

VISIT OF INTER-DEPARTMENTAL
COMMITTEE ON FOREST POLICY

9-10/10/62

TUESDAY 9th OCTOBER

8.23 a.m.	Depart Central Station for Gourock
9.20 a.m.	Depart Gourock by boat for Dunoon
9.40 a.m.	Depart Dunoon by bus
10.45 a.m.	Arrive Glenbranter -- Coffee
11.00 a.m.	Depart in mini-bus for tour of Glenbranter Forest
12.30 p.m.	Depart Glenbranter by bus for Creggans Inn
12.45 p.m.	Arrive Creggans for lunch
2.15 p.m.	Depart Creggans by bus for Cowal Ari Sawmill
3.30 p.m.	Depart Cowal Ari Sawmill
4.00 p.m.	Arrive Creggans Inn for tea
5.15 p.m.	Depart Creggans by bus
6.45 p.m.	Arrive Inveraray (George Hotel)
	Night at Inveraray

WEDNESDAY 10th OCTOBER

9.30 a.m.	Depart Inveraray by bus
10.00 a.m.	Arrive Minard - Tunns road end
	Drive by mini-bus through forests of Mid-Argyll to Knapdale
11.15 a.m.	Arrive fire lookout point Knapdale - Coffee
12 noon	Depart in mini-bus via Achnamara Village
12.45 p.m.	Arrive Crinan Hotel for lunch
2.00 p.m.	Depart Crinan by bus
2.30 p.m.	Arrive Kilmartin (Sallachry) for demonstration of ploughing and planting
3.00 p.m.	Depart Sallachry via East Loch Awe side
4.15 p.m.	Arrive Ardbrecknish for tea
4.45 p.m.	Depart Ardbrecknish
6.00 p.m.	Arrive Ardgartan Forest - Caravan Park of Argyll National Forest Park
6.20 p.m.	Depart for Tarbert
6.45 p.m.	Arrive Tarbert Hotel for dinner
8.15 p.m.	Depart Tarbert for Glasgow
9.30 p.m.	Arrive Glasgow Central Station
10.20 p.m.	Sleeper train departs Central Station

WEST CONSERVANCY (SCOTLAND)

Area under Plantations 131,700 acres

Forest Year 63

Planting Programme 7,050 acres

Production Programme 470,000 Hoppus feet

Industrial Labour 1,085

BENMORE FOREST

Supervision

Benmore Forest is in the West Division of the Conservancy and is within the South Cowal District under the control of Mr. W. B. Sutherland, District Officer Grade I.

Mr. J. Jackson, Head Forester in charge is assisted by one Forester and two Assistant Foresters.

Area of Forest

The total area of land is 9,300 acres. Of this 421 acres were acquired as standing woodlands, 2740 acres have been planted by the Forestry Commission and 300 acres remain to plant. The remaining 5,800 acres, which includes the unplatable high tops, is let for agriculture.

The greater part of the land which is now Benmore Forest was gifted to the State by the late Mr. H. G. Younger in 1925. In 1929 Benmore House was also gifted by Mr. Younger for the furtherance of forestry education and is used as a Forester Training School.

Planting started on a modest scale and in the early Thirties averaged 150 acres per annum. During the war years the programmes were again reduced, but rose to nearly 150 acres for a few years after the war. There are, therefore, some 400 acres of older plantations, the remainder being under 30 years of age.

Staff and Housing

The industrial staff at the forest totals 40, and the wages paid out in F.Y. 62 amounted to £19,744. There are 24 houses for forest workers, 8 of which are Swedish timber houses in a small community at Deer Park. In addition there are 9 Forest Workers' Holdings.

Programmes of Work

As the land available for planting is small, this operation is carried out by the students of the Forester Training School. The

nursery at Benmore has a lining-out programme of 1,200,000 to 1,500,000 seedlings per annum. The greater part of the forest is at the maintenance stage, of which the main operations are brashing and drain maintenance.

Thinning constitutes one of the main operations and in F.Y. 61 232 acres were thinned yielding 90,000 Hoppus feet of timber. We have a small sawmill and creosote tank and prepare fencing material for the forests of South Cowal. The thinning programme stays at this level for the next five years.

