

# MOUNTAINHALL

COMMUNITY  
GREENSPACE

## November / December update: winter solstice

As we approach the winter solstice, just before Christmas, we celebrate the middle of winter and a marker for another year passing. A perfect time for reflection. As we reflect on the Mountainhall Greenspace Community, we are grateful for all those who have shown constant support in developing this project; the NHS team, our DesignHOPEs research group, Miranda and Pippa supported through the WWDN network, who helped kick start our community engagement back in early 2025, and of course, to the community members who share our love of the space.

We are excited that we will be sharing our Design Statement with you in early 2026! Written by Laura at DesignHOPEs, this design statement is the accumulation of all our consultation work; surveys, workshops, talks and reports: bringing together our shared vision of the project.

At the end of October we had our Community Panel and stakeholder group meeting for the first time. Together, we are learning how to achieve our desired goals set out in our Design Statement.

**Our next joint meeting will be held on the 14th of January, 3 - 5pm online.** We hope to see many of our community panel members there.

Don't forget, you can get in contact at any time. We hope to hear from you, and would love to know of your ideas, thoughts and experiences from the Mountainhall Greenspace. Share on the [Facebook page](#) or email [mountainhallgreenspace@gmail.com](mailto:mountainhallgreenspace@gmail.com)

### • Wintering

*"The next day is also a bank holiday in Scotland, and the sun remains, the sky clear and the temperature plummets. A hoar frost forms, thick and sparkling, a dew that transforms into a cold white fur on everything that spent the night outside. The dead stems of umbellifers, grasses and spiders' webs who are given a new life by the thick white frost, their lines emphasised by the clinging cold.*

*We walk up the slope; through the side bushes along the path we get a panorama of frozen fields below, the grass bleached and scorched by the cold, an ice stream, a flock of sheep huddled together and the shadows filling in the gentle folds and dips between the fields. The consolations of the cold."*

From *'Wintering'* by Stephen Rutt. A local nature writer, he captures the beauty of winter in Dumfries.

Hear more from him in his newly released podcast on bats *'Echoes and Whispers'* Made in collaboration with sound artist [Claire Todd](#), partnered with [Species on the Edge](#).

• **Looking back on 2025**

**February 2025**  
**Litter picking**  
**Organised by Miranda and Pippa**  
**@two isles**



**March 2025**  
**Community Open Day**  
**Organised by Miranda and Pippa**  
**@two isles**  
**Mosaic game DesgnHOPES**



**March 2025**  
**Community Open Day Organised**  
**by Miranda and Pippa**  
**@two isles**





**March 2025**  
**Photo by Alan Sprung**



**2025**  
**Photo by Alan Sprung**



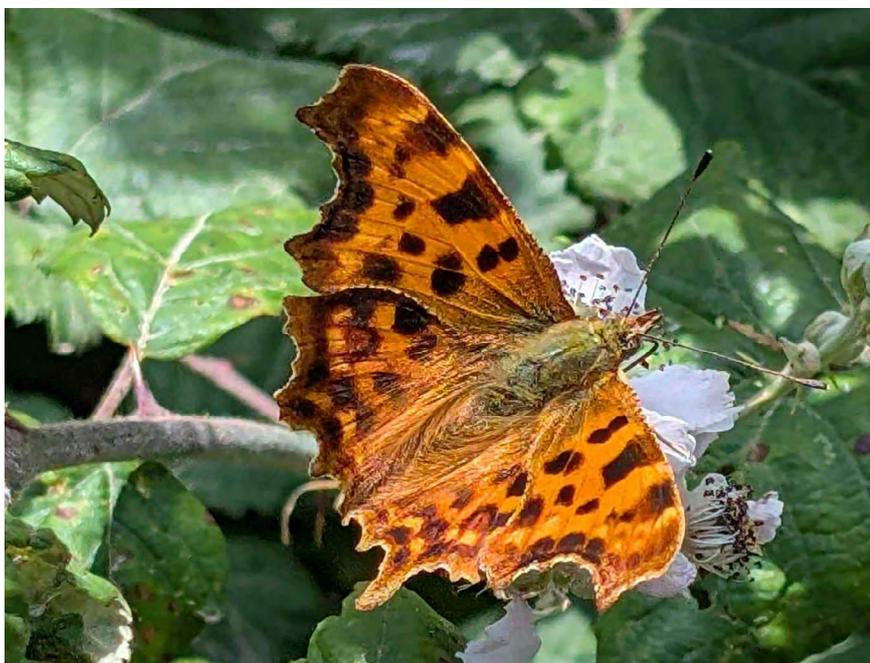
**June 2025**  
**First Community Panel meeting**  
**Mountainhall Treatment centre**  
**Mosaic game led by**  
**DesignHOPES**



