

Taymount and Five Mile Woods Feasibility Study

WEST STORMONT WOODLAND GROUP

WSWG = pron. WIZZYWIG

West Stormont Woodland Group
 We're looking for the best location for a new woodland in the Taymount area. We're looking for a site that is suitable for a woodland and is in the Taymount area. We're looking for a site that is suitable for a woodland and is in the Taymount area.

With Community Update - August 2019
 We've been working on the feasibility study for the Taymount and Five Mile Woods area. We've been working on the feasibility study for the Taymount and Five Mile Woods area.

"Feeling Good in the Woods"
Event 3/8: Woodland Art with Jeni Macnab - Generations Hand in Hand
 Saturday 24 August 2019

Do you enjoy & value this woodland? yes/no
Do you think it should be saved? yes/no

OUR VISION: To create community woodlands for the benefit of people and wildlife. To create community woodlands for the benefit of people and wildlife.

Legend Classification
 Class A
 Class B
 Class C
 Class D
 Class E
 Class F
 Class G
 Class H
 Class I
 Class J
 Class K
 Class L
 Class M
 Class N
 Class O
 Class P
 Class Q
 Class R
 Class S
 Class T
 Class U
 Class V
 Class W
 Class X
 Class Y
 Class Z

Management Area
 High
 Low
 Unclassified
 Unmanaged

Handwritten notes:
 Woodland Seat + Sculpture Trail
 WSWG HUPPING project
 FOREST SCHOOL YES! PLEASE

Map Scale: 1:10,000

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 For West Stormont Woodland Group

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Description

Location

The two woods, Taymount and Five Mile Woods, are located to the north of Perth, in a triangle bounded by a bend of the River Tay and the A9 trunk road to the west. The West Stormont Woodland Group (WSWG) sometimes refer to this as a peninsula. The main entrances to the woods lie on secondary roads close to the village of Stanley at:

Taymount Wood NO 120 351

Five Mile Wood NO 092 325

A useful map is Explorer 379 (1:25000) although the extreme east part of Taymount Wood is off the map.



- **Bankfoot**
Murthly
Stanley
Kinclaven
- Taymount and Five Mile Woods**
- Bus routes**
- Scattered rural communities**
- }

A9
- BP

Berth Park

Taymount and Five Mile Woods are located in the most populated part of Strathtay, perfectly positioned as community woodlands between the largest settlements in the area. Close to the A9, six miles north of Perth and serviced and surrounded by nearby rural bus routes from numerous directions, connected by the local core path network, they are accessible by public transport, car, bike, horse and foot. A new cycle route links Five Mile Wood with the A9. There are plans for a pedestrian and a wildlife bridge across the new A9 dualling. There is a public consultation currently taking place on two Active Travel route options between Stanley and Luncarty – one of which links into the new cycle path. Only a mile apart, WSWG sees Taymount and Five Mile Woods as “one wood with a gap in the middle”, which given time and resources and supportive local landowners, could be bridged.

Topography

Both woods lie on the ‘ridge’ which forms the back of the peninsula although this is a very gentle feature. Although the woods differ in outline, their topography is similar, rising gently from the main access points to high points in the northern part of each wood with large areas of almost flat terrain. This gives them a predominantly southerly aspect.

	Low Point	High Point
Taymount	62 m	81
Five Mile	45	97

As can be seen, Five Mile Wood looks like a tadpole and rises more steeply in the tail (south) section and is almost flat in the head (north) section. The surrounding landscape is similarly very gently rolling, reaching a high point of 111 m about 2 km to the north of Five Mile Wood at Muir of Thorn.

There are no major streams flowing through either wood. The Kings Myre, which has a fishery, is owned by Taymount estate and is enclosed by the west part of Taymount Wood, on three sides.

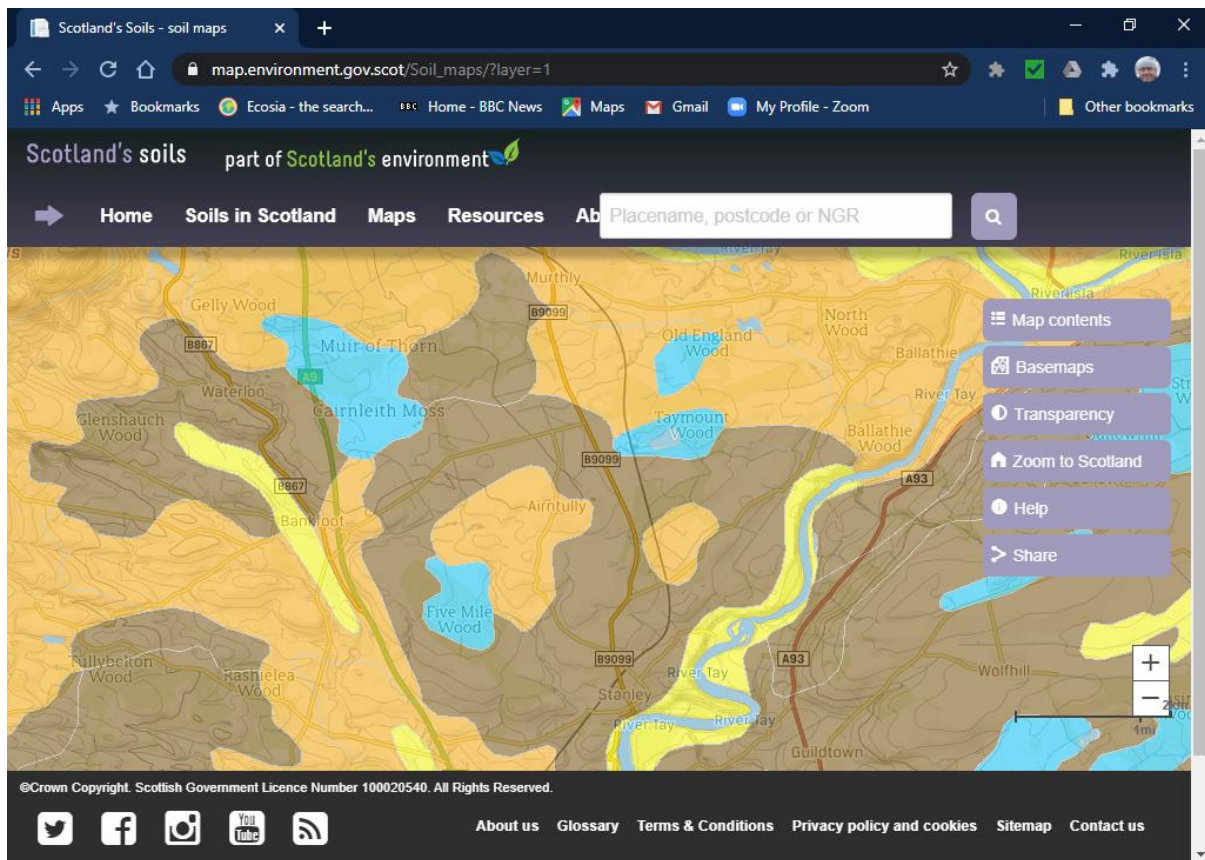
Climate

Annual rainfall is around 800mm (31”) which is low for Scotland. Being on a gentle ridge, close to the coast, the woods are quite exposed and windblow has been a feature. This is also affected by the soils. Snow is unlikely to settle for prolonged periods. Some of the more open, flatter parts of the woods could act as frost hollows.

