

Coilhullan Woodland Options Appraisal and Feasibility Study

FINAL Document September 2017



for
Callander Community Development Trust



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Executive Summary

Introduction

Callander is in Perthshire/Stirling District and with a population of around 3,500 people is the largest settlement in Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park. The economy of Callander is mainly based upon local retail and tourism, with outdoor activities in the surrounding natural environment being a central focus for visitors. The purpose of Callander Community Development Trust (CCDT) is to undertake practical projects for the benefit of the Callander community. It currently has 102 members and a Board of 8 elected directors and 8 associate directors. CCDT wants to purchase Coilhullan Woodland, approximately 83 hectares of mixed broadleaf and coniferous woodland situated to the south-west of Callander, to develop access opportunities and maximise community benefit.

Background to project

Significant work has already been carried to research the options for community ownership of woodland around Callander and Coilhullan had been clearly identified as the preferred woodland for potential development. CCDT has therefore decided to progress with further research into the potential lease or purchase of Coilhullan Woodland from Forest Enterprise for the benefit of the community, and commissioned this Feasibility Study.

Options Appraisal

The Options Appraisal articulated and analysed a series of options that would enable CCDT to take on the management/ownership of Coilhullan Woodland, facilitating the delivery of the aims and objectives it has identified. This information enabled CCDT to make an informed decision about which options to take forward into the business planning process.

The Proposed Project

CCDT will progress with the potential purchase of Coilhullan Woodland (79ha) and take a phased approach to the development of community and income generating activities.

Proposed developments in phase 1

- Trossachs Mobility base, café and facilities at the Coilhullan carpark
- New mountain bike tracks
- Small scale wood fuel and timber sales
- Manage the birch woodland for coppicing within 10 years
- Guided woodland walks / educational experiences
- Advertising and sponsorship from local businesses

CCDT intends to manage Coilhullan Woodland sustainably to increase access, facilities and opportunities, making it a sustainable asset for the benefit of the local community and visitors alike.

Project Aims:

- To own and manage Coilhullan Woodland in a sustainable manner
- To increase the number of people benefitting from the woodland
- To deliver the Woodland Management Plan effectively

CCDT Board members are facilitating a number of partnerships which will enable them to manage and maintain Coilhullan Woodland successfully. These include working with Trossachs Mobility (all terrain mobility scooters), FABB Scotland (All Ability Cycling Project), Callander Landscape Partnership

(Landscape Partnership 'Mind the Gap'), McLaren Community Leisure Centre, Callander Primary School, Callander Youth Project Trust and Cambusmore Estate.

Financial Tables

Capital COSTS	
Purchase of woodland	Capital
Purchase price - ESTIMATE	£100,000
Legal fees for purchase	£2,000
Set up and phase 1 projects	
Mountain bike tracks	£232,187
Other set up costs	£5,700
Total Capital Costs	£339,887
Capital Income (not confirmed)	Not confirmed
SLF 95% of price ESTIMATE	£96,900
CCDT 5% of price ESTIMATE	£5,100
Other capital grants for setup	£5,700
Mountain bike tracks	£232,187
Total Capital Income	£339,887

Revenue cashflow for the management of Coilhullan from year 1 of trading

Cashflow	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5
Income	£48,291	£49,915	£18,761	£16,593	£19,026
Expenditure	£52,703	£41,752	£16,896	£17,403	£17,925
Annual Cashflow	-£4,413	£8,164	£1,865	-£810	£1,101
Cumulative Cashflow	-£4,413	£3,751	£5,616	£4,806	£5,907

This cashflow includes a contingency of £10K in year 1 for potential larch die back remediation.

Expected Project Outcomes

- Coilhullan Woodland is owned and managed by the local community
- New partnerships and collaborative projects developed
- Community engaged and contributing to a sustainable project
- Improved facilities in place and generating an income
- Woodland Management Plan successfully implemented
- Increased number of volunteers engaged
- Increased events and activities in the woodland
- Increased confidence and skills within local community
- Increased number of people accessing the woodland
- Increased community resilience and self determination

Governance and Operational Management

Legal responsibility for the ownership of the asset will sit with CCDT, together with responsibility for receiving and administering all grant funding towards the purchase of the woodland. Coilhullan Community Woodland Group (CCWG) is a sub group of CCDT, formed to oversee the development and implementation of the Community Woodland project. It will work towards becoming a wholly owned trading company (ltd by guarantee) of CCDT. CCWG members will take responsibility for leading the Coilhullan Woodland project and delivering the voluntary work required. A part time Woodland Manager will be employed for the first two years of the project, to support development and volunteer recruitment whilst income streams are developed. A Woodland contractor will take on

this role from year 3. Volunteers will be recruited, trained and managed by CCWG and the Woodland Manager, delivering the majority of the low key maintenance and woodland activities planned.

FCS reports that the clearfelling of some areas of woodland is scheduled to be carried out within their plan by March 2018. This will be taken into account in the District Valuation.

Indicative timescales

Coilhullan Woodland Valuation	Aug 2017
Apply for FCS Community Asset Transfer (CATS)	Aug 2017
CATS response	Feb 2018
SLF application prepared and discussed with SLF	Sept 2017
Ongoing funding applications for project development	Sept 2017
SLF application submitted (after CATS response received)	Feb 2018
SLF response received	March 2018
Potential to purchase woodland	April 2018

Key Findings, risks and recommendations

This Options Appraisal, Feasibility Study and Business Plan illustrates that with careful management and significant effort from the CCWG, the Coilhullan Woodland could be purchased by CCDT and run sustainably by the sub group CCWG.

Key actions and recommendations highlighted throughout this report for CCDT:

- The Phytophthora (Larch dieback) risk is high, as it has been found in a nearby woodland. This must be taken into consideration when deciding a course of action, as the cost of removing all larch from the site cannot be accurately established within this study, although an indicative figure has been included as contingency. It is recommended that further advice is taken regarding the potential cost of this risk.
- Increasing the knowledge and understanding of woodland management within CCWG through learning journeys, training and recruitment of new members.
- Continuing community engagement by delivering events and activities within the woodland from this point in time, building momentum and engaging with a wider audience.
- Continuing to develop partnerships with local organisations to support the management of the woodland.

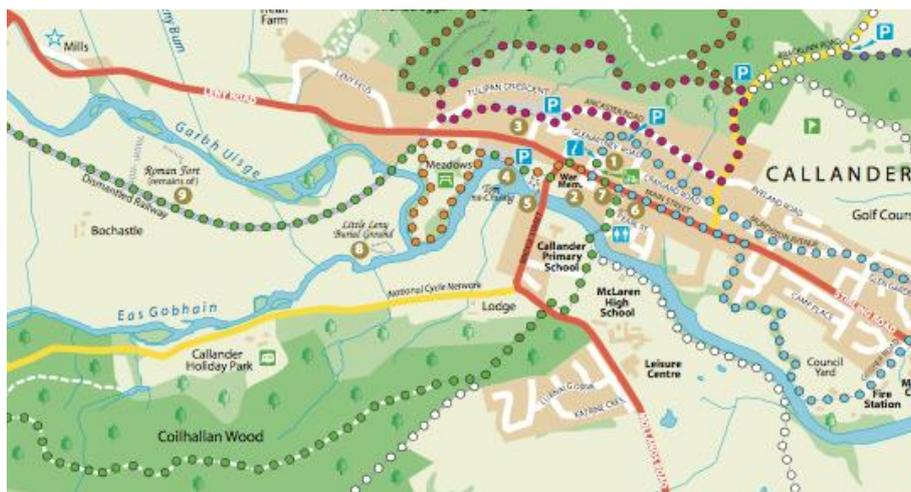
1 Introduction

Callander is in Perthshire/Stirling District and is the largest settlement in Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park. It currently has a population of around 3,500 people, who are predominantly permanent residents. There is a primary school of just over 200 children and a secondary school with around 650 pupils. The economy of Callander is mainly based upon local retail and tourism, with outdoor activities in the surrounding natural environment being a central focus for visitors. It is an attractive place to visit, offering a small welcoming town surrounded by easily accessible woodlands.

Callander Community Development Trust (CCDT) was incorporated in May 2003, as a company limited by guarantee (SC249970) and a registered Scottish Charity (SC034462) and currently has 102 members. The Board consists of 8 directors elected by members and 8 associate directors who represent key community organisations. The purpose of the organisation is to undertake practical projects for the benefit of the Callander community. CCDT currently employs a part time Town Centre Co-ordinator and all other work is carried out by volunteers. It is a member of Development Trusts Association Scotland and a key player in the Callander Partnership, which brings the community and agencies together to deliver Community Planning for the area.

Coilhallan Woodland consists of approximately 83 hectares of mixed broadleaf and non commercial coniferous woodland, situated to the south-west of Callander and is a recreational asset for the town. CCDT wants to purchase this woodland to develop access opportunities and maximise community benefit.

The site has a good location, being close to the town centre and adjacent to McLaren High School and Leisure Centre. The National Cycle Route 7 passes along the Northern border of Coilhallan Wood, giving access at both ends of the site. It also has an existing network of forestry tracks that are well used by walkers and cyclists, including some core paths.



Coilhallan Woodland has adequate car parking and is well connected and serviced for cycling. The amenity value of the area is very high, with a wide range of tree species, a mixture of established trees and new planting and a good network of footpaths and trails. Red and roe deer are both present

(although controlled to allow regeneration) together with red squirrels, black grouse and a wide variety of woodland plants, including copious bluebells.

