

Enchanted Forest
Community Newsletter

Issue: September 2024

Symphony of Nature

85,000

VISITORS TO
THE SHOW
EACH YEAR!

SHOW DATES
3 OCT – 3 NOV



THE
ENCHANTED
FOREST
TRUST

CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the 2024 edition of the Enchanted Forest Community Trust newsletter! It's less than a month to go until this year's much anticipated Enchanted Forest. We are very excited to unveil the show on 3 October, *Symphony of Nature*. It promises to be an unforgettable journey through a symphony of vibrant colours and lights, original music, and of course the natural beauty of Faskally Wood.

Before it all gets underway, this newsletter aims to provide you with the essential news and information you'll need in advance of the event, as well as sharing some insights into the support we have given to the invaluable work taking place behind the scenes to support Pitlochry and the wider community.

We know how important the Enchanted Forest event is to Highland Perthshire and to the many businesses in Pitlochry and the surrounding area who benefit from the custom that our visitors bring year after year. Our team have been working extremely hard once again to raise the bar and deliver another event which exceeds expectations.

We're also delighted to share that we have been shortlisted for this year's Scottish Thistle Regional Awards in the Celebrating Thriving Communities category!

This award celebrates partnerships, collaborations and team working – whether that be with local businesses, communities or a group of individuals – coming together to protect and enhance our environment whilst growing social, cultural and economic wealth.

Please keep everything crossed for us. In the meantime we can't wait to welcome visitors back for what is set to be an extraordinary show!

Karen Bothwell, Chair,
The Enchanted Forest Community Trust



REGIONAL FINALIST

The Enchanted Forest is a spectacular immersive art experience that has become a staple of Highland Perthshire's autumn tourism season. An award-winning sound and light show, transforming the beautiful Faskally Wood into a magical destination each October. A trailblazing event which is creative, energetic and entertaining, it is one of the UK's most successful cultural events, attracting 85,000 visitors annually.

Since its inception in 2002, the event has welcomed almost 800,000 visitors, creating an estimated long term economic impact of £73 million for Highland Perthshire over its 22-year history.

We're excited about this year's event, **Symphony of Nature**, which will take place from 3 October to 3 November. A celebration of the natural world and the harmonies created by the many creatures that call Faskally Wood home, visitors will be immersed in a magical celebration of the beauty and interconnectedness of nature, through a kaleidoscope of vivid colours and inspirational original music.

HIGHLAND PERTSHIRE'S ECONOMIC BOOST

The Enchanted Forest plays a crucial role in delivering an impressive boost to the local tourism economy in and around Pitlochry every autumn. An independent economic assessment report The Trust commission each year found the event is now able to deliver a significant annual economic impact of £10.38 million to Highland Perthshire.

An online visitor survey also found:

90%

The event was highly rated, with over 90% of visitors enjoying their visit.

91%

91% of visitors only visited Pitlochry because of the event.

89%

89% of visitors were from outside Perth and Kinross.

51%

51% stayed overnight, benefitting a multitude of local businesses.

89%

89% felt overall value for money was excellent.

90%

A growing trend in customer loyalty, with over 50% having visited before, and a repeat visit enjoyment rating of over 90%.

CELEBRATING THRIVING COMMUNITIES!

Despite the weather challenges and cancellations we had to face last year, thankfully the 2023 show was still a great success. This means we've been able to award a record number of grants this year to registered charities operating in Highland Perthshire, our highest ever contribution of £97,815 to 26 organisations.

We specifically sought applications that focused on helping people in need with the cost-of-living crisis, help with battling child poverty and focus on child welfare and increase inclusion, enablement, independence, mental health and wellbeing. We also looked for projects which increase access to employment, volunteering, learning, culture, sport, and leisure opportunities and aim to improve infrastructure which benefits the community and promotes sustainability through best practices.

Pitlochry Community Action Trust (PCAT), which exists to deliver the priorities laid out in the community action plan developed in consultation with local residents, received **£10,000**.

Chair of PCAT, **Charlie McCarthy**, welcomed the award, commenting: "All of us here at PCAT are extremely grateful to The Enchanted Forest for their generous support. Our vision is to proactively support the community in Pitlochry and Moulin. Funding awards such as this help us continue our work to both develop the Trust itself and work towards facilitating the sustainable development of the town, particularly through rural regeneration, increasing the provision of educational

opportunities in the community for the advancement of arts, heritage, culture or science, and advancing environmental protection or improvement locally."