Geology & Soils

As can be seen from the screenshot (www.map.environment.gov.scot/Soil_maps), the soils in the two woods are either blue, orange or brown. Five Mile Wood is all brown apart from

the main southern part of the 'head' (if you think of the wood as a tadpole). Taymount Wood is more complex. There is a blue area centred on Kings Myre. Orange dominates the northern area and the southern end next to the entrance. The rest is brown.



BROWN Balrownie series. This is a brown earth soil made from drifts derived mainly from sandstones of Lower Old Red Sandstone age, often water-modified. pH is 4 in the upper horizons, which is fairly acid.

ORANGE Forfar series. This is a humus-iron podzol made from water-sorted drifts derived from Lower Old Red Sandstone sediments. pH is 3.6 in the upper horizons, which is more acid than Balrownie.

BLUE Lour series. This is a non-calcareous gley made from drifts derived mainly from sandstones of Lower Old Red Sandstone age, often water-modified. pH is 4.7 which makes it the least acid of the three series but still significantly acid.

The three series are derived from the same geology but have developed in three different ways, mainly due to drainage or lack of. The brown soils are best drained and the blue soils are the wettest. All are acid and fertile.

The CJ Piper report for Five Mile Wood states 'It is important to note soils are 7l₁ and 7l₂; surrounding land is 1g₃ and 3g₄.

7 [Typical Surface-Water Gley]; l Loamy

7 [Typical Surface-Water Gley]; l Loamy; i Imperfectly Aerated

1 [Typical Brown Earth]; g Gleyed

3 [Typical Podzol]; g Gleyed

The gleyed nature of the soil is suggestive of an impermeable layer within the soil profile, typically clay or induration as gleyed soils are more susceptible to compaction (Kennedy, 2002). Across the site this has impeded drainage and there are areas of standing water/boggy ground, an SMR (Soil Moisture Regime) wet-very wet as a result of imperfectly aerated soils. Furthermore, a vegetation survey has revealed poor medium SNR (Soil Nutrient Regime) values.

Whilst wet soils impact negatively on the stability and growth rates of the trees, they have their own assemblages of flora and fauna. The result is a diverse mosaic of habitat types, high in ecological value.

History of the Woodlands

Five Mile Wood was purchased in 1943 from Strathord estate. Taymount was acquired in 1956 from Taymount Estate with a small section south-east of Kirk o' the Muir being added two years later. There have been plantations on parts of these sites for a long time. The Ordnance Survey map of 1860 shows both woods to be present in more or less their current footprint. It is believed that large parts of Taymount Wood were felled during World War 1.

There have been trees at Five Mile Wood for even longer. It appears as part of a designed landscape on a Roy map of 1747.

There are no scheduled or unscheduled ancient monuments in either wood. Local sources mention a disused ice-house in Five Mile Wood. Taymount has a deep anti-tank ditch and other concrete structures which were originally part of the Command Line constructed during World War Two to slow up invaders. Kirk o' the Muir, an impressive but ruined early Secession church lies just to the north of Taymount.

Both forest blocks are set in a rolling agricultural landscape, surrounded by productive arable farmland and estates. Whilst some areas of Taymount were felled and subsequently restocked or allowed to regenerate naturally, there had been no large scale felling in Five Mile Wood until recently when windblow left no alternative. The natural regeneration in both woods consists mainly of birch, spruce, Scots pine and a little oak.

Environmental Designations

There are no statutory designations within the boundaries of the forests but King's Myre, Site of Special Scientific Interest, is surrounded on three sides by Taymount. The River Tay Special Area of Conservation has an impact on the management of the forest blocks as all watercourses eventually flow into this nearby designated watercourse.

Both woodlands are currently of interest to Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels, a national strategy, managed by Scottish Wildlife Trust, to try and protect red squirrels by stopping the spread of grey squirrels. Local volunteers participate in the national squirrel survey work in both woods each spring.

Infrastructure

The two forests have a well laid out pattern of forest roads, constructed to a good standard. There is 3.4 km of roads in Taymount Wood plus a further 1.5 km of tracks. Five Mile Wood has 5.8 km of forest roads plus an informal path along the southern half of the western boundary. Parts of the system have been, or are in the process of being, lost to encroaching vegetation and wetness problems. The encroaching vegetation is mainly birch regeneration, gorse and broom. There are no forest buildings within the forests.



Large parts of the two forests are flat with impeded soils leading to wet conditions which were a major factor in the windblow in Five Mile Wood. The drainage system appears to be working reasonably well in most areas and will need to be maintained.

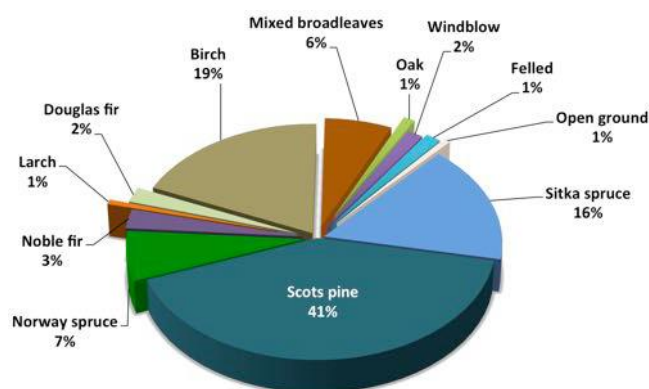
Woodland Composition

Taymount Wood

The gross woodland area is 156.5 ha. Of this, 70% is stocked with conifers, 26% with broadleaves and 4% is open ground, windblow or roads.