**June 2025**  
**Maggie picking Himalayan**  
**Balsam**  
**Community landscape**  
**management**



**July 2025**  
**Foraging on Mountainhall**  
**Greenspace**



**July 2025**  
**Comma Butterfly**  
**Recording by Malcolm Haddow**  
**@ SWSEIC**



**August 2025**  
**Photo by Alan Sprung**



**August 2025**  
**Mountainhall reflections,**  
**newsletter contributions**  
**Written by Simon Lidwell**  
**@ Quartz**



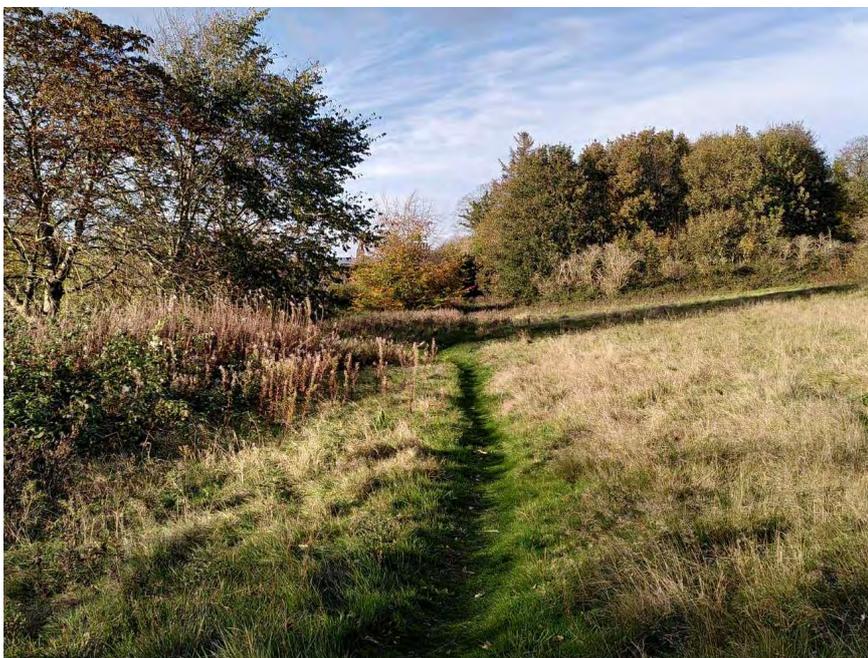
**September 2025**  
**Foraging recommendations from**  
**Freya @ Ferlie**



**October 2025**  
**Fungus foraging Mark and Katie**



**October 2025**  
**Photo by Andy Brooke**



**October 2025**  
**Photo by Andy Brooke**

This is a small round up of 2025. If you would like to learn more about the progression of this project, you can find all our reports and past newsletters on our webpage <https://www.propagate.org.uk/mountainhall-greenspace>. We look forward to developing this project alongside you further in 2026.

## • Mountainhall moments of reflection

### Paths and Desire

*“It’s a dangerous business, Frodo, going out your door. You step onto the road, and if you don’t keep your feet, there’s no knowing where you might be swept off to.”*

— J.R.R. Tolkien, The Lord of the Rings

The Mountainhall greenspace is a long strip of land. It lies on the edge of roads and buildings, and much of it is on a slope that a haggis would feel at home running along. It is tempting to think of it as undeveloped waste ground. It is neither fully fenced off for a purpose, or clearly accessible. It is however home to many “desire paths” and signs of activity. Perhaps this wildness is one of its important qualities. It is a place where you can step out of your front door and experience a moment in a space not excessively managed. Those who by circumstance or choice are unable to adventure to distant mountains and confront dragons, can at least wander in woods near Mountainhall.

By community member Simon Lidwell at Quartz <https://www.ancient-pathways.co.uk/>



Merry christmas and a happy new year

With kind wishes,

Emily

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<https://www.propagate.org.uk/mountainhall-greenspace>

Propagate are a regenerative food collective specialising in local, community and sustainable food projects.

*Mountainhall Greenspace Community is a community project being developed from the NHS grounds of the Mountainhall treatment centre. The project aims to create a resilient community, with access to nature and creative wellbeing.*

*Propagate and DesignHOPES are partnered with the NHS to develop this project.*