2 Background and Previous Research

Significant work has already been carried out to research the options for community lease/ownership of woodland around Callander, and to consider the potential for developing new mountain bike trails at Coilhullan woodland, as articulated in detail in the two reports referenced (further detail is provided in Appendix 1).

The findings of the **Callander Mountain Bike Trails Feasibility Study 2015 Report**¹ clearly identified Coilhullan as the preferred woodland for potential development. The report gives detailed technical advice on various aspects of possible mountain bike trail development, together with wider information including access provision and potential constraints.

A further study, **Woodlands Around Callander 2016**², carried out for CCDT by SAC, considered the potential for community management of five woodlands close to Callander, examining the possibilities for leasing or acquisition under the National Forest Land Scheme. Within the report Coilhullan is identified as a potentially attractive proposition, although likely to be without a commercial income from forestry.

On consideration of both these reports CCDT has decided to progress with further research into the potential lease or purchase of Coilhullan Woodland from Forest Enterprise. This Feasibility Study is therefore focussed upon identifying and assessing options, risks and potential income streams that could be developed to make Coilhullan a sustainable ownership proposition for CCDT and the community of Callander.

Please note: the two previous reports referenced above provide significant detail which is referred to throughout this document as appropriate, to avoid duplication.

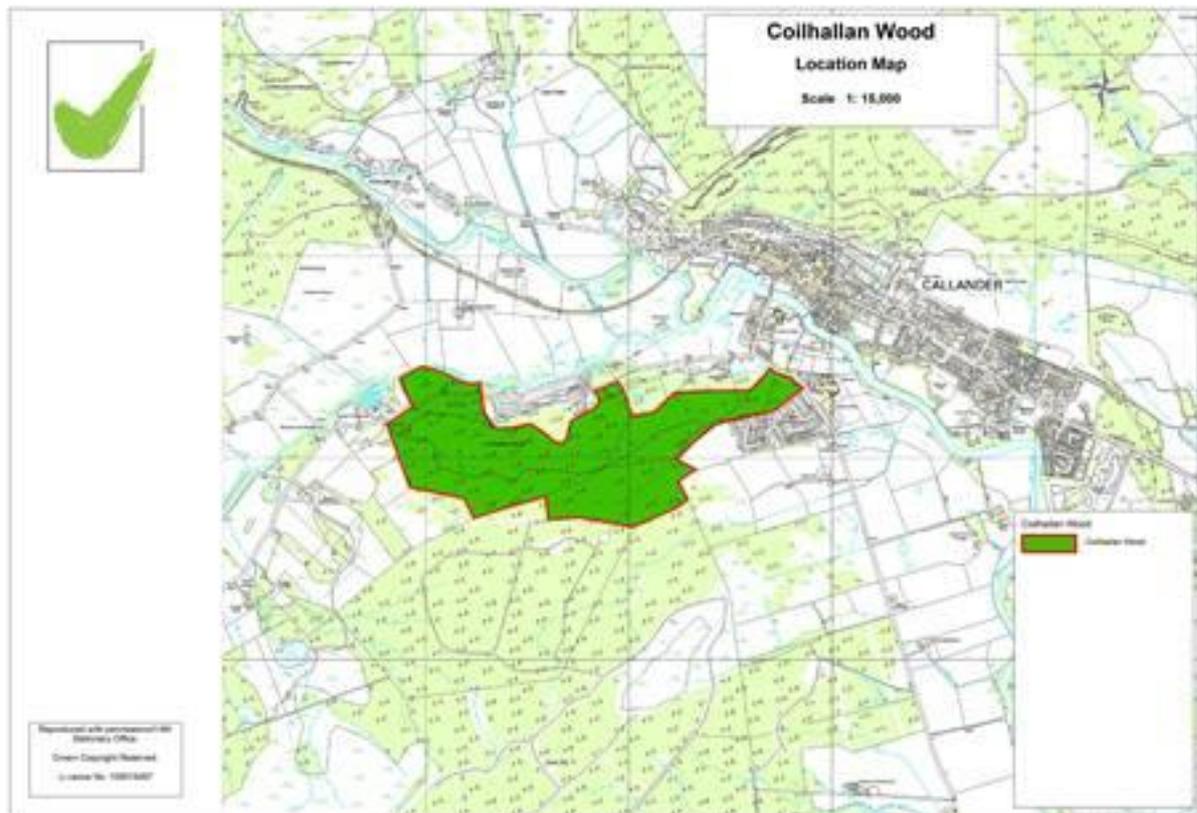
3 The Coilhullan Woodland Project Proposal

This project intends to increase amenity access by developing additional mountain biking and access trails, together with increasing associated visitor facilities, so maximising income generating opportunities and making Coilhullan a sustainable asset for the benefit of the local community.

Coilhullan Woodland has been identified by previous research as being the most suitable woodland in the area for development of mountain bike and all access trails, particularly because it is low lying and close to other amenities.

¹ *Callander Mountain Bike Trails Feasibility Study 2015, Collective Trax and ruralDimensions for CCDT*

² *Woodlands Around Callander 2016, Ownership/Management Options Study, Peter Jones, SAC Consulting*



Project Vision:

Coilhullan Woodland is managed sustainably by local people to increase amenity access and opportunities for the community and visitors alike.

CCDT Aims to:

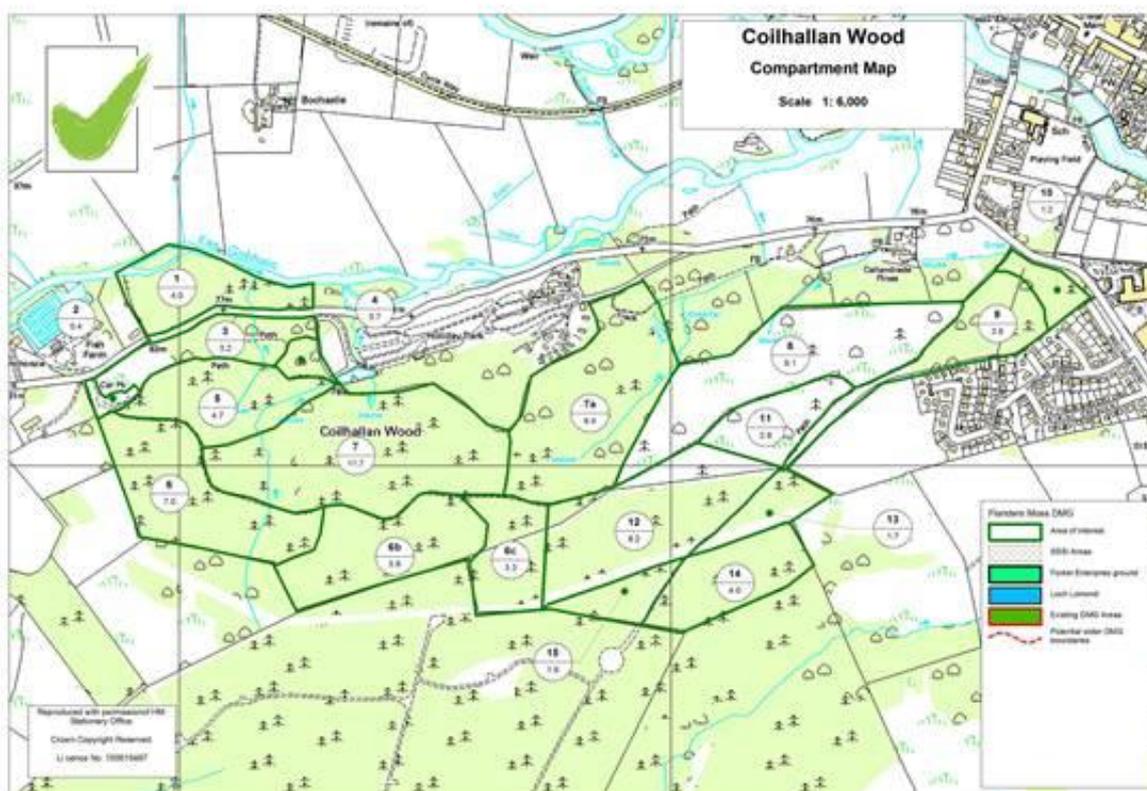
- Own and manage Coilhullan Woodland in a sustainable manner
- Increase the number of people benefitting from the woodland
- Deliver the Woodland Management Plan effectively

The Project Objectives are to:

- Run a wide range of accessible events and activities annually
- Recruit, support and train volunteers
- Increase confidence and skills within local community
- Increase local engagement and involvement in the woodland
- Develop partnerships and collaborative projects
- Put in place improved facilities, including a café and mountain bike tracks
- Generate an earned income to cover maintenance and running costs
- Improve the community and visitor experience

4 Woodland Management Plan Summary

A Woodland Management Plan (WMP) has been prepared for Coilhullan Woodland which assesses the current state of the woodland and articulates the key maintenance tasks that would need to be carried out by CCDT if it were to take ownership. A brief summary of these is given below. The full WMP is provided in Appendix 2.



The Compartment Map above details the different areas and types of woodland to be found in Coilhullan. The WMP suggests that the CCDT would need to carry out the following operations over the next 20 years if Coilhullan is taken into community ownership.