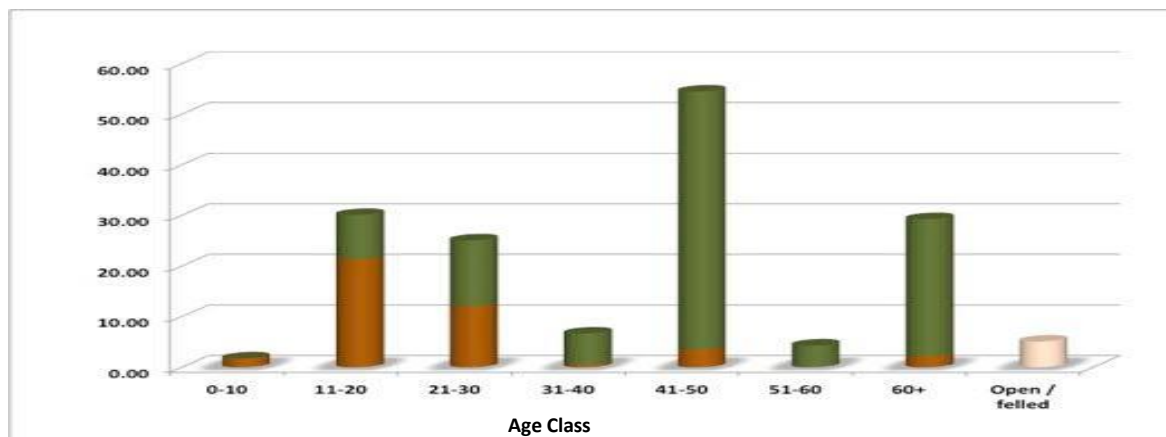
The species breakdown is:

Species	Area (ha)	%
Birch	29.4	19
Mixed broadleaves	10.1	6
Oak	1.7	1
Larch	1.1	1
Sitka spruce	25.8	16
Scots pine	64.4	41
Norway spruce	10.9	7
Noble fir	4.0	3
Douglas fir	3.3	2
Windblow	2.4	2
Felled / not restocked	2.4	2
Open ground	1.1	1
Total gross area	156.5	100



Birch dominates the broadleaves and Scots pine and Sitka spruce dominate the conifers. Together they account for 76% of the area.

The age class structure is:



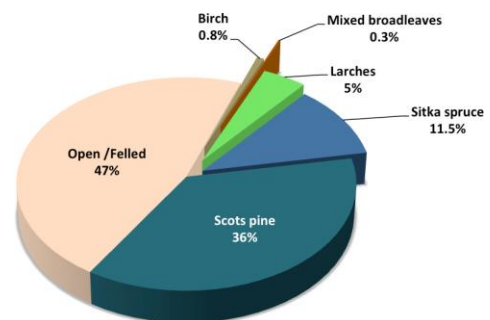
Notably, the 41-50 age class is over-represented and some others under-represented. The conifers (green) are in two older categories with the broadleaves (brown) increasing and becoming dominant in the younger age classes. The total estimated standing volume of the conifer stands is 27,512 cubic metres.

Five Mile Wood

The gross woodland area is 131.4 ha., slightly smaller than Taymount Wood. It is only 51% stocked, although a large proportion of the remaining 49% is showing signs of vigorous natural regeneration of both conifers and broadleaves.

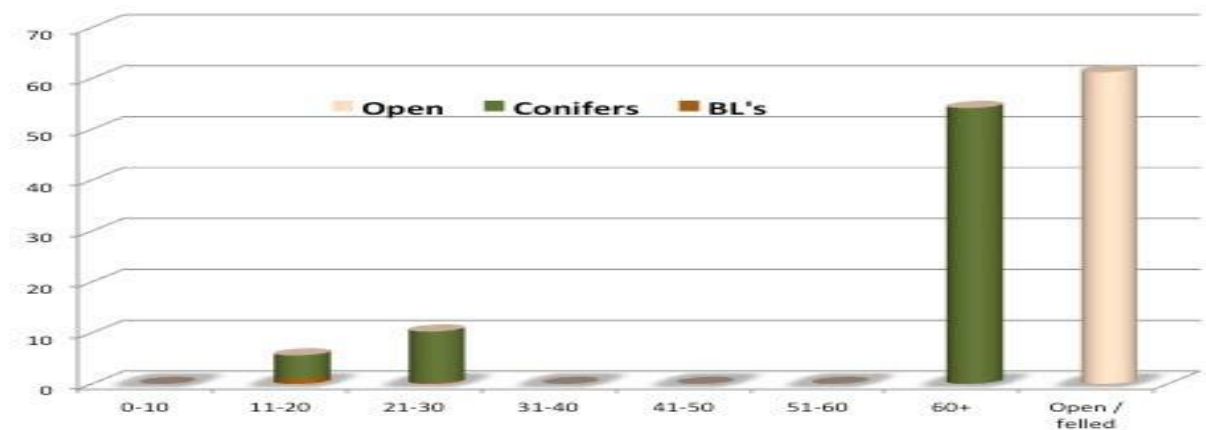
The species breakdown is:

Species	Area (ha)	%
Birch	1.0	0.7
Mixed broadleaves	0.3	0.3
Larch	5.6	4
Sitka spruce	14.6	11
Scots pine	46.1	35
Felled / not restocked	61.2	47
Other open land	2.6	2
Total gross area	131.4	100



Scots pine and Sitka spruce again dominate the stocked area. Once the natural regeneration is large enough to be accepted, the overall stocking will rise close to 100%. FLS surveyed the natural regeneration in 2019.

The age class structure is:



Five Mile Wood is over-represented in the 60+ category. This pattern doesn't reflect the amount of natural regeneration of conifers and broadleaves which is present. It also contrasts with Taymount Wood and adds greatly to the harvestable stands. The total estimated standing volume of the conifer stands is 13,588 cubic metres.

There is an estimated 41,000 cubic metres of softwood timber in the two woods. This is lower than national average standing timber volumes due to the heavy thinnings and occasional windblow. There has been a deliberate policy to convert the pine and larchwoods to a Low Impact Silvicultural System/ Continuous Cover and to mitigate the impact of Dothistroma in the pine. The spruce areas are largely unthinned.

Data from Five Mile Wood and Taymount Wood Facts and Figures (2019, CJ Piper & Co.)

Timber Value

Timber value is a function of growth rate, form and susceptibility to disease and climatic damage. Growth rates in both woods are similar with Scots pine attaining a very high (for Scots pine) Yield Class of 10-14 (maximum mean annual increment) on average and Sitka spruce averaging 12-16, at the poorer end of spruce yields. Firs (Douglas and Noble) have Yield Classes in the mid to high teens. Birch and oak yields are in single figures, which is normal.

The form of the conifers is good. The Scots pines are becoming round headed due to their wide spacing, but all the timber value is in the trunks. Dothistroma Needle Blight has been positively identified in Scots pine in both forests (July 2012). It will have an impact on growth potential and require heavy thinning to mitigate the effects. There is evidence of deer browsing on the young regenerating trees although many are getting away. Ongoing control will be needed.