Although the forest forms part of the Argyll National Forest Park, fire risk is not high apart from the period February to the end of May when it can be severe especially at holiday times.

Income

The income from Benmore in F.Y. 61 was £7,263 from produce; £1,012 from rents and the value of nursery plants used was £7,029.

Roads

The slopes are steep and rock outcrops are frequent and road-ing has been difficult. All plantations at the thinning stage have been roaded by some 20 miles of forest road. An additional 25 miles will be required to fully road the remaining younger plantations.

NOTE: The coach passes through Benmore Forest. There are no stops.

LOCH ECK FOREST

Supervision

Loch Eck Forest is in the West Division of the Conservancy and is within the North Cowl District under Mr. J. A. Goodlet, District Officer Grade II.

The Forester in charge is Mr. A. M. Stuart, and there is one Assistant Forester.

Area of Forest

The total land area is 5,501 acres. Of this 2,416 acres are under plantations with 26 acres remaining to plant. The remaining 3,059 acres, which consists mainly of the high mountain tops, is let for agricultural purposes and Forest Worker Holdings.

The first planting was in 1926 and for the next few years was at the rate of 200 acres per annum, dropping down to 150 acres. Apart from small areas of scrub land still to be planted, planting finished in 1947. The whole forest is mainly under 30 years of age.

Staff and Housing

The industrial staff at the forest at present totals 6, but recruitment is now necessary for the future programme of work. A small amount of drains maintenance is carried out by contract labour. There are 5 Forest Worker Holdings and 6 houses for workers. The wages paid out in F.Y. 62 was £3,782.

Programme of Work

There is virtually no planting to be done and the main tasks are drains maintenance and brashing prior to thinning. In F.Y. 61 254 acres were thinned yielding 71,000 Hoppus feet of produce.

The programme of thinnings in F.Y. 61 was 254 acres thinned, yielding 71,380 hoppus feet of produce. This programme will not increase during the next three years.

F.Y. 62 44 ac. 16,317 Thinning 24 ac. 22,111 H.F.
F.Y. 63 43,000

Income

The income for F.Y. 62 is expected to be £298 from rents and £3,790 from produce - a total of £4,088.

Roads

There are now 24 miles of forest roads and all road work in the forest will be completed in F.Y. 63. Because of slopes and rock outcrop road alignment and construction has been difficult.

NOTE: The coach passes through Loch Eck Forest. There are no stops.

GLENBRANTER FOREST

Supervision

Glenbranter Forest is in the West Division of the Conservancy and is under the supervision of Mr. J. A. Goodlet, District Officer Grade II.

Mr. D. J. MacRae, Head Forester, is assisted by one Forester and three Assistant Foresters.

Area of Forest

The total land area is ~~9,073~~^{8,793} acres, of which ~~4,019~~^{4,157} acres are planted and approximately 700 acres remain to plant. There are ~~4,956~~^{4,636} acres remaining in agriculture, which includes the low ground farm of Glenshellish and the higher unplantable tops.

Planting started in 1922 at 400 acres per annum, but averaged 200 acres until the early thirties when it dropped down to 80 acres per annum. The programme at present is 150 acres per annum.

The plantations of Glenbranter are some of the oldest within the Conservancy, and approximately one third of the area is at the thinning stage.

Staff and Housing

The industrial staff at the forest is 27 but in addition to this some of the brashing, drains maintenance and production work is carried out by contract. Recently standing sales of thinnings have been arranged.

There are 17 Forest Worker Holdings and 17 other houses - mainly Swedish timber houses - for staff and workers.

The wages paid out in F.Y. 62 was £44,804.

Contract

Programmes of Work

Preparation of ground for planting is largely done by ploughing. The annual planting programme for the next five years is 150 acres. The main operations are maintenance of drains, brashing and working of produce from thinnings.

Glen shellish Farm

Area : 160 acres (incl. 30 arable
30 pasture
100 rough pasture)

Stock : 36 Arysthies & followers
40 BF ewes

Rent : £ 360

Inverness Farm :

(Hill Farm, Scheme)

Area : 1525 ac. (incl. 22 arable).