Before purchase/lease

Forest Enterprise Scotland (FES) currently manages the woodland and is responsible for the delivery of the FES Management Plan³. FES has confirmed that it intends to clearfell cpts 14 & 15, removing the windblown timber. It is also planning to clearfell cpts 7a and 6b due to windblow, to make safe.

0- 5 years

- Put in place a management structure for overseeing the site
- Ensure continuity of deer control
- Remove rhododendrons and free up oak saplings with volunteers
- Restock Cpts 14 & 15 potentially as an educational woodland
- Zone the area to separate mountain bike use from walkers and others
- Set up a schedule of regular woodland safety and tree health inspections
- Potential larch die back mitigation (felling of larch within 2050m of infection)

³ Callander - Forestry Commission Scotland

5-10 years

- Continue deer management
- Remove small quantities of timber using local businesses
- Continue regular woodland safety and tree health inspections.

10-20 years

- As 5-10 years
- Thin some areas of birch regeneration using firewood licences.

Beyond 20 years

- Continue removing small numbers of trees from main woodland area
- Clear fell birch for coppice fuelwood, 1-2 hectares annually.

Costs for carrying out management and maintenance have been estimated and addressed in the finance section.

A number of risks are also identified, together with potential mitigation:

Risk	Mitigation
There is a high amount of windblown timber	Negotiate felling and clearing with FES before purchase
Possible infection by phytopthera ramorum, (larch die-back) which kills larch trees. This would necessitate removal of all larch from the infected area and is likely to incur a cost.	The disease is spreading and FCS reports that it has been found in Callander area. Regular checks will need to be carried out, and a contingency of £10K (estimated) has been incorporated into the budget.
Ongoing management and maintenance costs	Potentially minimised by partnership working with local businesses, volunteer input and sharing resources with other projects such as Mind the Gap.
Raising grant funding for paths and mountain bike trails is likely to be challenging in the current climate.	Strong project and group. High quality information re potential mountain bike trails available from previous reports.

5 Strategic Context

A detailed analysis of strategic fit has been provided in both the Callander Mountain Bike Trails Feasibility Study 2015 and Woodlands Around Callander 2016. A summary of key points with relevant updates and comment is therefore provided here.

National

The project proposal fits well with the strategic context of **Scottish Government** addressing a number of **Scotland's National Outcomes** directly:

- We live longer, [healthier lives](#).
- We value and enjoy our built and natural [environment](#) and protect it and enhance it for future generations.
- We have strong, resilient and supportive [communities](#) where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others.
- We live in well-designed, [sustainable places](#) where we are able to access the amenities and services we need.

Scotland's Economic Strategy (March 2015) illustrates the Scottish Government's support for community projects such as the development of Coilhallan Woodland and recognises the benefits that can be achieved by communities working proactively to take on assets.

Community Land Scotland clearly articulates the rationale for communities purchasing land on its website, as do several pre-purchase communities that are striving for similar outcomes to CCDT. It shows that community ownership enables a sense of belonging and develops the cohesive nature of a community.

The Scottish Land Fund can provide up to 95% grant funding towards the capital costs of land purchase and assesses the financial sustainability, community support and outcomes for the wider community and management capacity of an applicant organisation, which are addressed in this document.

The Coilhallan Woodland project will adhere to all the outcomes expected by the **Community Woodland Association**, with a focus upon effective woodland and habitat management and volunteer and community engagement.

CCDT ownership of Coilhallan woodland adheres to the **Scottish Forest Strategy (SFS)** 2006, which is the Scottish Government's framework for forestry to 2050 and has themes including '*Supporting community development to improve quality of life and wellbeing*' and '*Improving access to woodlands, to help improve the health of Scotland*'. The **National Forest Land Scheme** gives community organisations the chance to buy or lease National Forest Land where they can provide increased public benefits, as CCDT intends. **Forestry Commission Scotland Community Asset Transfer Scheme (CATS)** assesses a community's ability to deliver benefits by managing part of the National Forest Estate in a viable manner, with community support.

Local

Callander and Coilhallan Woodland are situated within **Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park (LLTNP)**. The **LLTNP Partnership Plan 2018-23** is currently being consulted upon. It articulates the long term vision as: '*We want the national park to be an internationally-renowned landscape where:*

- *nature, heritage, land and water are valued, managed and enhanced to provide multiple benefits for people and nature*
- *there is a high quality, authentic experience for visitors from all backgrounds. there are many opportunities to enjoy recreation activities and appreciate the area's outstanding natural and cultural heritage*
- *businesses and communities thrive and people live and work sustainably in a high quality environment.'*

LLTNP Proposed Local Development Plan 2017 – 2022 articulates how development can make the National Park a great place to 'Live, Invest, Visit and Experience' and also supports communities, visitors and local economies, whilst ensuring the ongoing conservation and enjoyment of the area's outstanding environment.

The proposed development of Coilhallan Woodland to increase amenity access, visitor experience and local income therefore adheres directly to the LLTNP vision.

The **Callander Community Action Plan 2011-17⁴** was put in place as a result of the **Callander Charrette** in 2011, which developed a long-term vision for Callander to be the '**outdoor capital of the National**

⁴ http://www.callandercdt.org.uk/images/attachments/Callander_CAP_2012_web.pdf

Park'. The Coilhullan Woodland, situated close to the town and providing opportunities for further development, plays a vital part in achieving this vision. The Community Plan is currently being updated to cover 2018 – 23 and is being consulted upon at this point in time (July 2017).

The project also fits closely with the aims of **Callander Landscape Partnership 'Mind the Gap'** which is centred on Callander and will raise awareness of and increase access to the surrounding landscapes and the rich natural and cultural heritage of the area.

Stirling Council works closely with its Community Planning partners to deliver the **Single Outcome Agreement** (SOA) for 2013 – 2023, which includes outcomes in health, economic prosperity and learning new skills, all of which relate to Coilhullan's development. As with all councils, Stirling Council is required to make significant savings over the following years to 2021/22, and it will therefore have very limited resources to invest in projects outside its statutory duties.

Callander Community Council works closely with CCDT and supports the development of this project.

6 Community Support and Survey results

Previous studies

The Callander Mountain Bike Trails Feasibility Study 2015⁵, received 260 responses to the **mountain bike survey in Summer 2014**, with 19 local businesses also expressing support for mountain bike trail development in the area. The report also highlights support from the LLTNP Ranger Service Manager and Access Officer.

A **Community Survey** was carried out in **2016** by the Town Coordinator in order to inform the Community Action Plan for 2018-23. It showed that residents like the beautiful surroundings of Callander and that improving access, paths, signage and activities in the surrounding countryside would improve it. Mountain bike trails, active travel and cycle links/paths were specifically highlighted as areas of potential development.

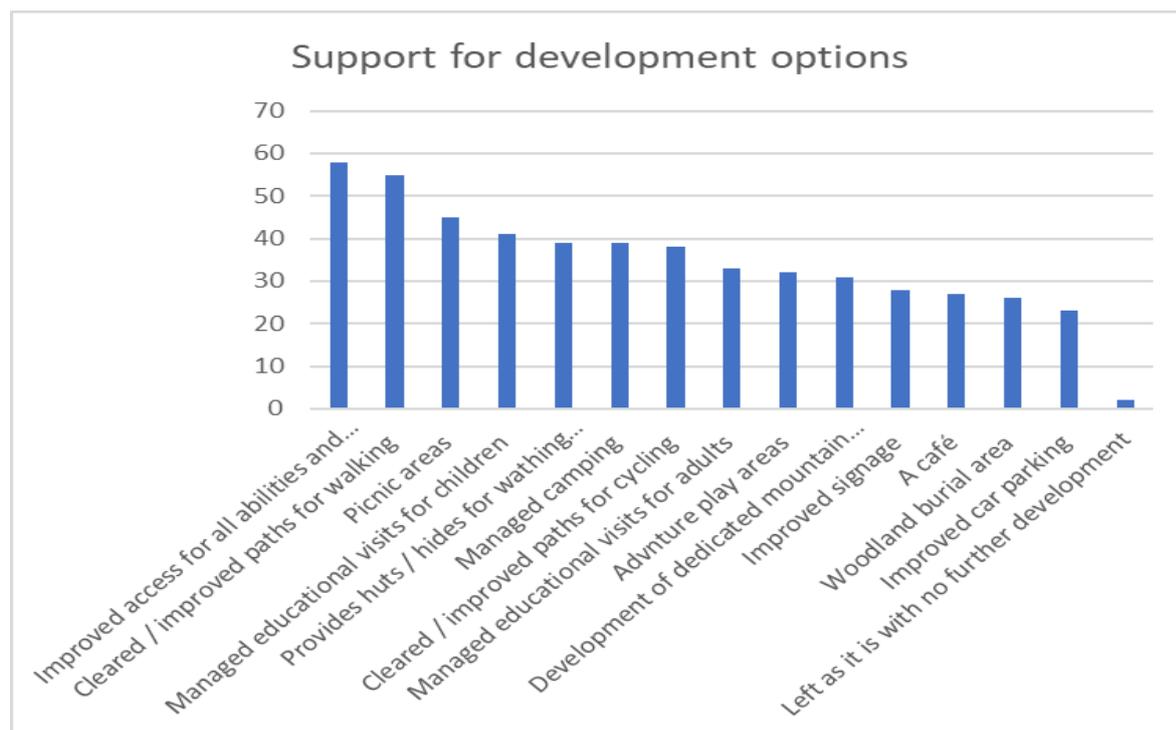
SKS Coilhullan Woodland Survey 2017 – Summary of results

An online survey was carried out by SKS Scotland as part of this research in May 2017 and there were 107 responses in total. 77% of respondents live in Callander, with 7% up to 10 km outside the town and 16% more than 10km outside Callander. 77% of the respondents supported CCDT seeking to take over management / ownership of Coilhullan Woodlands on behalf of the community.