The ongoing windblow in Five Mile Wood has been taken back to a firm edge, apart from 3.4 ha. at the north end, and the woods appear to be stable for now. Large parts of both

woods are fairly flat with wet soils. This means that minor windblow will take place from time to time. Catastrophic windblow can take place in any woodland whatever the management. Windblow can normally be harvested but the net income is reduced compared with a standing crop.

The timber quality, road system, economies of scale and distance to markets suggest that timber production is an attractive proposition in the two woods.

Ecological Value

Before the land was afforested, prior to the 1860 OS map, Taymount Wood would have been largely a poorly drained exposed area used for rough grazing. Five Mile Wood has had some tree cover dating back to Roy's maps of 1747. While most of the land was deforested, it is difficult to know what the pressure of grazing was like. It is likely that before enclosures, the animals moved around a wide area making it possible for a range of habitats to develop from open water to scrubby woodland. The biodiversity of such a regime, pre intensive farming, would have been moderately high compared with livestock farming today.

Dominant species in the Five Mile Wood windblown area, noted in the FLS Five Mile Wood Survey Report (2019), are tufted hair grass, soft rush, compact rush, bell heather, blaeberry, wavy hair grass, broom, gorse, bramble, raspberry, *Polytrichum commune* (a moss) and *Gallium saxitale* (heath bedstraw). They are likely to reflect the original vegetation although the ruderals probably came in later.

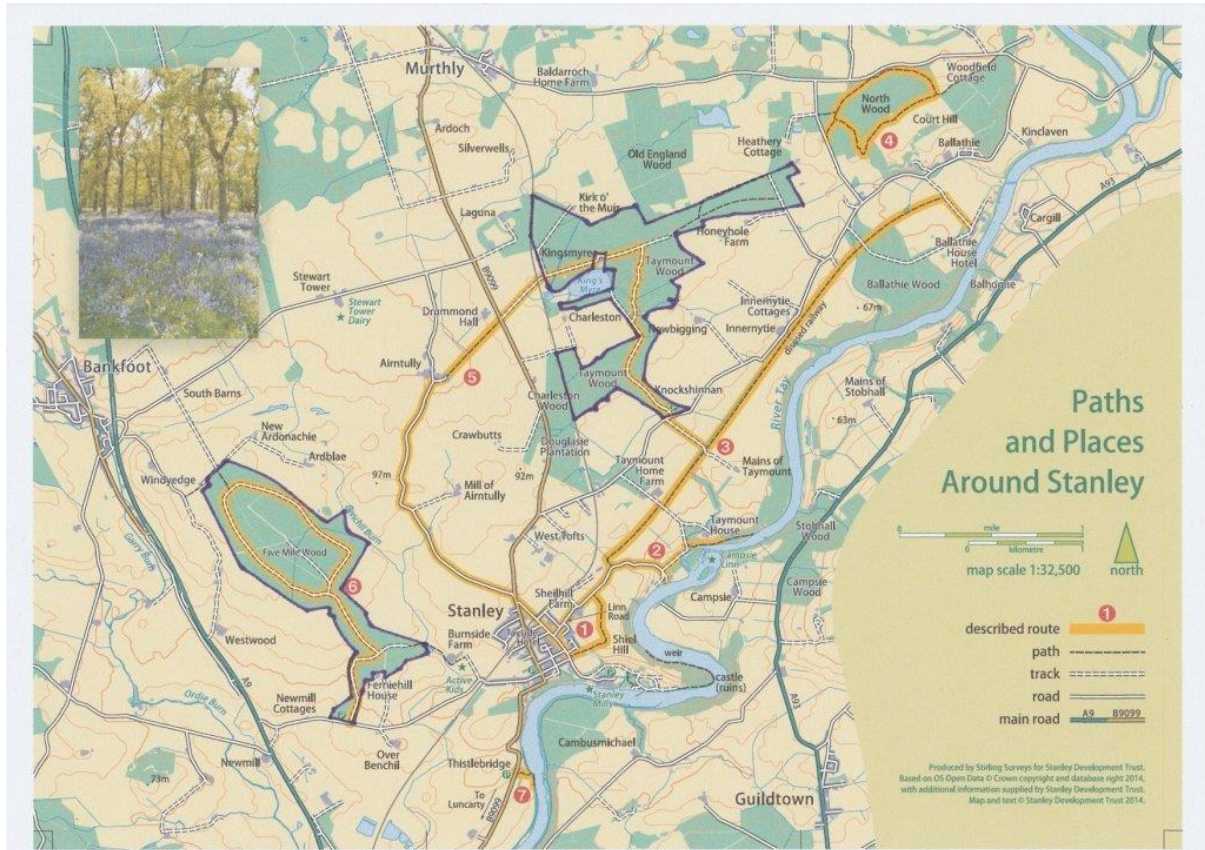
This rough grazing was then subjected to standard forestry ground preparation and planted up with Scots pine, Sitka spruce and other conifers, which will have suppressed the original vegetation. At this point, the ecological value of most parts of the two woods would have been low, according to the Nature Conservation Review criteria.

However, sporadic windblow has opened up areas and allowed birch and other species to fill the spaces through natural regeneration. A decision to move to Less Intensive Silvicultural Systems (LISS) with heavy thinnings in the pine stands has allowed an understorey of birch, pine, spruce and other trees and shrubs to develop. Both woods are increasing steadily in naturalness and over time will become more diverse. Already birds and invertebrates are moving in and occupying the new niches which are forming. A good example of this is the jays in Five Mile Wood and Taymount Wood. Other birds of note in the woods are crossbill, spotter flycatcher, tree creeper, woodcock, goshawk and raven.

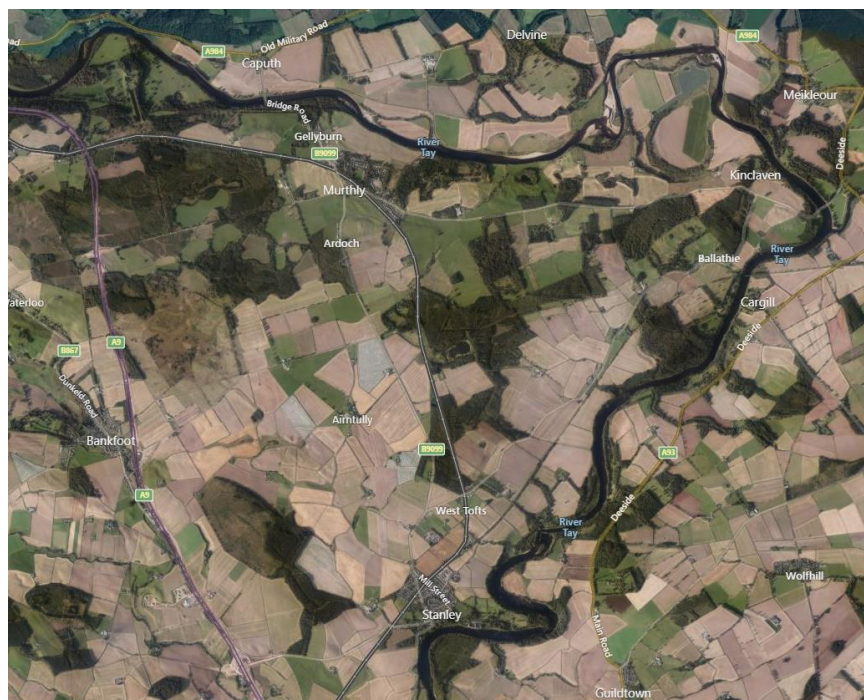
Water is an important element in both woods. The woodland on either side of King's Myre is largely native woodland with groups of mature Scots pine added to the mix. The watercourses, mainly ditches, have been in position for a long time and are treasure houses of biodiversity. Ditch maintenance will have to be carried out carefully and new ponds could be created. Beavers have been observed at various points in Taymount Wood, mainly

