildings.

We were excited to hold a [multi-day work party](#) in October. It was lovely to welcome back old friends with a BBQ of Glenlude venison burgers to celebrate the achievements of the past 12 years.

Our final work party of 2024 took place on Thursday 5 December. Volunteers continued removing tubes and vole guards, the compost loo got a new back wall and up above the hut mesh was added to further protect young saplings from browsing. A festive lunch in the

hut followed by fun games provided by regular volunteer John ended the year on a high.

During 2024, 158 volunteers have given us over 230 days of conservation work. We'll be back in March 2025 with an exciting programme of volunteering opportunities for the year ahead.



Volunteers removing tree shelters from established trees in winter sun on the final work party of 2024.

Photo: M Robertson.

Other visiting groups

Our Corporate Members, [Absolute Escapes](#), joined us for two days; while [George Watsons College Duke of Edinburgh](#) groups carried out a variety of tasks over three separate visits. They repaired brush hedges, did some brushing, tree planting and maintenance followed by a campfire and cook out on their final visit. The [Jamie's Wood Team](#) returned in April planting a further 204 trees in their woodland project area. They also checked and tended to all the trees planted since the project started in 2020. The same month saw us welcome 60 people from the [Phoenix Futures](#) communities in Fife, Glasgow, Derbyshire and Ayrshire. They were joined by [Paul Sweeney MSP](#) and [Colin Smythe MSP](#) to plant an additional 255 trees in the now well-established Phoenix Forest.



Over 60 members of the Phoenix Futures community joined us in April for tree planting and lunch

Following on from a talk given at their AGM in May the [Friends of the Pentlands](#) came for a day to see first-hand the work that we have been doing since we started in 2012.

Other news

Woodland project update

In 2023 we were awarded funding from [Rewilding Britain's Innovation Fund](#). These funds enabled us to engage expert help to undertake a Woodland Scoping Study – helping us to assess the potential to expand native woodland and a mosaic of habitats across the entire 149ha site and the best way to

manage the remaining conifer plantations. Now complete, we will use the findings in our review of the Glenlude Forest Plan – a long-term plan for native woodland restoration.



Our native woodlands are a welcome contrast to the commercial forestry in the distance

Wildlife and monitoring

The warmer months and longer days lead us into site-based monitoring. At Glenlude we undertake annual surveys of breeding birds, adders, dwarf shrub heath plots and marked seedlings. The flora aspect enables us to assess browsing pressure from deer, while the fauna surveys are a good marker of progress with our restoration plans. This year I was joined on site by the Trust's Thirlmere Resilience Project Officer Isaac Johnston who led on the breeding bird surveys. We were delighted to note 44 different bird species – up from 29 species when we first surveyed in 2014. Highlights included particularly high numbers of willow warbler and our first recording of tree pipits which are on the UK Red list for Birds of Conservation Concern.

- [Field Notes: Life returns to Glenlude](#)



Early morning breeding bird survey

Ringin' the changes



Phoenix Forest and Jamies Wood in 2018 (L) and in 2023 (R)



Glenlude in 2015 (L) and 2023 (R)

Next steps...

We have a lot of work lined up for 2025.

We are excited to restart our Thursday work parties in March and to continue our Growing Glenlude project that will enable us to welcome a more diverse range of groups and individuals to the site.

Our tree nursery will receive an overhaul and we look forward to welcoming a new member of staff to work alongside us at Glenlude.

Finally, a huge thank you to everyone who has supported us over the past year, keeping the show on the road, moving forward and spirits high.

We look forward to welcoming you back on site in 2025 and meeting new friends along the way.

Find out more about [Glenlude online](#).