The survey showed that the vast majority of visitors to the woodland visit weekly or monthly, mainly to walk, although one quarter visit to cycle and others to run, explore and see wildlife.

Around half the respondents would like to see improved access and cleared / improved paths for both walking and cycling, if CCDT was to purchase Coilhullan Woodland. 55% would like to see the development of dedicated mountain bike trails and 43% would like huts / hides provided to watch wildlife. 11% would like to see a café or managed camping, and 13% said they would like it to be left as it is, with no further development. Over two thirds of those returning surveys thought that Coilhullan Wood could be used to attract additional visitors and tourists to the area.

⁵ Callander Mountain Bike Trails Feasibility Study 2015, *Collective Trax and ruralDimensions*



This shows that improved access is the most popular idea, followed by a large number of options receiving more intermediate levels of support. Discussion with respondents revealed that there were mixed views on the idea of a café in the woods. Some respondents felt that it was essential, particularly for visitors to Callander and for people with limited mobility. Others felt that Callander was already oversupplied with café options, and the existence of a café in the woodland may negatively impact on existing local business.

A few respondents expressed some hesitancy about managed camping, picnic areas, and increased use of the woodland in general. This was founded in fears about larger numbers of people increasing the level of litter, misuse if the woods, and nuisance to regular users who presently enjoyed a relatively unused woodland. Only 2 respondents were against further development. Discussion with these individuals revealed that their view was founded in a belief that wild places should be left wild, and not managed for the benefit of humans.

In summary, the local community of Callander is very supportive of CCDT taking ownership of the Coilhallan woodland in order to increase access and facilities, as long as this is carried out in a sensitive manner. Further Community Survey Results 2017 are provided within the Market Analysis in Appendix 3 and the full results can be found in Appendix 13.

As part of the CATS assessment, Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) considers the level of community support for the project and how this will impact on the delivery of outcomes. This survey has illustrated that a high proportion of respondents are engaged with and use the woodland. CCDT will further involve this group going forward, through volunteer opportunities, woodland skills training and events.

7 Evidence of Need

Although not highlighted as an area of deprivation in the Scottish Indices of Deprivation (SIMD), the population of Callander strives to improve its access to the natural environment and increase economic opportunities from its natural assets. The **2011-17 Callander Community Plan** specifically identified the natural environment and a need to improve access to this valuable resource as a focus for the community. It recognises the need for people to be engaged with and more connected to the environment around them, which is further illustrated by the 2017 survey results from the Callander community above.

Market Analysis for Callander (see Appendix 3) illustrates that Stirling Council has some concerns about the local economy and lack of recent investment in the town. A focus on retail and tourism economies in Callander makes the proposed Coilhullan Woodland project an important development for visitors and locals alike.

Some areas of Callander have a higher proportion of people with long term health conditions (Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics, see appendix 4), and there is a growing body of evidence that illustrates the health benefits of being more connected with the natural environment. In particular, the Wildlife Trust has commissioned research which shows that nature is good for you, improving fitness, reducing stress, improving mood, and reducing social isolation. These benefits will all be facilitated and encouraged by Coilhullan Woodland development, providing the conditions for improved mental and physical health for the local community.

Further details are provided in Appendix 4.

8 Market Research and Analysis

Economy

The market assessment was carried out by looking at the local Callander economy, traffic figures and tourism data. This found that there has been concern amongst local traders and residents that the town is stagnating, with little investment or growth in visitor numbers. Traffic statistics were also examined, which showed that in general traffic in and out of Callander has maintained a similar level between 2000 and 2014. For example, annual estimated traffic count figures from the Department for Transport for the A84 between the A820 and A81 junctions (Burns of Cambus) are given below. These figures illustrate a relatively high number of vehicles passing through Callander.

Year	Cycles	Motorcycles	Cars	Bus/Coaches	Vans	HGVs
2014	1	33	4498	131	1102	714
2015	1	31	4445	134	1179	732
2016	1	31	4451	131	1233	731

In March 2017, Stirling Council agreed that given the current issues in the Callander economy, there was a need to provide support for diversification and new activity there, and a budget of £35,000 was allocated during 2016 / 17.

Visitor interest

Research carried out by Visit Scotland showed that The Queen Elizabeth Forest Park (near Aberfoyle) is the fifth most popular attraction in Loch Lomond & the Forth Valley, which confirms their insight

that there is a tourist market for micro-adventures, easy escapism and authentic experiences from their trips and holidays.

Income generating options

An all **ability / access destination** has been identified by Visit Britain as a growth market. This includes areas where access is possible and available to all ages and abilities, including older people; people with a long-term illness; deafness / hearing loss; mobility impairment; blind or partially sighted; mobility impairments and people with learning difficulties. Managed woodland walks and educational experiences also appear to be growing in popularity.

The option of using the wood as a **mountain biking destination** was explored. The area surrounding Callander is an obvious location for businesses offering outdoor activities, due to its natural beauty and geography, and also being just over an hour from Edinburgh and Glasgow. There are competitors in the area, however, the market does not appear to be saturated. All access trails are an offer that differentiates Coilhallan, so this is a niche that it could fill, particularly by partnering with existing businesses. There also appears to be the desire amongst local residents to use the wood as this type of destination.

A **café** is recognised as a good additional facility to improve the visitor offer and generate an income. A permanent building would be a significant investment and is unlikely to gain planning permission so a temporary structure may be a more viable option. This was discussed with Trossachs Mobility, and a wood cabin or airstream caravan is being considered as a pilot option.

It was found that a **zip-wire park** is not viable due to the lack of stability and safety of the trees in Coilhallan Woodland. Raised walks, hammocks and bungee ropes could be considered in the future however, as they do not need to use trees for support.

The option of using Coilhallan as a **natural burial ground** was researched, but the nature of the site does not easily lend itself to this end use. Stirling Council is also due to apply for planning permission for a new cemetery close by, which further means that this option is not particularly attractive. Using Coilhallan as a pet cemetery was also considered, and it was found that bodies such as SEPA would have to be consulted on the viability of this end use.

Woodland camping was considered. Due to the wild camping byelaws enforced by the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park, within the Camping Management Zone – which Coilhallan Wood is partly in - wild camping is only allowed by booking into a permit area of campsite. There are competitors in the immediate area, but it would be worth exploring as an additional offer. Basic toilet facilities would also need to be provided.

A discussion took place with The Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park's Head of Planning and Rural Development who indicated that CCDT's possible development options would be acceptable in principle, with further discussion around the detail required if CCDT's plans progressed further.

The full Market Analysis report can be found in in Appendix 3.

9 Potential Partnerships

CCDT and the Coilhallan Community Woodland Group have excellent connections across the community of Callander and several of the members are volunteers with other relevant organisations. Through these links, together with other local connections and contacts, CCDT Board members are facilitating a number of partnerships which will enable them to manage and maintain Coilhallan Woodland successfully. Key partnerships are summarised below, with more detail in Appendix 5.

Trossachs Mobility provides all terrain mobility scooters for hire to increase access to natural environments for people with mobility impairment. The business is interested in partnering CCDT by moving its base (currently in central Callander) to Coilhallan Woodland and potentially developing a café in a temporary building to complement the provision.

Callander Landscape Partnership - Coilhallan Woodland is a key location for access and interpretation for part of this HLF funded Landscape Partnership '**Mind the Gap**'. CCDT is currently discussing the logistics of sharing resources with Mind the Gap, which is providing apprenticeships and training in woodland management skills. CCDT will incorporate apprentice training into its activity plan, giving apprentices excellent work experience and helping CCDT with maintenance tasks.

LANTRA delivers modern apprenticeships in Trees and Timber and there is potential for trainees to carry out work in Coilhallan, in conjunction with the Mind the Gap project.

Callander Primary School is located close to the woodland and has integrated woodland activities into the curriculum, together with running Biketastic and Bikeability activity which will benefit from the new mountain bike trails and partnership working with CCDT.

McLaren Community Leisure Centre is keen to work closely with CCDT to collaborate on marketing and other activities for mutual benefit. The Leisure Centre aims to promote itself as an access point for Coilhallan outdoor activities, providing toilet and shower facilities. Increased marketing and potential sponsorship or resourcing of specific events (e.g. annual Easter Egg Hunt) will provide CCDT with additional support for event delivery whilst helping the Leisure Centre to grow its markets and increase volunteer engagement and training.

FABB Scotland's All Ability Cycling Project is a partner project of CCDT and FCS, providing an all abilities track for non motorised hand cranked bikes in Coilhallan Woodland. FABB is working closely with CCDT as this project moves forward and is supportive of ownership of the woodland transferring to CCDT in the future.

Cambusmore Estate is situated adjacent to Coilhallan Woodland and CCDT is in contact with the owner regarding potential collaboration when contracting woodland management expertise, which could reduce overall projected maintenance and management costs slightly.

