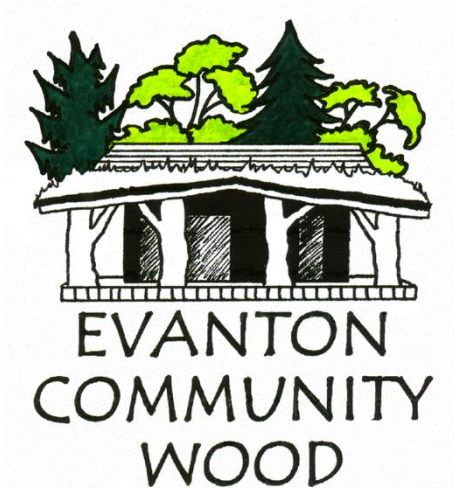


# Media Release



**The King's Award  
for Voluntary Service**

## **Evanton Wood Community Company Receives The King's Award for Voluntary Service 2025**

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**14 November 2025**

Evanton Wood Community Company has received the prestigious award, The King's Award for Voluntary Service. Equivalent to an MBE, KAVS is the highest Award given to local voluntary groups in the UK, and is awarded for life.

Evanton Wood Community Company is one of only 232 charities, social enterprises, and voluntary groups throughout the whole of the UK to receive the prestigious award this year.

Formed in 2007, when the opportunity arose to take the neighbouring mature woodland into community ownership, the volunteer run organisation has clocked up thousands of hours of voluntary service and reached out to the community in diverse ways. The original committee undertook the initial planning and funding applications, and when they seemingly met a funding brick wall, were happy to hand on to a new group. The emphasis now switched to involving the community in events and trial work sessions, which stood the group in good

stead when The Heritage Lottery was identified as a suitable source of funding. In September 2012 the community company took ownership of the 150 acres (65 hectare) wood and commenced a 5-year plan, which focussed on encouraging greater community access to and use of the wood for educational and recreational purposes. The group created a pond area, improved paths and signage, commissioned biological surveys, and engaged a coordinator to run a schools' programme. Volunteers met regularly to plant native trees and remove unwanted species and soon busied themselves in the creation of a log-built cabin. The programme for people living with dementia started up and has now been running weekly for nine years, now named the Friday Futures group (*pictured*) – a highly appreciated project. Volunteers then built a second log shelter, an octagonal building of note, which has served as a focal point for the concert series over the past 5 years.

The volunteer input has taken many shapes over the years from behind-the-scenes work and meetings to physical labour, mainly involving woodland management and construction, also running community events and the Friday Futures group, hosting or facilitating visits by schools and other groups, installing and looking after the composting toilets, and many other things involved in managing a community wood.

Douglas Wilson, chair of the board, commented: “this award is a great honour and is a tribute to the excellent work of our volunteers over many years and to the support of our community”.

The King's Award for Voluntary Service aims to recognise outstanding work by volunteer groups to support their communities. It was created in 2002 to celebrate Her Late Majesty The Queen's Golden Jubilee and was continued following the accession of His Majesty The King.

Representatives of EWCC will receive the award crystal and certificate from Mrs Joanie Whiteford, HM Lord-Lieutenant of Ross and Cromarty in the coming months. In addition, two volunteers from EWCC will be invited to attend a Royal Garden Party at Holyrood in July 2026.

#### Notes to editors:

1. Lord-Lieutenants represent the monarch in each of the UK's ceremonial counties.
2. This year there are 232 recipients of The King's Award Voluntary Service from across the UK and Channel Islands.
3. More information on the recipients and the Award can be found at <https://kavs.dcms.gov.uk/>
4. Full details on how to nominate are available at <https://kavs.dcms.gov.uk/>
5. Nominations for the 2026 award opened on the 1st of September 2025.