

SCOTLAND'S NATIONAL FOREST ESTATE - COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER SCHEME (CATS)

Introduction

Please read the relevant parts of the [Community Asset Transfer Scheme Guidance](#) before completing this form. You may also wish to refer to the Scottish Government's [Asset Transfer Guidance for Community Bodies](#).

The Request must be submitted in writing, either as a hard copy or by email. Please answer all the questions. You can attach additional information as extra sheets or electronic documents. Please be specific. When answering the questions do not repeat any information you have already given, simply refer to an earlier answer or attached document.

Please return the completed form and supporting documentation to:

Community Asset Transfer Scheme Team
Forest Enterprise Scotland
231 Corstorphine Road
Edinburgh
EH12 7AT

E-mail: communities@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

We will confirm receipt of your Request within 5 working days and you will receive a formal acknowledgement letter within 15 working days to confirm whether your Request is valid or requesting further information. We may need to ask you for more information during the assessment and evaluation process.

This is an asset transfer request made under Part 5 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

Information about the community transfer body making the request

1.1 Name of the community transfer body making the asset transfer request

Carsphairn Community Woodland Limited

1.2 Community transfer body address. This should be the registered address, if you have one.

Postal address: 13A Alva Street, Edinburgh

Postcode: EH2 4PH

1.3 Contact details. Please provide the name and contact address to which correspondence in relation to this asset transfer request should be sent.

Contact name: Wendy Fenton

Postal address: [REDACTED]

Postcode: [REDACTED]

Email: carsphairncw@gmail.com

Telephone: [REDACTED]

We agree that correspondence in relation to this asset transfer request may be sent by email to the email address given above. *(Please tick to indicate agreement)*

You can ask the Forest Enterprise Scotland to stop sending correspondence by email, or change the email address, by telling them at any time, as long as 5 working days' notice is given.

1.4 Please mark an "X" in the relevant box to confirm the type of community transfer body and its official number, if it has one.

Company, and its company number is	✓	SC591976
Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO), and its charity number is		
Community Benefit Society (BenCom), and its registered number is		
Unincorporated organisation (no number)		

Please attach a copy of the community transfer body’s constitution, articles of association or registered rules.

1.5 If the organisation is **not** an eligible community transfer body under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015:

a) Has the organisation been individually designated as a community transfer body by the Scottish Ministers?

No **Yes**

Please give the title and date of the designation order:

N/A

or b) Does the organisation fall within a class of bodies which has been designated as community transfer bodies by the Scottish Ministers?

No **Yes**

If yes what class of bodies does it fall within?

N/A

Section 2: Information about the land and rights requested

(see CATS Guidance Section 1.2)

2.1 Please identify the land to which this asset transfer request relates.

You should provide a grid reference and attach a map clearly showing the boundaries of the land to which this asset transfer request. You should also provide any name by which the land is known, and you may also wish to provide additional description. You can contact your local [Forest District](#) office for assistance in providing a copy of the map.

If you request it for a building, you should provide a street address and the Unique Property Reference Number if known. If you have identified the land on Forest Enterprise Scotland's [Register of Land](#), please enter the details listed there.

Grid reference: OS Grid: NX 261226, 591527

Muirdrochwood, part of Castlemaddy Forest. Muirdrochwood, also known as Marscalloch, lies within Forest Enterprise Scotland's Galloway Forest District, based in Newton Stewart. It is part of the Castlemaddy forest design plan area, which consists of four separate blocks totalling 2,876 hectares. The main block (2,144 hectares) is situated to the west of the A713; Muirdrochwood (324 hectares) is the most easterly part of the design plan area.

A full description of the forest, including geology and soils, climate, flora and fauna, designations and detail of the structure of the forest, is provided in Section 3 Muirdrochwood, of the Business Plan.