Callander Youth Project Trust partnership opportunities are being explored, including youth activities and camping, which increase access to the environment and learning for young people.

Stirling Bike Club would use the new mountain bike trails as a coaching venue, potentially developing training and coaching provision at Coilhallan in the future.

There is potential to develop access to toilet facilities by working with the **Cycle Hire and Bunkhouse businesses** adjacent to the Coilhallan carpark. Early stage discussions are being held with the owners by CCDT.

10 Comparators and Competitors

There are over 200 community organisations in Scotland that own and manage woodlands for the benefit of their communities. These range from small community groups carrying out all maintenance with volunteers, to large organisations that employ staff, carry out commercial forestry, deliver training and activities and run cafes. All of the examples we looked at strive to generate sufficient revenue income to cover running costs, and rely on attracting people who will pay for services to their facilities, as Coilhallan Woodland will need to do. Many also rely on core volunteers to carry out a significant part of the woodland maintenance work.

Coilhallan Woodland will predominantly serve the local community, providing woodland access and facilities for walkers and cyclists. However, it also aspires to draw people in from a wider area to enjoy the natural environment, access the mountain biking trails and contribute to the economy of Callander. Although in this respect it will be competing with a number of similar woodland mountain biking resources in the area, it will also be adding to the overall outdoor activity offer of Central Scotland, providing variety and options for potential visitors.

Key comparators:

Strathyre Outdoors is a Community Interest Company that organises outdoor 'events' or 'mini-adventures for groups, including wildlife trails / treks; fishing; orienteering and cycling. Prices range from £25 per adult (£15 per child) for a 2hour Bush Skills Experience to £75 per adult (£40 per child) for a Mini Expedition Adventure lasting approximately 4 – 5 hours.

Strathyre is approximately 10 miles from Callander (a 25 minute car drive).

<http://strathyreoutdoors.org>

Comrie Croft, recently featured in the Guardian travel section, and provides hostels, eco camping, a teahouse, woodland walking and mountain bike trails, courses, events and activities. It has developed a number of income streams to sustain the management costs and has partnerships with local businesses to deliver relevant services. Mountain biking was its original focus, and now there are '16 km of free hand-crafted blue, red and black single mountain bike track trails' at Comrie Croft. There is a bike wash, showers (small charge), toilet and car parking. They have also diversified into a specific bike service which offers bike hire, shop, classes and events.

Comrie Croft is a 45 minute car journey (30 miles) from Callander.

<http://www.comriecroft.com>

Laggan Wolfrax Centre - Laggan Forest Trust took a formal role in the management of Laggan Forest, in partnership with the Forestry Commission Scotland, in 1998. It aims to increase employment, conserve the woodland and maintain paths, aspiring to achieve economic sustainability through enterprise. Businesses include a small-scale wood fuel business, forestry contracting and the social enterprise cafe. The mountain bike tracks are the responsibility of the Forestry Commission, but this arrangement is no longer an option for community organisations. A full review of the Laggan Wolfrax Centre was carried out in 2013 and the learning from this is summarised in Appendix 3.

Anagach Woods Trust is a charitable limited company that owns 390ha in Grantown on Spey (population approximately 3,000). The woods comprise mostly of native pine forest and are used for environmental and forestry education, for sustainable timber management, and for a range of 'green tourism' activities as well as local amenity. The Trust is reliant on grants, donations, fund raising events and occasional sales of timber to sustain the woodland maintenance. A small core voluntary group carry out path repairs, drainage, way marking paths, small scale forestry work and other woodland estate tasks.

The **Community Woodland Association** provides a number of case studies illustrating activities and income streams delivered through community owned woodlands.

<http://www.communitywoods.org/index.php>

The **Scottish Woodland Skills** centre is part of Community treeCycle Community Interest Company, a social enterprise that works with young unemployed and special needs individuals to offer a professional tree and woodland management service and the supply of woodfuel and charcoal to the general public. www.communitytreecycle.co.uk

Further information on comparators is provided as part of the Market Analysis report in Appendix 3.

11 Options Appraisal Summary

The Options Appraisal articulated and analysed a series of options that would enable CCDT to take on the management/ownership of Coilhullan Woodland, facilitating the delivery of the aims and objectives it has identified. This information enabled CCDT to make an informed decision about which options to take forward into the business planning process. A summary of the options and decisions made by CCDT is given below, with the activities to be progressed as a phase 1 project highlighted in blue (phase 2 and 3 in green). The full Options Appraisal, with comment against criteria including community support, outcomes, costs, income, risks, assumptions and implementation is provided in Appendix 7.

Options Appraisal - Purchase / Lease Options A-D:

Option A: To purchase Coilhullan woodland (79ha) to be managed by CCDT for the benefit of the community.

Decision / Action: Progress with this option, taking into account the highlighted risks, the need for volunteer input and liaising with Forestry Commission and the local Estate re potential partnership working.

Option B: To lease Coilhullan woodland (79ha) long term from FCS to be managed by CCDT for the benefit of the community.

Decision / Action: Do not progress with lease option as not financially viable.
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Option C: To purchase / lease <u>part</u> of Coilhullan woodland to be managed by CCDT for the benefit of the community
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Decision / Action: Do not progress as limited opportunities for further development in the future and very limited income generation opportunities.
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Option D: Not to progress purchase of Coilhullan Woodland (status quo)

Decision / Action: Do not progress as this option does not offer asset ownership or increased positive outcomes for the community.

Options Appraisal Detail – Potential Woodland Uses Options 1-9**Option 1: Trossachs Mobility base, café and facilities at the carpark**

Trossachs Mobility is interested in moving its base to Coilhallan Woodland and developing a café in a temporary structure in the carpark area. Outside seating could also form part of this offer. From early investigation, planning permission for a temporary structure delivering visitor facilities is likely to be looked upon favourably.

Decision / Action: Progress this option as a pilot, taking into account the need for a low impact development. Liaise with potential tenant. Investigate access to toilet facilities with neighbouring businesses. Phase 1 development.

Option 2: Woodland camping

Loch Lomond National park has recently stopped wild camping in the Park from March to September, potentially opening up an opportunity to promote woodland camping within a designated, managed area of Coilhallan Woodland. Management of this facility could be in conjunction with an existing business. Planning permission and toilet provision would require further investigation.

Decision / Action: Facilitate development of this option through an existing business (e.g. Trossachs Mobility, Coilhallan Bunk House, Cycle Hire) as part of wider offer. Phase 2 development.

Option 3: Provision of new mountain bike tracks (as per phase 1 of the Callander Mountain Bike Feasibility Study 2015, Executive Summary provided in Appendix 6)

This project is well developed with an extensive feasibility study illustrating that Coilhallan is the preferred development area and providing detailed information about potential tracks, costs and implementation.

Decision / Action: Progress with this project as it is well progressed and a key driver for the CCDT purchase of the Coilhallan Woodland. Phase 1 development.

Option 4: Local wood fuel and timber sales

The Woodland Management Plan carried out for Coilhallan Woodland as part of this Feasibility Study has identified that although there is little commercial value in the timber within the woodland, there are areas that could provide wood sales. Some difficult to access areas could be harvested by a specialist woodsman / green woodworker with small localised machinery and the required skills. Risk assessments, health and safety and licences would need to be considered.

Decision / Action: Progress by looking for a potential contractor who will pay a small amount to access and remove wood. Phase 1 development

Option 5: Manage the young, healthy birch woodland for coppicing within 10 years

This would require some financial investment in thinning and managing the young birch areas now in order to coppice for local wood fuel in later years. Potential small income stream.

Decision / Action: Progress as part of Activity Plan with Woodland Manager. Phase 1 development.

Option 6: Woodland burial sites

There are two potential woodland burial sites within Coilhullan, in a discrete ancient woodland area away from the mountain biking. Early stage market research indicates that there could be a local market for woodland burials in the area. Planning permission would need to be obtained, with change the use of land, risks to ground water, a sustainable transport policy, archaeological disturbance, ecological scoping surveys and visual splays being considered. Partnership options for delivery to be considered.

Decision / Action: Only progress if willing business identified to run. Phase 2 development.

Option 7: High ropes course

The potential for CCDT to partner with another organisation to install a high ropes activity course within Coilhullan has been considered. The Woodland Management Plan highlights that the trees in Coilhullan are not stable enough for this use and does not recommend it as a suitable option for development. The course could alternatively be set up using free standing posts.

Decision / Action: Do not progress at this stage. Potential Phase 3 project.

Option 8: Guided woodland walks / educational experiences

Building on current activities, events and guided walks, CCDT could develop a full activities programme within Coilhullan Woodland, employing a part time officer to organise activities and develop partnerships with a wide range of organisations.

Decision / Action: Provides strong community engagement. Progress as part of the Activity Plan. Phase 1 development.

Option 9: Advertising and sponsorship from local businesses

Promoting the benefits of the increased access trails in Coilhullan Woodland, making a link with tourism and increased visitors:

Encourage a voluntary payment towards woodland upkeep from local businesses

Develop a Friends' scheme, giving individuals a chance to pay an annual membership

Voluntary carparking payment and donations box for woodland and trail upkeep.

Decision / Action: Progress as part of Phase 1 development, with further partnership development around marketing and sponsorship in phase 2 and 3.