Stock 800 BF ewes

16 Cows & followers AA. + 8 short horn bull.

Rent, £ 126

£ 20 grazing

£ 65 grazing top

FWH's G'branlin

Av. rental = £ 20-25

Rates = £ 14-5 approx

Fw's Houses

Av. rental £ 20-19-1

Rates £ 22-18-0.

During F.Y. 61 360 acres were thinned, yielding 176,000 Hoppus feet of timber. During F.Y. 62 the produce yield was 220,000 Hoppus feet. The forecast for F.Y. 63 is just over 300,000 Hoppus Feet, and from that date onwards production of timber from thinnings becomes the most important operation at this forest.

Income

The income during F.Y. 62 is £20,000 from sales of produce and £1,080 from rents, making a total of £21,080.

Roads

Roading of all production areas is now complete and there are some 50 miles of forest roads. It is not anticipated that further roads will be required for at least five years to tap the younger plantations.

Stops on Route

Stop 1 - Compartments 59/60

To see felling, extraction and conversion of thinnings from 1924 plantations. Logs for Cowal Ari sawmill and pole length material for conversion into pitprops, etc.

Stop 1A - C. 69

Stop 2 - Near Forest Office

To see downfall at Invernoaden Farm to demonstrate land use, agriculture and forestry.

STRACHUR SCHOOL :

1950	68 PUPILS
1955	81 PUPILS
1956	SCHOOL ENLARGED
1962	83 PUPILS / 3 TEACHERS.

STRACHUR COUNCIL HOUSES

42 TOTAL - 23 allocated to sawmilling.

COWAL ARI SAWMILL

Introduction

By 1952 in the Cowal area of Argyll increasing supplies of small softwood thinnings were coming on to the market and it was considered that this presented an opportunity for testing new markets for thinnings by the precision sawing of comparatively small sized logs followed by good seasoning of the sawn timber.

Considerable thought was given to the type and location of a mill which would be suitable for this purpose. It was felt that a comparatively small unit situated within the forest area was preferable to a large sawmill in an industrial area far from the source of the raw material. In addition, it was thought desirable, in view of the depopulation of the Highland areas, to create further community life around a forest industry. Great support for this project was given by the Argyll County Council, the Scottish Council (Development and Industry) and the North of Scotland Hydro-Electric Board.

As special attention had been given in Sweden to the technique of handling and sawing small sized logs, use was made of the research carried out by Swedish specialists and, after much deliberation, it was decided to erect a Swedish Ari Sawmill at Strachur, Argyll.

Organisation of the Company

The Cowal Ari-Sawmilling Company Limited was formed in July, 1953. The finances of the Company were provided by Messrs. Adam Wilson and Sons Limited, Timber Merchants of Troon, who were working pitwood in the area, and the Forestry Commission which is, of course, particularly interested in expanding the market for thinnings. The two parties nominated a Board of Directors and an independent Chairman was appointed. The Forestry Commission's financial interest in the Company is in the form of a debenture holding.

Establishment of the Sawmill

A site was leased from the Forestry Commission at Strachur and building began in October, 1953. An "Ari" sawmill unit was

installed and a "Wells" kiln of modern design was constructed for seasoning at least 50% of the production. Despite difficulties in obtaining suitable labour, mainly because of lack of housing at that time, sawing began in 1954 and production has progressively increased to date. The mill is now in full scale production at approximately 1,000 standards per annum. There are 29 employees including the sales and office staff (3). The labour position has been static during the past few years since some 21 houses, built by the County Council at Strachur Village, have become available to the Company.

Supplies of Round Logs

Since establishment of the Mill the main supplies of logs have come from Forestry Commission forests. The present annual input is some 220,000 to 240,000 cubic feet of round logs. To date over 1,750,000 cubic feet (51,000 tons) of round timber have been sawn.

The Cowal forests are not yet at a stage when they can supply the Mill's total requirements and about 50% has to be brought from forests around the Lochgilphead area (Knapdale and Inverliever). The Company have recently been successful in purchasing considerable quantities of suitable timber from private estates.

