

# CLOCHANDIGHTER

**EDITION 54 - WINTER 2006**



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## Portlethen Moss Conservation Group

[www.portlethen-moss.org.uk](http://www.portlethen-moss.org.uk)

Update:

A site visit, with representatives from Aberdeenshire Council and the Aberdeen Woodlands Project Officer, took place on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October. The purpose of this visit was to assess the Moss and for the group to put forward their 'wish list' of potential development, restoration and maintenance ideas. The Aberdeen Woodlands Project Officer will put this forward as a proposal to see if the Moss is eligible for funding under a current scheme which is being run to help fund green areas within communities in Aberdeen.

If we are granted this funding significant improvements will be made which will enhance the natural environment of the Moss for the resident wildlife and the community paths will be upgraded in certain areas where wildlife and habitat will not be affected by change. Benches and information boards were also amongst some of the suggestions put forward.

However it is not all good news as we were advised by Aberdeenshire Council that the major land owners of the Moss have sought legal advice and have decided not to enter into a management agreement with the group and Aberdeenshire Council - which is necessary for us to develop the Moss as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR). The reason given was that they felt the Moss had future development potential adding that they were willing to sell the Moss to us.

Needless to say this is not good news; it would be an absolute irreversible tragedy if the Moss was ever to be developed as it would be the end for the resident wildlife which includes (amongst others) Roe Deer, Newts, Frogs, Dragon Flies, Damsel Flies and a variety of wild flowers including beautiful Orchids and Sundews. Although a large part of the Moss has already been lost to development, that which remains is still of natural interest (as affirmed by the Peat lands Advisor for Scotland when he visited the Moss earlier this year). With very few peat bogs remaining in the UK, this is our chance as a community to conserve one which exists on our own doorsteps.

It is hoped that further discussions between Aberdeenshire Council and the landowners will take place and that perhaps a mutually agreeable solution can be reached; failing this then a community buyout may be our only option.

As a result of this, if we are successful in gaining the funding which the Aberdeen Woodlands Project Officer is putting us forward for, the enhancements to the Moss will only take place on the small area of the Moss that is currently owned by Aberdeenshire Council - this is the area at the very south end of the Moss. In light of the land owners views this is the only area that we could put forward the proposal for at this time, whereas initially it was hoped that we could include the whole area of the Moss in the proposal.

Anyone wishing to know more about the Portlethen Moss Conservation Group please do not hesitate to contact me:

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