around King's Myre. They will make a significant impact on the hydrology of the wood. Otters are present nearby in the Tay and may move through the area.

Position in an Ecological Unit



The peninsula formed by the bend in the River Tay with the A9 as its base, makes a coherent geographical unit. It is a very gentle landscape with the two woods occupying some of the higher ground. Similar woods such as Old England Wood, North Wood (Woodland Trust) and the Murthly woods



extend the forested area to the east and north. All around and between the two woods is arable agriculture, with very few trees present. This breaks up the ecological network, especially in the Airtully area. At present the landscape is fragmented but there are opportunities for further connection, notably along the drainage channels, such as the Benchil Burn.

Deer Management

The two woods extend to nearly 300ha. The predominant species is roe deer, with some fallow and occasional red deer. The forests are enclosed by stock fences of various ages and condition. Both woods are surrounded by rolling agricultural land and mixed woods. Much of this land is also used for mixed sporting interests and with only stock fences, there is medium to high migration of deer across boundaries.

According to the FES/ FLS Design Plan (2012) for the two woods, a Deer Management Permission is used to control the deer in the woods with the current annual cull being around 50 roe and 15 fallow for the two woods.

The Forest District maintains a Forest Deer Management Strategy for all its forest blocks as a mechanism for identifying deer management issues at both strategic and operational level. Feeding into the strategy is captured data from cull records, boundary fence condition, browsing impacts, and estimated deer population figures within forest blocks and on neighbouring land. This information is collected by local FLS staff and external bodies to give a holistic view of deer dynamics effecting individual forest blocks.

The overall plan by FLS is to continue to monitor deer populations and trends by dung counts and culls to reduce densities to less than 10/100ha. In addition, they are monitoring the impact of deer on young restocking, areas of natural regeneration and important habitats. There is no Deer Management Group covering the area but close collaboration exists between FLS and local land-owners. The Dunkeld and South Perthshire Deer Management Groups are close by and it may be possible to work with them in the future.

Ongoing deer control will be required. This will mainly take the form of shooting by trained and licenced personnel but there may be situations where temporary fencing can be used, after felling. Tree shelters should be avoided wherever possible due to cost, carbon footprint and disposal issues.

Community Value

Since the West Stormont Woodland Group was set up in July 2018, it has articulated the community interest in the two woods. This is well expressed in the Position paper submitted to the Scottish Land Fund in April 2019 and the regular newsletters. There is a well organised website <https://www.weststormontwoodlandgroup.org.uk/> and a Facebook group with 290 followers <https://www.facebook.com/West-Stormont-Woodland-Group->

[250205992353688/](https://www.weststormontwoodlandgroup.scot) A new website is being launched for the community consultation- <https://www.weststormontwoodlandgroup.scot> One notable feature of the website is the Imaginarium where members of the community are invited to post their thoughts about the future of the woodlands. The Imaginarium has also captured ideas and opinions through other means, including Landowner and Neighbour Surveys, Gateway User Surveys, post-it boards at events, networking events, mindshowers, emails and exchange visits with other community woodlands. This has generated many innovative ideas, some more practical than others.

At present, the woods are well used by foot, mountain bike and on horseback. A number of core paths run through the wood and a new long-distance path, the River Tay Way may link these up. A small mountain bike circuit was created in Five Mile Wood with access from Burnside Farm.

Interest in and use of the woodlands is increasing steadily under the leadership of the West Stormont Woodland Group. The community is buzzing with ideas as to how the woodlands could be used more as a community asset. Some of these are captured in the WSWG Position Paper submitted to the Scottish Land Fund (2019).

Aspirations

Mission & Aim

The mission of the West Stormont Woodlands Group (WSWG) is:

To provide both woods with a long-term sustainable future as a community resource and a vital part of our local environment.

This mission statement is linked with a 25 year aim for the woodlands, which is:

To achieve significant progress towards a thriving community living in a sustainable, healthy and enjoyable landscape in eastern Strathguy centred on the rapidly naturalising Taymount Wood and Five Mile Wood. To work for substantially enhanced landscape ecology, improved and integrated access provision and a boosted local green economy.

History of the WSWG

The Steering Group was set up in July 2018. Since then a great deal of activity has taken place involving the local community, FLS and external organisations. The details are in the SLF Position Paper (2019).

Objectives of Management

The group was asked to list their objectives of management, in order of priority, should they come to be responsible for their ongoing management. They are:

- climate action & biodiversity;
- healthy living;
- welcome, access & accessibility;
- recreation;
- education;
- timber production;
- other timber products;
- non timber products (forest food – fruit, nuts, berries, venison);
- creativity and culture;
- green enterprise (to support existing local businesses and develop new community enterprise)
- hutting/Bothy Project;
- enhanced landscape ecology and connectivity;
- landscape value;
- renewable energy (solar and wind);
- shelter/safety for adjacent properties.

This is a rich and diverse list of objectives, most of which are compatible with each other. Different parts of the two woods lend themselves to different management objectives. Generic objectives, such as climate action, biodiversity and healthy living will apply across the whole woodland area.

Every woodland owner has their own unique set of objectives and some activities which are not appropriate. In this case, the group would rule out grazing animals in the woods for reasons of location and proximity to population. They would also rule out game shooting for sport.

WSWG in the Community

Engagement with the local community is described in the SLF Position Paper (2019). WSWG is addressing key inequalities identified in the Highland and Strathay Local Action Plan. Should it be successful in taking over ownership of the two woods, social, environmental and economic needs would be addressed.

Social The communities in the WSWG area have their share of social deprivation and a higher than average number of younger and older people. This combined with new housing developments means that access to welcoming green space is at a premium. There is no community owned land in the area. Good quality accessible green space is essential for physical and mental well-being. The two woods are already crucial in this regard and can be further enhanced.