Other charities operating in Highland Perthshire awarded grant funding include **Pitlochry Community First Responders, Pitlochry Baptist Church, Pitlochry Repair Cafe** and the **Pitlochry and Blair Atholl Pipe Band**.

The Enchanted Forest Community Fund was set up in 2015 to redistribute proceeds from the event to the local community in Highland Perthshire and is administered by the Enchanted Forest Community Trust. Applications open in January every year.

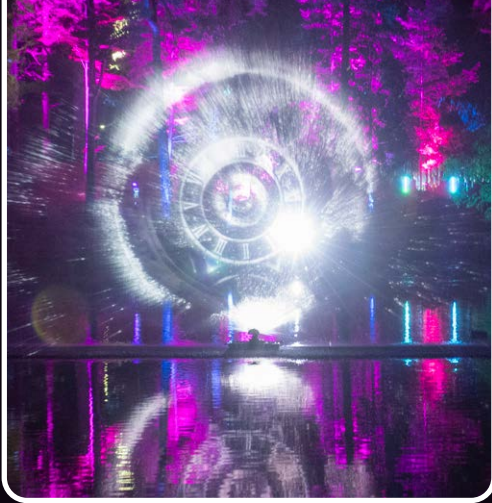
The Trust also makes a number of discretionary donations every year to local organisations who are not registered charities or community interest groups (CICs). Since January 2024, the Trust has granted **£6,700** to a range of local community groups including **Pitlochry in Bloom, Pitlochry Path Group** and **Pitlochry Winter Lights**.

As a thank you to the local community we will be inviting all recipients of the Enchanted Forest Community Fund and discretionary donations, plus all schools within a 15-minute radius of Pitlochry, to the show.



THANK YOU!

The Enchanted Forest would not be the international success it is without the support of the community of Pitlochry and Highland Perthshire. We know that the event can cause a level of disruption during the month of October due the volume of visitors to Pitlochry, so we do appreciate your hospitality and patience, and, for our part, we do our best to listen to all concerns and address them as best we can.



PARKING MATTERS

Visitors to the event will be signposted to the public car parks available in Pitlochry, with additional yellow **"Event Parking"** signs erected by the AA to ensure these are clearly signposted. Visitors staying in Pitlochry will be asked to leave their vehicle at their accommodation. If parking on the street, visitors are being asked in pre-show attendance information to park considerately, to observe any parking restrictions, and not to park on yellow lines. More information on parking for the event can be found on **The Enchanted Forest website**.

WHAT TO EXPECT

The shuttle bus route to the forest and back will remain the same as in previous years and will begin at Fisher's Hotel in Pitlochry. Fisher's Hotel is a familiar start point for our many visitors and has the advantage of allowing other local businesses to benefit from passing trade.

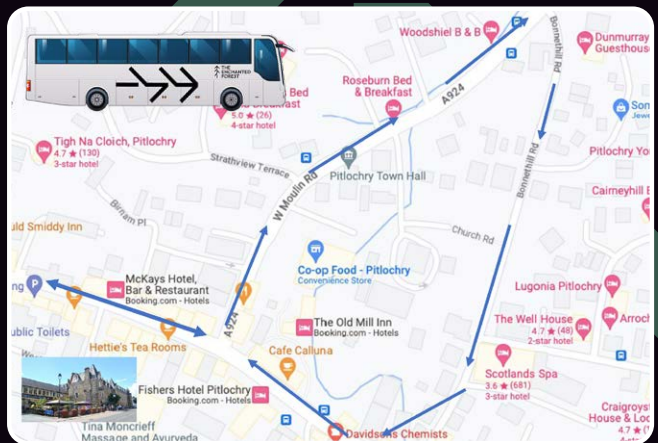
The chosen bus route remains the safest option available, and parking restrictions will once again be implemented by **Perth and Kinross Council** to ensure minimal traffic disruption from visitors. It will also remove any obstacles so that the buses can freely travel to and from **Faskally Wood**. The parking restrictions include **West Moulin Road** and **Bonnethill Road** down to the **Scotland's Spa Hotel** and will reduce any congestion and bus noise overall.

We will have a larger team of **stewards** this year, ensuring the smooth departure of buses throughout each night from **Fisher's Hotel**. We will be asking all visitors to arrive just before the start of their departure window detailed in their tickets, and not any earlier. We will also ensure they have their tickets ready to be scanned before boarding the buses. This should alleviate unnecessary congestion at the departure point.