Markets

The timber is sold mainly for case and crate making and for housing construction. The sales area covered is Glasgow, Edinburgh and as far south as the English Midlands. Sales for housing construction have gradually increased and are currently about 50% of production.

The Company has its own transport with specialised equipment for bringing the logs to the mill and for deliveries of sawn timber to consumers.

Sales and Prices

The Company is getting an ex Mill price which is 10% under the c.i.f. price of best quality Scandinavian Whitewood. This is considered very satisfactory when it is taken into account that we are selling "log run" and small boards to a large extent, whereas the price comparison with Scandinavian is for a picked specification on a 7" basis.

The Company is paying an average price of 3s. 7½d. overbark per Hoppus foot delivered for its logs.

The Company's lumber is commanding a higher price in the market above the normal run of home grown timber. This is because of the superior quality of sawing and drying treatment, which are paramount factors when selling. As stated, approximately 50% of the production is kiln dried and one third is in boards under 1". This leaves a balance of 20% approximately of deals/battens for air drying. To date we have sold timber to the value of £580,000 without complaint as to the quality and manufacture.

It would not be true to say that prejudice against home grown timber has been overcome but advances are being made in getting our kiln dried lumber used for purposes where previously it would not have been considered. Users, however, expect to buy home grown timber very much cheaper than imported, and unless the margin is sufficient they cannot be enticed to use it.

THE FORESTS OF MID-ARGYLL (SOUTH)

Supervision

Mid-Argyll (South) District is supervised by Mr. I. Gillespie, District Officer Grade I. The forests included in the district are Minard, Asknish, Kilmory, Kilmichael North, Kilmichael South and Kilmartin. There are five Foresters assisted by two Assistant Foresters.

Area of Forests

The total land area is 27,625 acres of which 17,764 are under plantations with approximately 400 acres remaining to plant. The remainder, 9,500 acres, is allocated to agriculture, holdings and a small nursery at Minard Forest.

First planting was at Asknish Forest in 1937 and was at the rate of 150 acres per annum. At Minard planting started in 1939 at approximately 50 acres per annum. At the four other units, planting did not start until 1947 onwards when large programmes were undertaken (1,500 acres for a few years) as part of the immediate post-war expansion.

The greater part of this large forest area is under 15 years of age.

Staff and Housing

The total industrial labour force within the district is 70, and wages paid out in F.Y. 62 have totalled £38,270. There are 64 houses for forest workers and 5 forest worker holdings. The houses are mainly at Minard, Asknish and Kilmichael.

Programmes of Work

The land remaining to plant is very small and will all be planted up in F.Y. 64. There is a very large programme of drain maintenance, and a small brashing programme. Only very small areas of Asknish are at the thinning stage, producing some 20,000-30,000 hoppus feet per annum. The small nursery at Minard is used for transplanting only, using 500,000 seedlings per annum.

Fire risk is still very high, especially where the forest bounds the county road.

Income

The total income from the district during F.Y. 62 is estimated to be £11,330 made up from produce sales £2,300, nursery stocks £6,300 and rents £2,730.

Roads

As few plantations have reached the production stage, road construction has consisted mainly of a few long strategically sited roads for access for management and fire protection. The total mileage constructed to date is 32 miles, and it is hoped to be able to allow an annual programme of some 6 miles within the district.

Stop 1

In Minard Forest for general picture of large scale afforestation.

Stop 4

At Kilmartin Forest (Sallachry Section) to see ploughing for planting and demonstration of planting.

KNAPDALE FOREST

Supervision

Knapdale Forest is in the West Division of the Conservancy and in the Kintyre District under Mr. K. N. V. Townsend, District Officer Grade I.

Mr. H. Mackinnon, Head Forester, is assisted by one Forester and three Assistant Foresters.

Area of Forest

The total land area of Knapdale is 20,997 acres of which 7,382 acres are planted leaving 450 acres to plant and 13,168 acres in agriculture.

Planting started in 1934 and averaged 300 acres per annum until the war years slowed down the programme. Since then programmes have fluctuated considerably. None of the forest is over 30 years of age, but a considerable part of it is over 10 years of age.