12 Resulting Proposal for Coilhallan Woodland

CCDT will progress with the potential purchase of Coilhallan Woodland (79ha) and take a phased approach to the development of community and income generating activities. Phase 1 activities will be the focus of this business plan. A part time Woodland Manager will be employed for the first two years of the project to support development and volunteer management.

Proposed developments in phase 1:

- Trossachs Mobility base, café and facilities at the Coilhallan carpark
- New mountain bike tracks
- Local wood fuel and timber sales
- Manage the birch woodland for coppicing within 10 years
- Guided woodland walks / educational experiences
- Advertising and sponsorship from local businesses

Proposed developments in phase 2:

- Woodland camping
- Woodland pet burials
- Further partnership development around marketing and sponsorship

Proposed developments in phase 3:

- High ropes course / commercial partnership/

13 Community Woodland Activities Plan Summary

Key activities that are likely to be facilitated in the Coilhallan Woodland are listed in the table below. These have been collated from conversations with local people, market research and the survey responses. A detailed plan and estimated timetable is provided in Appendix 8.

Woodland Management Plan (WMP) delivery	
Activity	Measurement
Volunteer and apprentice woodland management and skills training workshops	Number of volunteers engaged
Volunteer and apprentice woodland management activities	Progress towards WMP actions
Habitat diversification, replanting, minor path restoration, signage for walkers/bikers	Number of volunteer hours delivered
Fencing, deer management, track maintenance	Contracts for delivery in place and implemented
Removal of windblow and thinning	Contractor in place

Regular events and activities	
Schools activities	Number of events annually Number of children attending
Mountain bike events	Numbers attending and feedback from participants
Green woodworking events: Craft based activities – bird and bat box making. Bird tables,	Numbers attending and feedback from participants
Guided walks – flora / fauna / mushroom identification	Numbers attending and feedback from participants
All access BBQ and adventure trail games / teddy bear's picnic	Numbers attending and feedback from participants
Woodland activity days for children (kite making, creative nature, treasure hunts, orienteering)	Numbers attending and feedback from participants
Annual Open Day	Numbers attending and feedback from participants
Easter Event	Numbers attending and feedback from participants
Autumn Event	Numbers attending and feedback from participants
Capital project delivery	
Interpretation boards	Boards in place
New Mountain bike trail – skills route	Implemented and in use
New Mountain bike trail – red/blue route	Implemented and in use
Trossachs Mobility base	lease in place
Café	Café in place and open regularly

14 Expected Outcomes and Measurement

Expected Outcomes	Indicators	Timescale
SLF Outcome 1: Our communities will achieve more sustainable economic, environmental and/or social development through ownership of land and buildings.		
Coilhullan Woodland is owned and managed by the local community	Purchase complete and legal documentation in place	Year 1
Increased events and activities	10 new events and activities run annually	Year 1 onwards
Increased number of volunteers	20 new volunteers engaged with the project	Year 1 onwards
Increased confidence and skills within local community	Training programme in woodland management skills for volunteers and apprentices	Year 1 onwards
Increasing number of people accessing the woodland	Number of people using woodland monitored through events, activity and regular surveys.	Year 1 onwards
SLF Outcome 2: Our communities will have a stronger role in and control over their own development.		
Increased community resilience and self determination	Annual open days to gather views and feedback re Coilhullan's future	Year 1 onwards
New partnerships and collaborative projects developed	3 new collaborations developed	Year 2
Community engaged and contributing to a sustainable project	1,000 volunteer hours delivered annually	Year 1 onwards
SLF Outcome 3: Our communities own well managed, financially sustainable land and buildings		
Improved facilities for visitors in place and generating income	Café lease in place Mountain bike trail in place	Year 1 Year 3
Woodland Management Plan being successfully implemented	Woodland Manager in post Woodland contractor managing volunteers	Years 1&2 Year 3 onwards
Improved community and visitor experience	Annual survey of woodland users	Year 1 onwards

Community ownership will add value to Coilhullan Woodland by:

- Increasing access through mountain bike trails and additional footpaths by sourcing external funding and taking responsibility for implementation and ongoing maintenance.
- Increasing the diversity of woodland areas by locating oak and other native saplings and protecting them using volunteer time.
- Continuous cover forestry management in some areas, with small scale contractors removing selected trees for their own use.

None of these activities would take place if FCS maintained ownership as they require high levels of volunteer input to make them viable, and do not currently fit within FCS plans.

15 Coilhallan Woodland Business Plan

Financial Tables

Capital Summary

Capital COSTS	
Purchase of woodland	Capital
Purchase price - ESTIMATE	£100,000
Legal fees for purchase	£2,000
Set up and phase 1 projects	
Legal fees for set up of Trossachs Mobility lease	£2,000
Mountain bike tracks	£232,187
Woodland professional recruitment	£200
Volunteer tools woodland management	£500
Signage and waymarking	£3,000
Total Capital Costs	£339,887
Capital Income (not confirmed)	Not confirmed
SLF 95% of price ESTIMATE	£96,900
CCDT 5% of price ESTIMATE	£5,100
Other capital grants for setup (Gregs/Community fundraising)	£5,700
Mountain bike tracks Sport Scotland/Leader/Weir/ Other	£232,187
Total Capital Income	£339,887

Revenue Summary

Revenue costs	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5
Woodland Manager post inc. events delivery	£21,240	£21,877			
IT, phone, T&S costs	£2,250	£250			
Legal fees for governance advice and set up	2,000	2,000			
Marketing, printing, events costs	500	£515	£530	£546	£563
Woodland management contracted in			£4,000	£4,120	£4,244
Path and track maintenance (volunteer labour)	£1,500	£1,545	£1,591	£1,639	£1,688
Mountain bike tracks additional maintenance			£1,000	£1,030	£1,061
Woodland Maintenance estimate (deer management, felling for safety, fencing)	£5,000	£5,150	£5,305	£5,464	£5,628
Replanting clearfelled areas	£6,000	£6,075			
Annual tree safety and health survey	£2,500	£2,575	£2,652	£2,732	£2,814
Public Liability and woodland insurance	£212	£218	£225	£232	£239
Volunteer training	£1,501	£1,546	£1,592	£1,640	£1,689
Contingency for phytophthora larch clearfelling	£10,000				
Total	£52,703	£41,752	£16,896	£17,403	£17,925

Revenue Income	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5
SLF revenue for project development (95%) (1)	£24,691	£23,410			
Volunteering Support Fund (2)	£4,000	£4,000			
Small scale fundraising for events and activities	£1,500	£1,500	£1,500	£1,500	£1,500
FCS Community Grant (3)	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000		
FCS Forestry Grant Scheme – restocking (4)	£6,000	£6,075			
Income from Trossachs Mobility Lease	£1,000	£2,000	£3,000	£4,000	£5,000
Income from TM% profits	£100	£300	£500	£700	£1,000
Timber - professional removal and sale	£1,000	£1,030	£1,061	£1,093	£1,126
Birch wood coppicing sales					£1,000
Friends' membership (£20 per yr)	£2,000	£3,000	£4,000	£5,000	£5,000
Carpark / woodland use donations	£2,000	£2,100	£2,200	£2,300	£2,400
Corporate sponsorship /donations	£1,000	£1,500	£1,500	£2,000	£2,000
Totals	£48,291	£49,915	£18,761	£16,593	£19,026
Cashflow	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5
Income	£48,291	£49,915	£18,761	£16,593	£19,026
Expenditure	£52,703	£41,752	£16,896	£17,403	£17,925
Annual Cashflow	-£4,413	£8,164	£1,865	-£810	£1,101
Cumulative Cashflow	-£4,413	£3,751	£5,616	£4,806	£5,907

Numbers in brackets refer to grants below. Full financial tables and assumptions are in Appendix 16.

Notes re Financial Tables

These financial tables illustrate that CCDT could take ownership of Coilhallan Woodland and deliver a number of projects that would increase the amenity access and facilities available in a sustainable manner. The 5 year projections take into account the requirements for woodland maintenance and safety, employment of staff, training of volunteers and other relevant costs, including contingency for potential larch die back infection. Income streams have been estimated conservatively and are based upon a relatively low level of use initially, but are expected to grow steadily with increased use of the asset. A key income stream is Friends' Membership, which will require significant volunteer effort to recruit Friends and Administer, but will be a steady and worthwhile income if set up through standing orders at the outset.

CCDT Financial position

CCDT currently has an annual turnover of approximately £100K, and delivers a number of projects for the area. It receives unrestricted funds from the Callander Community Hydro Fund, for use as grant funding for local projects (£60K in 2016). In the 2016 accounts unrestricted funds stand at £58K. £20K of this funding has been allocated to the development of mountain bike trails in Coilhallan Woodland, and the remainder, together with income in following years, is allocated for use on other local projects. No further wind farm funding is available for Coilhallan Woodland project at this point in time.

The accounts state that CCDT aspires to develop a number of additional asset ownership projects over the following years, including acquisition of public toilets, park areas and carparks from Stirling Council. The carparks are of particular interest as they are currently being run at a profit of approximately £60K annually. If CCDT is successful in obtaining the carparks, it is their intention to use this profit to sustain the other community assets in their ownership, including Coilhallan Woodland, for the long term.

