



MOUNTAINHALL

COMMUNITY
GREENSPACE

October update:

The end of October is considered the end of the Harvest season, farmers, growers and foragers have done their best to produce and preserve as much food as possible to see us all throughout winter. Many of our wildlife species have done the same, either storing pantries of food for them to tuck into while the land rests, or they've bulked up creating insulating layers of fat while they hibernate and sleep throughout the cold months. Squirrels often come to mind, but did you know Moles also store food over winter? Read about some of our wildlife winter food storage tactics here: <https://www.hiwwt.org.uk/blog/hiwwt/wild-winter-larders>

It was lovely having the Community Panel and Stakeholder group meet for the first time towards the end of this month. Being an important step in understanding the future of the project. Thank you to everyone who joined, if Community Panel members could please keep a look out for the next meeting invitation.

As ever, thank you to the community members who have sent in their photos and contributions to the newsletters. It's so wonderful seeing the space through your



Mountainhall Community Greenspace - photo by Andy Brooke



Ramaria stricta - Photo by Katie and Mark

- **Fungus at Mountainhall**

Community members Mark and Katie went looking for fungus after a prompt on our newsletters. They discovered quite a few interesting species, and had a nice time exploring the space.

They shared photos of *Ramaria Stricta*, a 'up-right coral' fungus mostly found growing on conifers. They are very curious fungus with a strong smell, which Katie said smelt like toothpaste. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ramaria_stricta

These fungi are not edible, please do your own research and check with an expert before foraging for food.



Mountainhall Community Greenspace - Photos by Katie and Mark

• Mountainhall moments of reflection

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

Interconnectedness.

When I last sat in the car park (resting the required time after a vaccination) and looked out over the greenspace, and the river, and the houses I was struck by how interconnected everything is.

Sometimes I think it is good to step back from a situation, and benefit from the human ability to imagine ourselves “non-attached” to the environment we live in. I have also inherited and consider the phrase “And the Word became Flesh and lived among us”.

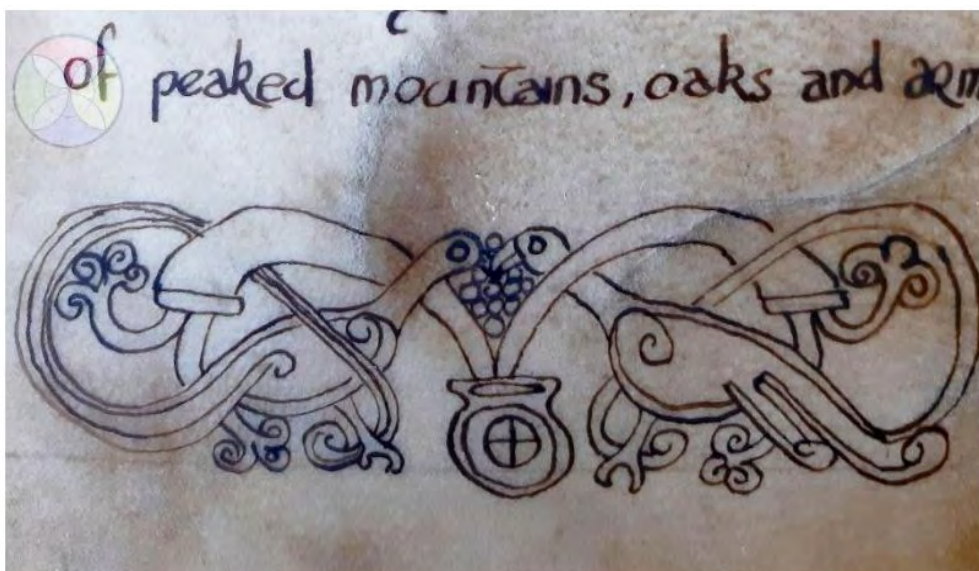
This really sinks in when I write on vellum using oak gall inks. The ink is made from things which grow locally, and I have gathered. I can imagine a monk writing on vellum sourced from the herd of cattle that are their community’s wealth. As the ink sinks in and bonds with the material the invisible thoughts in my head become visible words and then darken into something which could last more than a thousand years.

Perhaps it will be helpful for you to take a moment to some time to reflect:

- Rest and gain an awareness of your surroundings.
- Search your heart and linger on the moments, people, and places where you feel “solid”.
- What memories or feelings are like sparks which kindle your passions?

All living things adapt and change but are you able to sense a direction of “flows” in your life? What course will you take as your life weaves in and through your environment?

“And the word became flesh and lived among us...” (Jn 1:14) NRSV



Oak gall ink on vellum - Simon Lidwell

Viriditas

“With nature’s help, humankind can set into creation all that is necessary and sustaining”–
Hildegard, Book of Divine Works (Liber Divinorum Operum)

What do you expect when you go for a walk, what if simply being in a green place has the potential to help you refuel your mind?

Dog walking can be a chore, and a visitor once joked about UK culture that it was odd to see so many dogs leading humans all over the place, but perhaps sometimes we need to be led out of our comfort zone. Think back to the times you have been walking through the grass and remember the feeling of being surrounded by living things simply growing.

Perhaps it requires some intentional thought as well as stepping outdoors! – but if you imagine the green-ness around you as a reservoir of potential how would that affect your relationship with it?



Mountainhall Community Greenspace - photo by Andy Brooke

• Creative writing at Mountainhall Greenspace Community

It's now been 6 months since our wonderful community open day with Miranda and Pippa, celebrating the Mountainhall Greenspace. Now, as then, we were welcoming the turning of the seasons which was documented so well during a community writing workshop led by Pippa. Here is the lovely piece of writing made during this workshop.

There is a sign up form for anyone that would be interested in pursuing the idea of a [Mountainhall Greenspace Community writing group](#). If you would like to contribute pieces of writing, if you have ideas how you would like this group to be conducted, or if you're interested in facilitating a writing workshop, please get in touch.

1.

I didn't know the birds but
From the way they were calling to each other
They clearly know each other
The smell of spring carried on a gentle breeze
Whispering through the grass
It sparks in this March light
White blackthorn blossom comes again and revives us
Beautiful that spring has arrived

2.

I can not feel anxiety
Happy, calm, joy
Emotional, change, decay
messy , hopeful, life
Bursting spring buds
Alive, grounded
Buoyant on pencils and cake

3.

Nostalgia, dry grass, looks like
Rice grain back at home
Everything battered down but
Defiantly ready to rise again
The future of a greenspace tucked away
We are crisply sat on last years grass
A crisp and lazy island
Natural cycles
Out for a walk with the bees

4.

Birdsong, wondering what they are saying
Commenting on our presence?
Songs of many sizes
Trees like soldiers on parade
Standing guard
Stuck, when you step
Carefully, just like life
Branches lie like dismembered limbs after a battle with storm
Peace broken at times by the sound of cars
But quickly restored
Ever encroaching on my eyeline





Mountainhall Community Greenspace - photo by Andy Brooke

- **Greenspaces for public health**

We are learning a lot throughout this process of community building on the NHS grounds at Mountainhall. It's important to remember this is a nationwide movement, and the NHS are looking across all their estates throughout Scotland to better use them for public health. If you would like to learn more about this, and put our project into a wider context Public Health Scotland have uploaded this webinar onto their youtube channel. [Valuing, Protecting and Managing the NHS Scotland Outdoor Estate Webinar](#)

It's been amazing seeing the response to our greenspace community project and it's clear this greenspace has a special place within the Dumfries community. If you would like to send any thoughts, questions, or contributing content to the newsletter, please get in touch: mountainhallgreenspace@gmail.com

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.