Staff and Housing

The present industrial staff at Knapdale is 52. There are 46 houses and 8 forest worker holdings. The main housing area is at Achnamara. Wages paid out in F.Y. 62 have totalled £28,560.

Programme of Work

As the land available for planting is small it will all be used up by F.Y. 64. The main tasks on the forest are drains maintenance and brashing. Some of the earlier plantings are at the thinning stage and in F.Y. 61 some 356 acres were thinned yielding 122,000 hoppus feet of produce. The yield in F.Y. 62 is expected to be similar and production should rise to 240,000 hoppus feet by 1967.

Income

The income in F.Y. 62 is estimated at £9,163, made up from £7,317 from produce and £1,846 from rents.

Roads

The terrain at Knapdale makes road layout a considerable problem,

but to date some 36 miles of roads have been constructed and the annual programme is 6 miles of new roads.

Stop 2

At fire look-out hut for general view of forest.

Stop 3

Achnamara Village of Swedish timber houses erected post-war.

INVERLIEVER FOREST

Supervision

Inverliever Forest, which forms part of the West Lochaweside Working Plan area, is in the East Division of the Conservancy, and the Mid-Argyll District under Mr. G. A. Dey, District Officer Grade I.

Mr. I. H. MacKensie, Head Forester, is assisted by two Foresters and an Assistant Forester.

Area of Forest

The total land area of Inverliever is 15,381 acres of which 4,216 have been planted and 200 acres remain to plant.

The balance of 10,965 acres is in agriculture nearly all of which forms part of one or other of three large stock-rearing farms.

Inverliever was started by the Office of Woods, and the oldest plantations date from 1909 and are approaching maturity. Between 1909 and 1924 when the Forestry Commission took over 1,768 acres had been planted. Since then planting has been continuing with some fluctuations.

Staff and Housing

The present labour force is 37 and is slightly below the desired strength. There are 55 houses and 8 Forest Workers' Holdings, but some of the houses are used to accommodate workers from the adjacent Inverinan Forest. Most of the houses are at the forest village of Dalavich, where 46 dwellings were built about 10 years ago.

Besides Forestry Commission labour there are also locally housed contractors working in the forest who are employed both by the Forestry Commission and by timber merchants, chiefly on produce working. These average 8 men throughout the year.

We also offer part-time employment to women whose husbands and fathers work in the forest. About 8 women work sporadically in the forest.

Programme of Work

As there is little planting work to be done in the foreseeable future the bulk of the labour is employed on maintenance operations (brashing, weeding, drainage, etc.) and on timber production. About 250,000 hoppus feet of timber is produced annually and over half of this consists of sawlogs. Production is likely to remain fairly steady until 1970 when it will increase rapidly with the advent of clear felling to about half a million hoppus feet per annum.

Income

The income in F.Y. 62 is estimated at £28,998. £27,754 will come from produce and £1,244 from rents.

Roads

To date 24 miles of road have been built and a further 9 miles are proposed over the next five years.

EREDINE FOREST

Supervision

Eredine Forest lies in the East Division of the Conservancy. The Forester in charge, Mr. C. R. Johnston, is also responsible for Dalmally Forest and Glenorchy Forest, which lie away to the north. He is helped by two Assistant Foresters, one of whom is employed almost exclusively at Eredine. *

Area of Forest

The total land area of Eredine is 14,493 acres, of which 1,967 have been planted and 367 remain to plant. The bulk of the remaining land is run as two large farms.

Planting started at Eredine in 1935 and continued until 1952. Since then little has been done.

Staff and Housing

The present labour force of 39 has also to cope with Glenorchy and Dalmally Forests (totalling about 2,000 acres of plantations). There are 22 houses and 4 Forest Workers' Holdings. The 22 houses were built at Eredine in 1954 and form a small village.

The timber at Eredine is usually worked by contractors, and affords employment for a further 2 or 3 men.

Programme of Work

Most of the labour is employed on maintenance operations (drainage, cleaning, weeding and brashing). Timber production will rise from about 30,000 hoppus feet per annum now to 65,000 hoppus feet per annum in 1970 and 105,000 hoppus feet per annum in 1975.