Map attached: (ForestryCommissionLetter _Maps_20161011.pdf)

UPRN (if known):

Section 3: Type of request, payment and conditions

(see CATS Guidance Section 1.4)

3.1 Please tick what type of request is being made:

- for ownership (under section 79(2)(a)) – **go to section 3A**
- for lease (under section 79(2)(b)(i)) – **go to section 3B**
- for other rights (section 79(2)(b)(ii)) – **go to section 3C**

3A – Request for ownership

What price are you prepared to pay for the land requested (see CATS Guidance Section 2.2)?

Proposed price: £1,235,000 - Details under BP5.I Acquisition

Please attach a note setting out any other terms and conditions you wish to apply to the request.

3B – request for lease

What is the length of lease you are requesting?

How much rent are you prepared to pay (see CATS Guidance Section 2.2)? Please make clear whether this is per year or per month.

Proposed rent: £ per

Please attach a note setting out any other terms and conditions you wish to be included in the lease, or to apply to the request in any other way.

3C – request for other rights

What are the rights you are requesting?

Do you propose to make any payment for these rights?

Yes **No**

If yes, how much are you prepared to pay? Please make clear what period this would cover, for example per week, per month, per day?

Please attach a note setting out any other terms and conditions you wish to apply to the request.

Section 4: Community Proposal

- 4.1 Please set out the reasons for making the request and how the land or building will be used.

This should explain the objectives of your project, why there is a need for it, any development or changes you plan to make to the land or building, and any activities that will take place there.

To avoid repetition, as requested, the relevant sections of the business plan are referred to throughout using the prefix BP. Relevant sections of the Outdoor Education Centre Plan are referred to using the prefix OEC. Italicised text is quoted from the business plan / OEC plan as appropriate.

Carsphairn Community Woodland Ltd (CCW) wish to acquire Muirdrochwood Forest in order to create a rural economic hub to help address social issues of depopulation, an ageing population and a lack of outdoor facilities in the area, along with enhancing the diversity of the forest, through the following Objectives (**BP2.1**):

- *Creating local employment opportunities*
- *Creating local economic benefit from the forest*
- *Improving the amenity and environmental value of the forest*
- *Delivering products and services to the local community*
- *Creating opportunities for activities that support community cohesion, health and well-being*

Key outputs of the project are: (BP2.3)

- *Creation of 12 posts equating to 8.5 FTE jobs by year 4*
- *Creation of approximately 3,000m of new trails, creating a linked network covering 10km and contributing linkage to other long distance paths*
- *Development of community volunteering infrastructure and delivery of at least 100 of volunteer days per annum by year 5*
- *Development of an Outdoor Education Centre welcoming 800 customers annually by year 5*
- *Sale of 400m³ of woodfuel annually for local markets (equivalent to 236t CO₂ savings annually if substituting for domestic heating oil)*
- *Restocking of 80ha including 16.5ha of broadleaves*

The need for the project: (BP3.3)

The economic difficulty Carsphairn community faces resembles that of an island community, cut off not by water but by mountainous geography, multiple authority boundaries and a general attitude outwith our boundaries, of remoteness. Carsphairn is part of a large, rural data zone which is just below mid-ranking in Scottish index of Multiple Deprivation. The area is in the lowest 1% (61st of 6976 zones) for geographic access.

Employment patterns have changed significantly: Hill farming employed 26 shepherds locally in the 1970s and by the 1980's over 40 people were employed locally in forestry: the figures now are one and two respectively. The expansion of windfarms locally - there are now 3 operational and three more approved – has not provided jobs: there are currently no locals employed in the renewables sector. Although the community have developed a number of active organisations (BP3.3.3) there is little employment opportunity, which has led to an ageing population and fall in young families, and a lack of outdoor space for the community.

The purchase of the whole Muirdrochwood site would greatly help the regeneration of the area through the chance to provide employment and recreation for use by the community and to help attract visitors to the area, creating a place that people would want to come to for leisure and work. As a heritage village of upland culture, Carsphairn is the ideal location for employment and training in rural skills.