Grant Funding Options

CCDT is actively pursuing Crowd Funding as a means to raise the necessary match funding and as a way of ensuring transparency, increasing community engagement, establishing a solid base of supporters outside of Callander and of raising awareness of what the Woodland has to offer.

A full appraisal of other potential grant funding options has been carried out by SKS and is provided in Appendix 9, Some of the key grant funding opportunities summarised below:

Scottish Land Fund

At stage 2, Scottish Land Fund may award grant to cover 95% costs of acquisition of land and buildings and up to £75k development funding.

Volunteering Support Fund 2017-18

Voluntary Action Fund's Volunteering Support Fund 2017-18 allows small to medium-sized third sector organisations to apply for the for the costs of recruiting at least an additional 10 volunteers.

Forestry Commission Scotland Community Fund

The Forestry Commission Scotland Community Fund aims to support groups and organisations to encourage and enable greater use of woods by people to derive health, well-being and community benefits. May be suitable for the Coilhallan project for events, community engagement and volunteer support. Not suitable for capital funding for the acquisition of fixed assets e.g. land and permanent buildings.

Forestry Commission Scotland Forestry Grant Scheme

The Forestry Grant Scheme offers financial support for the creation of new woodland and the sustainable management of existing woodland. There are 8 categories under which applications may be made, 4 of which may be of value to the Coilhallan project at different stages and for different purposes including sustainable management, improvement, access and tree health.

Leader Forth Valley

Objective 4 of Leader Forth Valley is 'Increase the Understanding Of, And Access To, Our Natural And Cultural Heritage Environment'. Objective 4 is supported by the following intervention 'Initiatives that will open up access to new environmental, recreational and cultural resources.' Community Development Trusts are specifically identified as partners in this intervention.

Greggs Foundation's Environmental Grants Scheme

Grants of up to £2,000 are available for projects in England, Wales or Scotland that deliver a real benefit to the environment. The funding can be used to cover the purchase of equipment, purchase of trees/plants, small capital projects and learning activities. May be good for part of the CCDT contribution towards purchase of the woodland.

Scottish Community Alliance Community Learning Exchange Fund

The Exchange will cover up to 100% of the costs of a learning visit by members of one community to another community project up to a limit of £750.

Weir Charitable Trust

Support services/projects, aimed at encouraging and increasing public participation in sport (activities which involve physical skill and exertion), and recreational facilities which are primarily intended for people who need them due to age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage

Scotland's Cycle Friendly Community Award Development Grants

Grants of up to £20,000 in order to encourage cycling and increase the number of locals making journeys by bike. Grant fund aims to facilitate projects which support improvement to cycling facilities and infrastructure. May be more focused on cycling as transport, rather than recreation.

Governance

CCDT, a registered charity and company limited by guarantee, will take ownership of Coilhullan Woodland on behalf of the community. The CCDT constitution is provided in Appendix 14.

Legal responsibility for the ownership of the asset will sit with CCDT, together with responsibility for receiving and administering all grant-funding towards the purchase. Any sub leases for use of the land will be awarded by CCDT, as the owner of the woodland.

CCDT has a subgroup called the Asset Transfer Group (ATG) which is currently discussing CCDT potentially owning a number of further assets in addition to Coilhullan Woods.

The ATG includes the Coilhullan Community Woodland Group (CCWG) which is composed of 3 CCDT Board Members who are also members of the ATG, and 5 individuals who bring the relevant expertise to the table. Short biographies of the CCWG members are provided in Appendix 15. These illustrate a significant amount of professional experience and relevant links with other organisations in the local community, as does the skills audit in Appendix 16. CCWG is looking to further increase its knowledge and experience in woodland management through learning journeys, training and actively recruiting new members to the group.

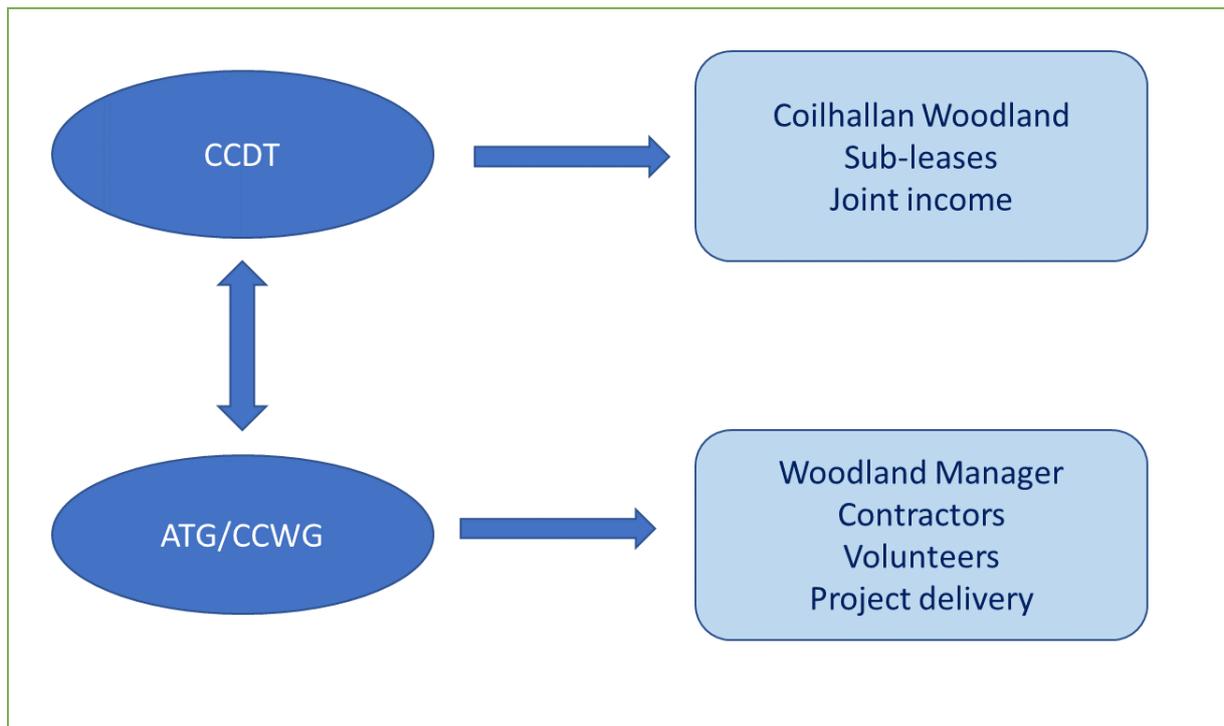
CCDT will create the Woodland Manager post and be responsible for letting all contracts, while the ATG (and CCWG) remains an unconstituted sub group. All income generated through activities associated with Coilhullan Woodland by ATG/CCWG will be ring-fenced within the CCDT budget, for re-investment in the project, and spend from this budget will be delegated to ATG/CCWG, with regular reporting to CCDT. ATG/CCWG will also report regularly to the CCDT Board regarding project progress and highlighting any issues for discussion.

Once the woodland is purchased, ATG/CCWG will become a wholly owned trading subsidiary of CCDT (a company limited by guarantee), with the responsibility of managing the project and all traded income. At this point, responsibility for staff employment and contracts will move to ATG/CCWG.

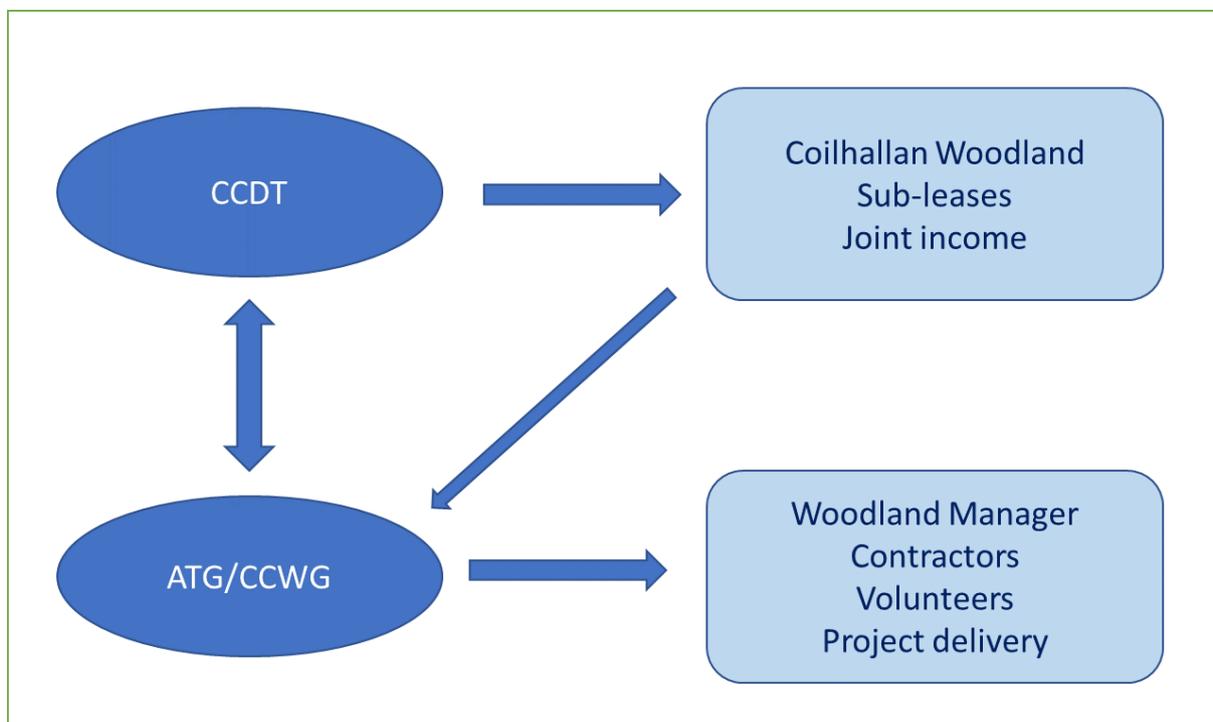
All relevant woodland ownership policies and procedures will be put in place by CCDT, to include Health and Safety, Environmental and Risk Management. CCDT already employs the Callander Town Coordinator and has all relevant systems and employee policies in place.