Income

The income for F.Y. 62 is estimated at £4,781 - produce providing £770, rents £941 and a small nursery (just closed) £3,070.

Roads

Roading has only just started and to date 3 miles have been finished. In the next 5 years a further 7 miles are planned.

ARDGARTAN FOREST

Supervision

Ardgartan is in North Cowal district under Mr. J. A. Goodlet, District Officer Grade II.

Mr. R. S. Angus, Forester in charge, is assisted by two Foresters and an Assistant Forester.

Area of Forest

The total land area of Ardgartan Forest is 20,962 acres of which 6,657 acres are under plantations, 800 acres remain to plant and 13,500 acres, mainly unplantable high tops, are allotted to agriculture.

Planting started at Ardgartan in 1925 at about 100 acres per annum rising to 300 acres then falling off at the outbreak of the war. During war years there was very little planting, but since the war approximately 300 acres have been planted annually. There are, therefore, in Ardgartan some of the oldest plantations of the West Conservancy.

Staff and Housing

The labour force at Ardgartan is 33, and there are 28 houses and 15 forest worker holdings. The wages paid out in F.Y. 62 was £20,481.

Programme of Work

The planting programme is 250-300 acres per annum, and a considerable part of this has to be manually prepared for planting. Drain maintenance and brashing form a major item in the annual programme. Because of the age of the forest, in F.Y. 61 200 acres were thinned providing 51,000 hoppus feet of produce. This programme is to step up to over 100,000 hoppus feet by 1964.

Income

The total income for F.Y. 62 is £6,015, of which £4,540 is from sales of produce and £1,475 from rents.

Roads

As approximately 1,000 acres of the forest are at the thinning stage 35 miles of forest roads have been constructed. The annual programme is 4 miles. Terrain is very uneven and road layout and construction is difficult.

ARGYLL NATIONAL FOREST PARK

The Argyll National Forest Park consists of large stretches of forest, mountain and moorland lying to the west of Loch Long. It is divided into two main areas. The northern area consists of Ardgartan and Ardgoil and forms a wedge of mountains between Loch Coil and Loch Long; the rest of the boundary is formed by a line which runs north from Arrochar up Glen Loin and Coiregrogain, round the northern slopes of Beinn Ime to Glen Kinglas and then follows approximately the road to Rest-and-be-Thankful and then on to Lochgoilhead. The southern area is bounded on the east by Loch Long and Loch Coil. Its western part consists of the Beinn Mhor ridge of mountains extending from Benmore to near Strachur on Loch Fyne. Its north-eastern boundary lies roughly on a line from Carrick Castle on Loch Coil to Strachur.

The two areas are built up of a group of estates, one of which, Ardgoil, was presented to the Corporation of the City of Glasgow by Mr. T. Cameron Corbett in 1906; the others were acquired by the Forestry Commission. The first planting done by the Commission was in Glenbranter in 1922, and since then the Commission has afforested large areas.

In 1936 the Forestry Commission, under the chairmanship of Sir Roy Robinson (later Lord Robinson), conceived the idea of utilising the area as a National Forest Park, and the Corporation of Glasgow consented to co-operate.

The total area of the estates is about 58,000 acres, of which certain strips round the coasts and below 1,000 feet in altitude, amounting to about 25,000 acres, have been afforested, leaving approximately 33,000 acres available for grazing and recreation.

Ardgartan House is used as a Hostel by the Scottish Youth Hostels Association and within the grounds of Ardgartan House is the park for the Scottish Caravan Club. Nearby there are camping sites for boys and girls associations, and a park for the Caravan Club of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The Forestry Commission have established a Caravan Park close to the River Cree and have installed modern site facilities. In addition a field near to the village of Arrochar has been set aside

as a camping ground. These facilities are under the control of our Wardens during the season.

During the summer of 1961 the receipts amounted to £1,730, most of which was for car and caravan facilities, and the estimated number of persons to use those sites was 22,834.

Stop 5 - Ardgartan Caravan Park

View of site and facilities available for caravan owners.

P463 EST ch N. Canal

73,600 FC.

17,436 Contract.

91,036