Proposed development within the forest: (BP2.2)

CCW will deliver the objectives through a number of projects, details of which are provided in the business plan:

- **Forest management:** harvesting the existing Sitka spruce crop over the next 30 years to provide regular income from timber sales and material for woodfuel and wood products businesses. A sensitive and realistic restocking plan will significantly improve the environmental (and amenity) value of the forest by increasing species diversity, moving from Sitka monoculture to a mix of productive conifers and broadleaves. This is detailed further in **BP5.4**
- **Recreation infrastructure:** creating facilities to encourage community access and welcome visitors to Muirdrochwood, including a carpark, toilet facilities and new paths to link up the existing forest road network, give access to the loch and the river frontage.
- **Community involvement:** developing facilities and acquiring equipment to provide opportunities for community involvement through volunteering, skills training.
- **Woodfuel and wood products:** developing a range of products from the forest, including woodfuel for local markets. This will provide employment, income and contribute to tackling climate change.
- **Establishing an Outdoor Education Centre:** providing a unique and all-encompassing experience allowing young people to gain key and core skills in regards to teamwork, environmental stewardship, technical skills, personal growth, problem solving and skilled focused learning through a residential experience which provides an education without walls.

4.2 Benefits of the proposal

Please set out the benefits that you consider will arise if the request is agreed to (see CATS Guidance Section 3.2)

This section should explain how the project will benefit your community, and others. Please refer to the guidance on how the relevant authority will consider the benefits of a request.

Benefits to the Community (BP2)

CCW wish to acquire Muirdrochwood to create a rural economic hub which will contribute to the regeneration of the community and to deliver a broad range of economic, social and environmental benefits. Community ownership provides the opportunity to unlock the potential of the site, creating new business and employment opportunities to facilitate rural regeneration and help build a more resilient community.

The economic benefits of future timber harvesting will be retained and reinvested in the management and development of the forest whilst an outdoor education centre will create jobs and income and raise the profile of the area. Longer term projects such as affordable housing and tourist accommodation will continue to increase the value of the forest to the community and the local economy.

Acquiring the forest is a long term investment in the future health and well-being of the community: the increased energy and activity will make Carsphairn a more attractive place to live, especially for younger families and will enable the community to be in a position to take advantage of future as-yet-unforeseen opportunities.

Economic

Community ownership and implementation of this plan will:

- *directly create 12 jobs (=8.5 FTE) by year 4, all but one of which will be funded by earned income;*
- *support additional employment opportunities by creating new contractor opportunities through construction of the outdoor education centre and forest management projects (paths, sawmilling etc) whilst maintaining existing contractor roles in timber harvesting and haulage;*
- *provide woodfuel and other products for local markets;*
- *stimulate additional trade for local tourist and retail businesses.*

Social

Community ownership and implementation of this plan will:

- *develop new recreation facilities for walkers, mountain bikers, etc and contribute towards linking long distance routes;*
- *provide a range of outdoor activities available to the local community and visitors;*
- *create opportunities for volunteering, and space for community activities and events;*
- *deliver a range of skills training and social rehabilitation opportunities;*

-
- *increase community cohesion and resilience through the management of the forest and its resources.*

Environmental

Community ownership and implementation of this plan will:

- *enhance the environmental (and amenity) value of forest through greater use of broadleaves and open space in restocking;*
- *increase (through education, interpretation etc) public awareness of biodiversity;*
- *enable more site-sensitive management policies and practices for priority species such as red squirrel and raptors;*
- *establish a local woodfuel supply allowing substitution of fossil fuels and reducing timber miles for low grade material.*

Benefits to others

- The enhanced public access and provision of wood products will provide benefit to locals out-with Carsphairn and visitors to the area.
- The outdoor education centre will provide benefit to a significant number of young people from potentially around the UK.