Environmental The UK is 189th in the world list of how far removed its biodiversity is from its balanced natural state. Added to this is a low forest cover (19%) compared with Europe (37%) and a lack of ecological connectivity across landscapes. WSWG aims to address this dire situation through management of these two woods for the benefit of local people and wildlife.

Economic A number of local businesses, listed in the SLF Position Paper, have indicated an interest in the project. These range from forest schools to trained deer hunters and a sawmill. Once the group is successful then strong links will be built with other local businesses with an interest in the products and services which the woodland can provide.

Capabilities of the Group

Note: This section of the Feasibility Study has been updated to reflect WSWG at December 2022 when the CATS Application was submitted.

This table below includes the Board of Trustees of the WSWG SCIO who were elected at the first WSWG General Meeting in June 2022.

Name & Position	Local	Forestry	Ecology	Comm-unity	Green Issues	Project Man.	Comm. Skills	Educ-ation	Finan-cial
Shonagh Moore - Chair									
Andrew Lear Secretary									
Alan Ross Treasurer and Ecologist									
Elspeth Coutts Membership Secretary									
Betty Abbott									
Bob Talbot									

The group, all based locally, demonstrate a wide range of useful skills based around land use, including forestry, land use and food growing. Several have been involved with locally based community organisations. Teaching and good communication skills are to the fore. Several members run their own businesses and are adept at project management and handling budgets. A concern about the climate and ecological emergency binds the group together.

For mini-biographies of the Trustees, see the Meet the Teams page on the WSWG website.

www.weststormontwoodlandgroup.scot/meet-the-team/

The group is also aware that relevant skills such as financial planning and management exist in the community and will be available to the group in the future, mainly as voluntary contributions. A number of professional foresters live in the area and two forest management companies have already expressed an interest in working with the group.

More information on proposed operational structures for broadening and strengthening community engagement, including the proposal for the Wildwood Steering Group is available in the Business Plan and Appendix BP2 WSWG Stakeholder Report.

Resolution

Current Management Regime (FLS)

The Forestry Commission, now Forestry and Land Scotland, made an enlightened decision nearly 20 years ago (Forest Plan 2002- 2012) to manage the two woods under a less intensive model than the standard model. At the time this would have been called Continuous Cover or Alternative to Clearfell and is now called Less Intensive Silvicultural Systems (LISS). There were, presumably, several reasons for this:

- The ground was fairly flat and the soils were fairly wet, increasing the possibility of windblow, which had already started in Taymount Forest
- The predominant species is Scots pine rather than Sitka spruce. Scots pine has a longer rotation, can be thinned with better results and allows ground flora and an understorey to develop. It is less likely than spruce to blow down at the same top height
- The Scots pine was growing surprisingly well
- This was resulting in a more attractive and biodiverse forest
- This in turn was attracting significant numbers of local people for recreation
- The edges of the forest were important as they could be seen from the villages and main roads
- Natural regeneration, especially of birch, was taking place and recognised as an asset
- Dothistroma Needle Blight was identified in the Scots pine in 2012, possibly weather related
- The management treatment for this is to further thin the pine to allow more air flow

The intention of the current plan (2012- 2022) is ‘to produce woodland that meets the demands of timber production, landscaping, biodiversity and recreation in a sustainable manner while retaining flexibility to adapt to priority changes in both the short and long term as well as any opportunities that present themselves.’

In practice, this means ongoing thinning of the stands, moving further towards LISS, and clearing up windblow where it arises with restocking. In fact, quite a bit of windblow has occurred in Five Mile Wood since 2016 and has been cleared. Restocking was due this winter (2020/ 21). LISS has great benefits for biodiversity, recreation and landscape as well as generating a regular income from timber sales. Production of 7500 m³/ 5 year cycle of thinnings is estimated by FLS for the combined woods. This will be reduced now due to windblow, but 6000 m³/ 5 year cycle (= 1200 m³/ year) might be anticipated on the current LISS regime. Any windblow clearance would be in addition to this.

Proforestation Option

There is interest amongst WSWG members in ‘proforestation’. This is a North American term meaning ‘the practice of purposefully growing an existing forest intact toward its full

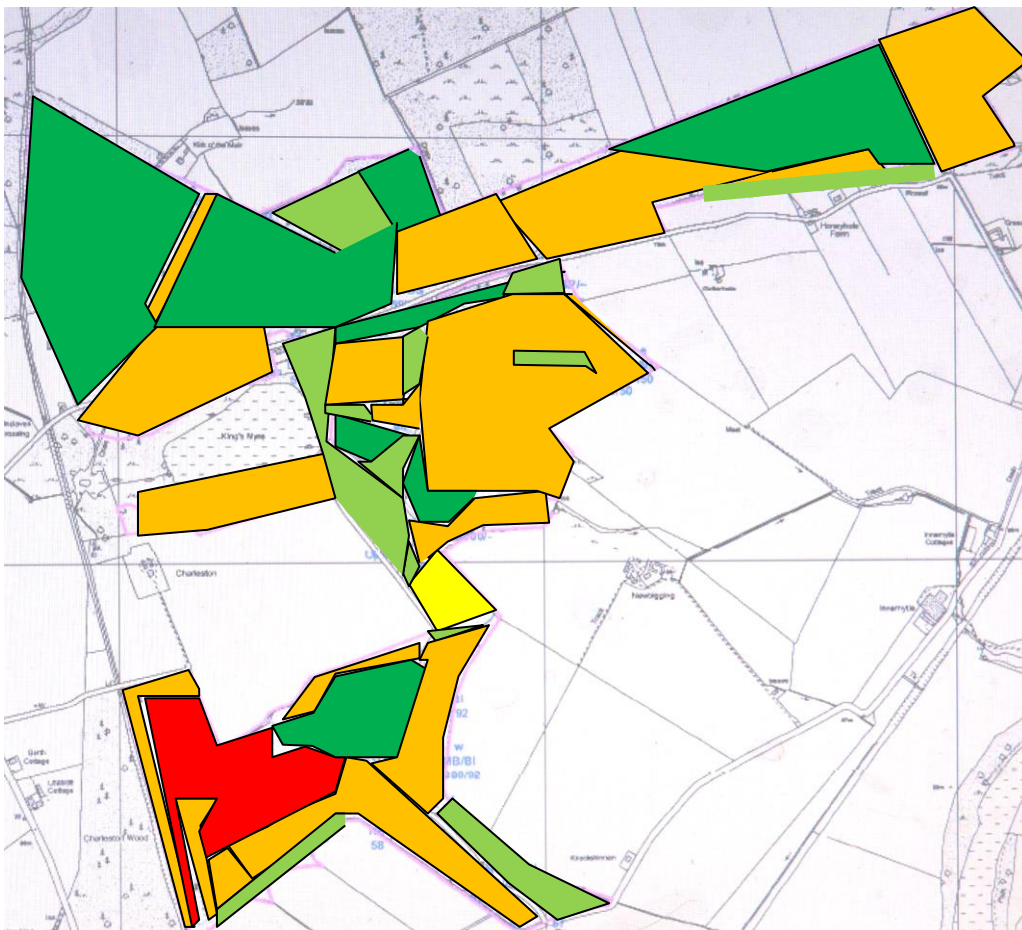
ecological potential. It is a nature-based solution whereby existing forests are protected as intact ecosystems to foster continuous growth for maximal carbon storage and ecological and structural complexity.'