The Woodland Management Plan 'Action Plan' (to be created as a sub section of the Woodland Manager Work Plan) will be delivered by the Woodland Manager, overseen by ATG/CCWG. The woodland will be managed in accordance with the principles of sustainable forest management as set out in the current UK Forestry Standard.

Organisational responsibilities at the early stage of the project, during acquisition:



Organisational responsibilities at the later stage of the project, when CCWG becomes a wholly owned trading subsidiary (company limited by guarantee):



Operational Management

The Coilhallan Community Woodland Group (CCWG) has been formed by the Asset Transfer Group (ATG) to oversee the development and implementation of the Community Woodland project, providing the opportunity to bring additional skills and experience into the group as required, and separating it from the core business of CCDT. CCWG will take on the responsibility for delivering the Coilhallan Woodland project effectively, planning and implementing the programme work and activities and ensuring strong leadership throughout. It is expected that once the initial phase is complete, CCWG will cease to exist and its staff and volunteers will become part of the core business of ATG.

Key Operational / Management Tasks to be carried out: The ATG/CCWG remit includes:

- Staff recruitment
- Staff work planning / management
- Partnership working with Cambusmore Estate
- Monitoring budget and approving payments
- Promoting opportunities to the community
- Liaising with FCS and other partners
- Setting up and promotion of Friend's scheme
- Generating and securing sponsorship opportunities
- Development of partnerships (e.g. Mind the Gap apprenticeships)
- Supporting the Callander Mountain Bike Trails group to raise capital funding for mountain bike tracks.

ATG/CCWG will be supported by a part time member of staff and volunteers who will deliver the following, with the support and overview of CCDT:

- Co-ordination of all operational aspects of the development
- Woodland management plan delivery
- Events programme delivery
- Volunteer recruitment and management
- Set up of volunteer and apprentice training
- Monitoring and reporting against outcomes and work plan
- Managing revenue funding from SLF and other funders - preparing reports and claims
- Health and safety, environment and security
- Risk assessment
- Set up and management of leases
- Set up and management of woodland contracts
- Management of people / bikes access

A skills analysis of CCWG members is provided in Appendix 15. This clearly illustrates the high level of skills and experience that they bring to the project collectively, particularly in financial and staff management and governance, legal requirements and risk assessment. Areas requiring further knowledge and potential training include operational woodland management, apprenticeships and National Forest management requirements.

Staffing / Volunteers

Staff

A part time Woodland Manager Post will be employed by CCDT for the first two years of the project to oversee the implementation of the WMP, project development and delivery and volunteer engagement, training and management. The post will be line managed by a member of the CCWG. A draft job description is provided in Appendix 10.

The aim of this post is to set up all procedures and policies, develop effective work plans and events programmes and recruit and train a team of volunteers. It is the intention of this project to use revenue funding from SLF 2 application to employ the part time post for the first two years, training volunteers to take on activities that can be managed by a contracted Woodland Manager in future years, so moving the project towards sustainability. This will be possible with a strong recruitment drive, good community support and high quality training. This model will enable the Coilhullan Woodland to run in a sustainable manner without significant ongoing grant funding, although there will be the option to apply for further grants, or increase earned income streams to maintain the woodland management post for a longer period of time if that is desirable.

Volunteers

CCDT will require extensive volunteer recruitment and training to ensure that sufficient volunteers are engaged with the project in the long term. The volunteers will require regular training support, together with effective co-ordination and management. The recruitment of a Woodland Manager with volunteer recruitment and management experience will ensure this can be put in place effectively.

Volunteers will be recruited through existing interested groups and individuals, local events and the Friend's Scheme. Clear job descriptions for the types of volunteering roles available will be produced, ensuring that people can see the tasks involved and the benefits to be gained. The social aspect of volunteering is very important, providing an opportunity to meet new people and reduce isolation. Regular engagement events for existing volunteers, together with opportunities to get involved with new activities like tree planting and running events, will encourage people to take part. Becoming 'part of the team' that looks after Coilhullan Woodland for this and future generations will be promoted as a legacy activity – improving Callander's health and well being and planting trees for your children and grand children.

Regular volunteer training events will be held to provide the skills and knowledge required to enable small teams of volunteers to carry out tree checks, path maintenance, thinning, planting and coppicing in line with the WMP and under the guidance of the Woodland Manager. Training in events organisation and running activities will also be provided, building skills and capacity to enable volunteers to take on more responsibility for delivering the activity plan in future years.

Monitoring and Reporting

All desired outcomes will be monitored on a 6 monthly basis by the Woodland Manager and reported to the CCWG and CCDT Board. Each outcome has a measurable indicator and a system for monitoring each will be established at the outset. For example, a register of volunteers on site will be kept on a daily basis for health and safety requirements and this will also monitor the hours of voluntary time contributed to the project.

A work plan will be prepared by the Woodland Manager to clarify all activities and tasks to be carried out. The post holder will report against this work plan on a monthly basis, in regular meetings with the line manager appointed from the CCWG.

Ongoing Community Engagement

CCWG is engaging with the Callander Community during summer events, increasing involvement and support for the project. The engagement plan is ongoing, with events and activities taking place throughout the year that include:

- Regular community events and gatherings
- Development of volunteering opportunities
- Ongoing engagement with the current supporters, and further efforts to engage with those members of the community who have not yet become involved, particularly the hard to reach groups, or isolated older and younger people, through bespoke activities.
- Ensuring that all events and activities are used productively to gather and record feedback, and collect contact details of all those expressing an interest in becoming involved with the project or using the facilities in the future.
- Actively recruiting more people to become Members of CCDT and to join the Board.
- Progressing with the potential partnerships identified.

Indicative Timetable Overview

Coilhallan Woodland Valuation	Aug 2017
Apply for FCS Community Asset Transfer (CATS)	Aug 2017
CCDT change of constitution	Aug 2017
SLF application prepared and discussed with SLF	Sept 2017
Ongoing fundraising towards practical projects	Sept 2017
CATS panel	Jan 2018
CATS response	Feb 2018
SLF application submitted (after CATS response received)	Feb 2018
SLF response received	March 2018
Coilhallan Woodland purchase	April 2018
Appointment of Woodland Manager	June 2018
Practical project development	June 2018
Practical project implementation	August 2018 onwards

Risk Analysis

Risk	Mitigation
Group inexperienced in managing woodland	Increase capacity of CCWG to include woodland expertise through training and recruitment. Employment of a Woodland Manager to take day to day responsibility. CCWG to undertake learning journeys and training.
Possible infection by phytopthera ramorum which kills larch trees – this would necessitate removal of all larch.	The disease is spreading and FCS reports that it has been found in Callander area, at Lenny Woods, which was clearfelled as a result. Regular checks must be carried out at Coilhullan and the risk of phytopthera infection considered high. (Further information in Appendix 11)
Ongoing management and maintenance costs	Potentially reduced by partnership working with local businesses, volunteer support and sharing resources with other CCDT owned assets such as the Mind the Gap project and Town Manager post.
Failure to secure forest scheme CATS approval for asset transfer.	Ensure application form is high quality.
Lack of grant funding opportunities	Research all possible options for grant funding for capital aspects of project and apply at an early stage.
Limited community engagement and high work load for small group of people. Volunteer fatigue	Recruit new group members. Woodland Manager post to be employed to reduce pressure on CCDT Board
Low revenue income likely to be achieved	Reduce requirement for revenue by using volunteer time
Low capacity organisation	High commitment from CCDT members needs to be built. Recruit new members with woodland knowledge for the delivery and management of the project.
Low community interest	Community Engagement plan and ongoing events and activities.

16 Key Recommendations

This Options Appraisal, Feasibility Study and Business Plan illustrates that with careful management and significant effort the Coilhallan Woodland could be purchased by CCDT and run sustainably by the sub group CCWG.

There are a number of actions and recommendations highlighted throughout this report:

- Continue community engagement by delivering events and activities within the woodland from this point in time, building momentum and engaging with a wider audience.
- Increase the knowledge and understanding of woodland management within CCWG through learning journeys, training and recruitment of new members.
- The Phytophthora (Larch dieback) risk is high, as it has been found in a nearby woodland. This must be taken into consideration when deciding a course of action, as the cost of removing all larch from the site can not be accurately established within this study, and a nominal contingency figure is included in the cashflow. It is recommended that further advice is taken re the potential cost of this risk.
- Liaise with FCS regarding the CATS process and the requirements for the constitution to be updated and ensure this is in place in time for CATS submission.
- Continuing to develop partnerships with local organisations to support the management of the woodland.