The project will also contribute towards the delivery of the following of Scotland's 16 National Outcomes:

4. 'Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens': Providing an outdoor learning space for children both within the community and to pupils, potentially across the UK. This could be a unique opportunity for inner city children to experience a potentially life changing time spent learning new skills in the outdoors. The wide range of benefits an outdoor education centre could provide are detailed in OEI.4

6. 'We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others': This may be the only opportunity Carsphairn has to build a community controlled rural economic hub, with access to land to ensure their resilience and sustainability. The Carsphairn Community seeks enablement: to be in control of our own destiny and future economic regeneration rather than being pulled and pushed by external bodies who have no long term interest in the community. Muirdrochwood forest has the size and scope to provide much needed opportunities and this plan can help deliver 12 new jobs, as detailed in the business plan, bringing new families into the community, and vastly increased recreation opportunities for Carsphairn community, with the consequence of helping increase health and fitness so reducing the demand on local health services. It fits in perfectly with the Community Future Plan and will help regenerate this community and increase community cohesion. The wide range of projects will ensure that everyone in the community should be able to find an area to suit their interests.

7. **'We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations'**. The project will be enhancing a significant area of local forest, as detailed within **BP5.4**, forest management planning, which will benefit both wildlife and people long into the future.

Local Authority (D&G Council) Consideration (BP3.3.1)

The objectives of D&G Council, through the Local Development Plan and the Dumfries and Galloway Forestry and Woodland Strategy are described in detail under BP3.3.1 Local Policy Background. This proposal will address aspects of sustainability, business development, tourist attractions in the LDP and woodland themes of sustainable growth, climate change and woodland for people.

4.3 Restrictions on use of the land

If there are any restrictions on the use or development of the land, please explain how your project will comply with these. The local [Forest District](#) office can provide assistance in identifying any restrictions and how to comply with them.

Restrictions might include, amongst others, environmental designations such as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSI), heritage designations such as listed building status, controls on contaminated land or planning restrictions.

There are no statutory environmental designations on or adjacent to the site. Designations are detailed in section BP3.1.5 and are summarised here:

There is a category B listed building adjacent to the southern edge of the site (The High Bridge of Ken) and there are six historic sites (an old farmstead, field systems, buildings and a corn drying kiln) recorded within Muirdrochwood by Canmore, the national record of the historical environment.

There is a keen interest in archaeology within Carsphairn (Carsphairn Heritage Group: www.carsphairn.org/HeritageGroup) and this group will be consulted during any works involving these sites. Future forest management and other operations will be designed to ensure that no damage is done to recorded sites or their surroundings and CCW will ensure that sites and their settings will be enhanced by any future developments.

4.4 Negative consequences

What negative consequences (if any) may occur if your request is agreed to? How would you propose to minimise these?

You should consider any potential negative consequences for the local economy, environment, or any group of people, and explain how you could reduce these.

Potential negative consequences:

Local economy: No negative consequences are perceived as the project will bring new job opportunities.

Environment: No negative consequences are perceived as the forest will be enhanced through creation of open areas and more diverse planting.

Neighbouring properties: Potential disturbance by activities, noise: Of the seven residential properties adjacent to the forest, three are Members/Directors involved in the project and the others have been updated on the progress of the project. Care will be taken to ensure that project development will include identifying areas around neighbouring properties to ensure they are sympathetically managed to reduce disturbance to the neighbours and on-going liaison with them will ensure any concerns are addressed.

4.5 Capacity to deliver

Please show how your organisation will be able to manage the project and achieve your objectives.

This could include the skills and experience of members of the organisation, any track record of previous projects, whether you intend to use professional advisers, etc.

Management of the Project:

Carsphairn Community Woodland Ltd. was set up to manage the acquisition of Muirdrochwood Forest and details, including purposes and Board of Directors are provided in section BP3.4. The Articles of Association have been supplied as a separate document and are available from the Companies House website. The proposed governance system for CCW is detailed in BP5.2. The project will be managed by the Community Forest Manager, who will be line managed by a Director. Individual Board members will lead on specific areas and additional roles will include a Safety Officer and a Communications Officer. Additional staff will be appointed as required. A Forest Worker post will assist the Forest Manager and have responsibility for the woodfuel and wood products operations (detailed in BP5.3).