BEING ACCESSIBLE

Making the Enchanted Forest event as accessible as possible has always been a priority. We want to make the event as accessible as we can, mindful of the restrictions we might have due to the natural forest setting, and that everyone's needs can vary. The paths of Faskally Wood are accessible for some wheelchair users, and we have a range of accessibility provisions in place which we've developed and enhanced over the years based on feedback, including our accessibility bus and the introduction of Autism friendly performances.

BUS ROUTE 2024



SUPPORTING LOCAL

One of our core values at the Trust is using local suppliers and businesses to support the event wherever possible. Pitlochry based companies Tay Ecology are responsible for our ecological impact survey and Highland Perthshire Shopmobility will again be providing wheelchairs for the event. Aberfeldy based Beyond Adventure is our first aid provider and has become an integral part of the team.

Once again, we will be using two Perthshire based transport companies to provide our shuttle buses, Auchterarder based Docherty's Midland Coaches and Pitlochry based Elizabeth Yule Transport. Ricky Morton, Director, and Transport Manager at Elizabeth Yule Transport, who has been supplying buses to the event for over twenty years, said: "As a local business based in Pitlochry, we're pleased to be working with The Enchanted Forest this year and look forward to taking their visitors to and from the forest in October. It's one of the country's major events and we're proud to have been selected as one of their transport partners, proof that collaborating with local businesses is great for the local economy."

The Enchanted Forest provides a significant boost for companies in Highland Perthshire, transforming the fortunes of many hotels, restaurants and cafes in the traditionally quieter shoulder month of October, to become one of their busiest periods of the year.

We want as many businesses as possible to benefit from the economic uplift the event brings. There are several ways we can help you to reach our **85,000 visitors**, many of whom are looking for places to stay, places to eat or things to do during their stay. We actively open up our audience to local businesses through a variety of digital advertising opportunities which can be booked on our website.



SCAN ME

HIRING LOCAL TALENT

The Enchanted Forest employs around 80 seasonal staff ranging in age from 17 to 76, who support the smooth running of the event and ensure visitors have a great time. It's a priority for us to employ as many local people as possible, with a passion for the event which is evident to all visitors. We are proud to see this reflected in feedback from last year's show with 99% rating the stewarding team as excellent. We are delighted that 70% of last year's team are returning this year.

We are nearly fully staffed for this year, but we have a few stewarding vacancies left to fill. If you would like to be part of the 2024 team, please visit: www.enchantedforest.org.uk/recruitment2024

GET YOUR TICKETS
NOW!





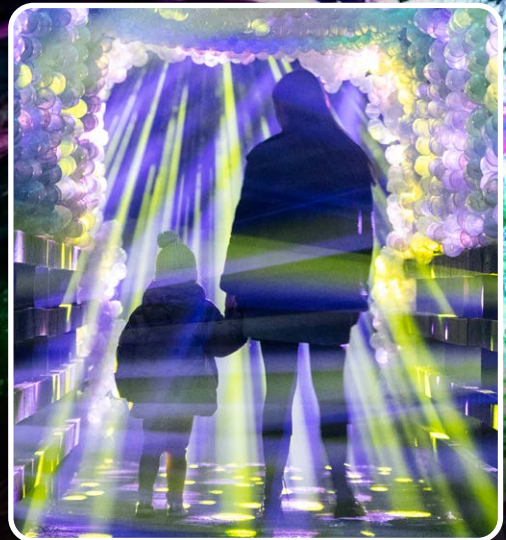
SCAN ME

WIN TICKETS TO THE SHOW

We're delighted to offer ten lucky local readers the chance to win family tickets to the exclusive preview night of **The Enchanted Forest** in Pitlochry on **Wednesday 2 October 2024**. To enter to win, please use this QR code and tell us what this year's show is called.

LOOKING AFTER FASKALLY FOREST

The Enchanted Forest would not exist without its beautiful home, Faskally Wood. For this reason, we are dedicated to looking after it, and its **magnificent eco-system**, throughout the duration of the event and beyond. As part of our planning, we retain a locally based independent environmental and wildlife impact assessor, **Tay Ecology**, who carry out an annual environmental impact assessment for the show. We work with them to guide the event design and layout to ensure the event continues to have minimal impact on the forest and its wildlife.



Light. Sound. Imagination.

Tickets on sale now.
enchantedforest.org.uk