Some work has been done on what this would mean applied to the Two Woods. In the case of Taymount Forest, it suggests thinning the pine (as under LISS) and clearfelling the Sitka spruce and larch. These latter areas would be replaced with mixed stands (of mainly other conifers or mainly broadleaved) plus a food forest, as shown below.

Appendix 3. Indicative dominant species composition future outlook after 2040

Key :

- Pine, with scattered broadleaved
- Other conifer, Norway spruce, Noble fir, Douglas fir, with scattered broadleaved
- Mixed Broadleaved woodland, with scattered conifers
- Food forest
- Commercial conifers - continuous timber resource



A similar regime is proposed for Five Mile Wood, thinning the pines and replacing the spruce and fir with mixed native broadleaves. Proforestation also emphasises very long rotations, positive enhancement of the biodiversity through encouraging certain species, such as

butterflies, and looking at the other non-timber forest resources, such as forest burials and weddings.

Recommended Management Regime

There is an overlap between these two approaches, LISS and Proforestation, and both are a long way away from the standard clearfell and replant Sitka spruce model. Neither has a clear vision for the desired stable end point but focus instead on the process- a Low Intensive Silvicultural System on the one hand versus a Nature Based Solution on the other. Neither system discusses the National Vegetation Classification of what the climax forest would be on that site. Neither advocates an Ecological Site Classification (ESC) which would help to determine which species and which NVC Native Woodland type would be best suited to this site. There is a better way which is termed Ecoforestry and is described below.

This brings into focus the long-term vision for the forest:

1. primarily a long-term timber factory with add on benefits
2. OR a climax forest based on native broadleaves + Scots pine
3. OR a subtle combination of the two

It can be argued that LISS and Proforestation are both manifestations of Option 2, a climax forest based on native broadleaves and Scots pine. There is a different emphasis on the need to change species. LISS accepts the current stocking of Scots pine, other conifers and native broadleaves, especially birch. Proforestation seeks to change the species balance towards native broadleaves + Scots pine and away from Sitka spruce, larch, Douglas and noble firs.

Scots pine is an interesting species. Here it is very close to its natural distribution which is often regarded as having its southern boundary at the Highland Boundary fault, close by to the north. So, it can be claimed as a native species as well as a productive conifer. Add in its range of site types, its growth rates, its 'thinnability' and the biodiversity which develops under well spaced trees and it becomes a very desirable species in this situation.

Turning to Option 3, many people would favour this option and be heavily influenced by the current status of the two woods and the proactive decision by FCS twenty years ago to shift from option 1. We could describe this option as Ecoforestry as it is trying to find a sustainable middle way between timber/ income production and all the other benefits and services which the two woods can provide. Ecoforestry is shorthand for forest management for the full range of objectives, multi-objective or holistic forestry.

The woods have to generate a regular income which means that trees have to be felled and replaced. Most of the trees need to have a commercial timber value. At the same time, they can do much, much more, developing as an ecosystem and providing an attractive backdrop for a wide range of human activities, some recreational, some supporting the local economy.

1. **Thinning.** All are agreed that the Scots pine and birch should continue to be thinned on a cycle. The spruce and other conifers could also be thinned so long as they are windfirm. As the Scots pine canopy opens up, natural regeneration will develop into an understorey, so long as deer numbers are controlled. Some enrichment planting may be required or desired. The species selected should be based on an Ecological Site Classification. These thinnings could lead on to a Shelterwood system or to a Group Felling system as described below.
2. **Felling.** There is an imbalance in the age classes with older trees predominating. This fortunate situation can be addressed by group felling in the 60+ age class in Five Mile Wood and the 41-50 and, to a lesser extent, 60+ age classes in Taymount Wood. Most of these will be Scots pine but there may also be some spruce and larch. If the 41-50 class is not yet of a size ready for market, it could be thinned and left for a few years. The groups could be small- around ¼ ha in size, allowing plenty of light to encourage natural regeneration. Some scarification at felling will also help. Gaps after a few years can be planted up with desired species to use the sites optimally. The cycle will then start again. Mother trees (pine, spruce and other species) could be identified and protected long term.
3. **Diversifying.** There is also room, on a smaller scale, to diversify into productive broadleaves, coppicing and a food forest. A food forest is simply an area of woodland with a predominance of fruit and nut trees and shrubs with room for cultivating vegetables. These will require better soils, good drainage, good access and protection from deer. The deer protection could be via temporary mesh fencing. The prescription will be different for each of these woodland types. The products will be hardwood timber, wood fuel, other small roundwood and food. Small areas can be left alone for non intervention native woodland to maximise biodiversity benefits.
4. **Other Forestry Operations.** In addition to the felling, thinning and restocking, the two woods need to be managed and maintained in other ways. Control of deer numbers is essential for natural regeneration to take place. Damage to trees and biodiversity needs to be consistently monitored. Grey squirrels also need to be culled to allow the reds to expand their range.

Drainage is of the utmost importance in these woods which have a tendency to wetness and windblow. Some of the water can be drawn towards new ponds in suitable places. All will end up flowing into the Tay and so pollution control must be planned into any developments.

The road infrastructure is good but will need to be maintained. In some places, sections of road have been almost lost due to encroaching vegetation. There is scope for improving the path system, providing more entry points, such as at the north end of Five Mile Wood. Fences, where they are serving a purpose, need to be maintained. In the case of march fences, these costs should be shared equally by the two owners.

This proposed Ecoforestry regime matches the WSWG 25-year aim. The woods will be 'sustainable, healthy and enjoyable'. They will be 'rapidly naturalising' through structure and natural regeneration. The landscape ecology will be enhanced and the woodlands will provide opportunities for 'improved and integrated access provision' and a 'local green economy.' At the same time, the woods will be producing a vital income from timber sales which will underpin all of the group's aspirations.