The outdoor education centre will be run as a wholly-owned trading subsidiary, employing staff as required, estimated at 6.5 FTE posts. The governance of the OEC is summarised in BP5.9.1 and detailed in the OEC business plan, in section OEC1.3, with staff finance described in OEC3.3.

Track record of the community:

Carsphairn Community has a good track record of running community ventures as described under Carsphairn community assets (BP3.3.3 and 3.3.4)

Existing skills:

The Board of Directors have a wide range of skills as outlined in the Directors biographies in Appendix A3 and the Directors' skills matrix (supplied as a separate document). Skills cover farming, forestry, education, electrical, nursing and gardening backgrounds, along with project management, construction and IT. These combined skills provide a good basis for management but it is recognised that additional skillsets will need to be brought in for some aspects of the project and this contributes to one of the aspirations of the project of increased employment.

Use of Professional Advisers:

Professional guidance will be sought as required in further development of the project and the running of various aspects within the project. A design team will be engaged in the development of the outdoor education centre (BP5.9.2, OEC1.8).

Section 5: Level and nature of support

5.1 Please provide details of the level and nature of support for the request, from your community and, if relevant, from others (see CATS Guidance Section 3.2)

This could include information on the proportion of your community who are involved with the request, how you have engaged with your community beyond the members of your organisation and what their response has been. You should also show how you have engaged with any other communities that may be affected by your proposals.

Community engagement is detailed in sections 3.3.5, CCT Communication and Community Engagement, section 4, the CATS process, Section 5.8.3 Assessment of demand for Woodfuel NS section 5.7.2 (Red Squirrel Group engagement) and summarised below:

As part of the Carsphairn Future Plan produced in 2015 CCT a 51-question survey was developed to show how the community of Carsphairn would like to see the area developed in the coming years. 60% of respondents scored woodland positively.

Following the notification of the sale of Muirdrochwood a woodland survey was carried out in the community early in 2017 which showed 71% of respondents were in favour of the acquisition of Muirdrochwood.

A community woodfuel survey was distributed in May 2018 to the Glenkens Community Council mailing list to assess likely demand for woodfuel. The survey was also issued for the CCW community event in Lagwyne Hall on 5 October and the results are detailed in BP5.8.2.

A public consultation event was held at Lagwyne Hall on 5 October 2018, attracting a total of 58 visitors. A fuller report on this event, including comments made by supporters outwith the community, is included in Appendix 2. During this event additional members were gained (current membership is 41, or 22% of the community) and letters of support were offered from a number of Carsphairn community groups and local organisations. These have been supplied as a separate document. The Glenkens Red Squirrel group have funds available from the Galloway Glens Project to install hides with cameras and they have indicated they are keen to do so in this forest.

Comments from some of the 19 letters of support include:

- The Southern Upland Partnership: ‘The proposals developed for the Carsphairn Community Woodland Project are exactly the type of initiative that SUP would like to see happening across Southern Scotland, where local people are empowered to take back control of local assets to benefit their wider community’.
- RSPB: ‘The forests around Carsphairn, including Muirdrochwood, are in real need of environmental enhancement through provision of more open space and a more diversified tree species community... I’m sure the community woodland project will be able to sensitively enhance and promote this’
- Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere: ‘It’s a really exciting proposal that embraces the core goals of UNESCO Biospheres, from conserving wildlife and habitats, to supporting new learning opportunities and developing and fostering a more sustainable economy and society’
- Finlay Carson, MSP: ‘Consultations in the past have evidenced a disconnect between communities and the natural heritage surrounding them. The acquisition of Muirdrochwood Forest by Carsphairn Community Woodland Ltd would not only allow for the community of Carsphairn to better appreciate their local environment, but it would also be a driver for regeneration and sustainable economic development – benefiting business, tourism and educational opportunities, therefore the local community’
- and from a Carsphairn school pupil: ‘We will definitely use and love an outdoor centre here in Carsphairn. We will go to it on a lot of school trips and I would love to walk along some nice paths with my family. If this all happens it will be so amazing, we will get so many more families.’

Section 6: Funding

6.1 Please outline how you propose to fund the price or rent you are prepared to pay for the land, and your proposed use of the land (see CATS Guidance Section 1.5)

You should show your calculations of the costs associated with the transfer of the land or building and your future use of it, including any redevelopment, ongoing maintenance and the costs of your activities. All proposed income and investment should be identified, including volunteering and donations. If you intend to apply for grants or loans you should demonstrate that your proposals are eligible for the relevant scheme, according to the guidance available for applicants.

Detailed costings for the acquisition and subsequent set up and running of the various elements of the project are included under the appropriate sub-headings in BP5 and OEC3.

A justification of the discount sought is contained in BP8

A 25-year cashflow has been supplied as a separate document.

Acquisition plans are summarised as:

Item		Amount
Acquisition costs	Base price	1,475,000
	less discount	-250,000
Legal fees		10,000
Total		1,235,000
Scottish Land Fund		1,000,000
Local fundraising		35,000
Loan secured against timber harvest		200,000
Total		1,235,000

CCW will apply for the majority of the purchase price to the Scottish Land Fund, which supports communities to become more resilient and sustainable through the ownership and management of land and land assets. CCW's legal fees are eligible costs for SLF. Additional funding will come from local fundraising, and a loan secured against future timber harvest revenues.

Capital funding from a range of sources, including the Big Lottery Community Assets, South of Scotland Enterprise Agency, LEADER replacement funds and CREFL (local windfarm distributor body) will be sought to enable the initial development of various projects. Earned income from timber harvesting, value added processing and the OEC will enable financial sustainability.

Signature

Two office-bearers (board members, charity trustees or committee members) of the community transfer body must sign the form. They must provide their full names and home addresses for the purposes of prevention and detection of fraud.

This form and supporting documents will be made available online for any interested person to read and comment on. Personal information will be redacted before the form is made available.

We, the undersigned on behalf of the community transfer body as noted at section 1, make an asset transfer request as specified in this form.

We declare that the information provided in this form and any accompanying documents is accurate to the best of our knowledge.

Name Steve Cowley

Address

Date 7th November 2018

Position Chair

Signature

Name Wendy Fenton

Address

Date 7th November 2018

Position Secretary

Signature

Checklist of accompanying documents

To check that nothing is missed, please list any documents which you are submitting to accompany this form.

Section 1 – you **must** attach your organisation’s constitution, articles of association or registered rules

Title of document attached: CCW Articles of Association
Certificate of Incorporation

Section 2 – any maps, drawings or description of the land requested

Documents attached: Forestry Commission Letter_Maps_20161011
Muirdrochwood Map 1: FES stock map 2017
Muirdrochwood Map 5: CCW restocking proposals
Muirdrochwood Map 6: CCW felling proposals
Muirdrochwood Map 7: CCW thinning proposals

Section 3 – note of any terms and conditions that are to apply to the request

Documents attached:

Section 4 – about your proposals, their benefits, any restrictions on the land or potential negative consequences, and your organisation’s capacity to deliver.

Documents attached:
CCW Muirdrochwood Business Plan Nov 2018
CCW OEC Outline Plan Nov 2018
CCW Directors’ skills matrix

Section 5 – evidence of community support

Documents attached:
CCW Muirdrochwood letters of support
Community Workshops requested
Additional documents available on website (www.carsphairn.org/CCWL):
Community Event display sheets
Membership forms

Section 6 – funding

Documents attached:
Muirdrochwood MV Report
CCW 25-year cashflow