Sustainable Timber Production



The scene above would be very familiar to Nordic foresters- spruce growing up under a canopy of well thinned Scots pine with birch also present in the mix. Here it is Sitka spruce which occupies the same niche as Norway spruce in Europe. In this scenario, the Nordic forester would fell most of the pine in a few years, leaving a few seed trees and allowing the spruce to develop. The spruce would be thinned, then felled when of marketable size. The site would recolonise mainly with pine and birch. The birch would be cut out as a firewood crop, leaving the pine to grow on and be thinned. At this point, the spruce would come back from seed trees and the cycle repeats itself.

This is an Irregular Shelterwood system. It is very productive as crops overlap with each other. It is also very attractive and a good backdrop for recreational activities. A similar

group felling system operates at Glentress in the Tweed Valley and provides a beautiful environment for the Seven Stanes mountain bike centre which is based there.

As described above, it is estimated that continued thinning of the Scots pine will generate 1200 m³ of timber per year. Windblow clearance will be in addition. The conversion of the two woods to a better age class balance will generate further timber production, primarily through felling most of the 60 years + trees over a period of time. Seed trees would be allowed to grow on in perpetuity.

There are 50 ha of 60+ trees in Five Mile Wood + 30 ha in Taymount Wood, giving a total of 80 ha. The majority of these will be Scots pine plus some spruce, larch and firs. The standing volumes of conifers in the two woods were sampled and calculated by CJ Piper & Co. (2019). The summarised results are in the table below. Only trees with a diameter (DBH) of more than 29 cms are included in the table. Trees are normally felled commercially between 35 and 45 cms diameter (DBH). The total estimated volume of softwood is 28,745 m³.

Sub-comp.	Scots pine	Sitka spruce	Norway spruce	Larch	Douglas fir	Noble fir
Five Mile	7840 m ³ 32-42 cms	167 49		212 49		
Tay 3062	6871 32-62				1269 43	
Tay 3063	3057 31	337 30	415 32			
Tay 3064	2040 30-55	429 43-51	226 40			776 38-40
Tay 3065	639 35-38	1846 32-40	2296 35-48	325 29		
Total m³	20,447 m³	2,779	2,937	537	1269	776

If 5% of the mature timber is felled per year on average and 5% left as a long term retention, including seed trees, after 19 years the two woods will have a much more even age class distribution with 80 hectares in the 0- 20 year age classes. The remaining 208 hectares will be distributed across the older age classes and unstocked land.

The felling will generate 1437 m³ per year on average in addition to the 1200 m³ from thinning. Gradually the thinning volume will decrease as the stands are felled but the total volume of timber in the forest will rise due to the annual increment less removal. At a ballpark figure of £25/ m³ for a standing sale, felling should generate an annual income of £66,000 per year at today's prices.

The younger trees will grow faster and capture carbon more actively than trees in the 60+ age classes.

Carbon Sequestration and Mitigation

Conifers lock up carbon faster than broadleaves (A Fraser- An Option for the Management of Taymount Wood 2020), based on data supplied by FLS (Taymount Production Forecast 2019). The maximum accumulated CO₂ was found with Noble fir which had sequestered 440 tonnes CO₂ per hectare at the age of 61. The broadleaves were estimated to lock up 320 tonnes CO₂ per hectare by the same age with Scots pine, spruces and larch in between.

The conifers and birch stands largely cease locking up carbon by 60 + years of age. Oak, beech and sycamore, for example, will continue locking up carbon well beyond this age. The soil will also continue to lock up carbon and this is a large component of the carbon in a Scottish woodland.

The two woods are already approaching a steady state as far as carbon sequestration is concerned. If no felling took place from this day forwards, additional carbon would be locked up at a very slow rate, related to the slow growth rates of older trees. All the parts of the trees, including the roots and the associated fungal root networks would lock up carbon very slowly and eventually come into balance. Hence, existing woodlands cannot be used for carbon offsetting although they may continue to lock up a little CO₂.

The science of carbon sequestration is continuing. Recent research suggests that natural forests can hold 40 times more carbon than plantations. While further research from China has shown that with each additional tree species grown in a woodland, the soil carbon storage increases by around 6%. (Alan Ross, pers. comm.)

On the other hand, if the two woods were clearfelled and restocked through planting or natural regeneration, there would be a much more rapid capturing of carbon compared with the felled state. This would rise to a maximum at the point of Maximum Mean Annual Increment, or Yield Class. This rapid sequestration of carbon dioxide is balanced by the release of CO₂ from the felled timber which may be rapid, if burned or left on site, or slow if manufactured into long life products, such as pine furniture. Knowledge of the whole life of the timber is needed to follow the CO₂.

The Ecoforestry 'middle way' regime will move the wood towards a 'normal' structure with the age classes roughly balanced and a regular income ensuing. Carbon will be sequestered through the young trees growing faster than the mature trees were growing but this will be balanced by the release of CO₂ from the felled and processed timber, taken off the site. The CO₂ balance will be considered in planting, felling and restocking operations. There may also be a small increase in soil carbon. Some large specimen trees can be retained and they too will lock up a substantial amount of carbon, for some time.

There will be carbon sequestration if new areas of woodland can be planted, connecting the two woods and forming ecological corridors. Some of these could be riparian woodlands, following the watercourses, and of great value for biodiversity.

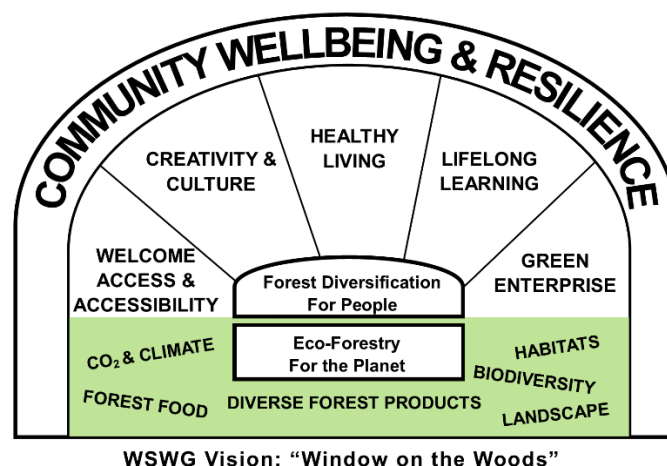
Could the two woods be more resilient to climate change than they are now? Of the current species:

- Scots pine as a native species has great adaptability although the provenance of the original seedlings is unknown. When enriching regeneration, it would be wise to use plants grown from seed collected in Deeside or Speyside, where there is a wide range of genotypes.
- Sitka spruce may be towards the eastern part of its ideal range in Scotland and does sometimes suffer from drought stress in the east. However, the two woods are fairly wet, so there is unlikely to be a problem in the foreseeable future.
- Japanese and hybrid larch is suffering badly from Phytophthora ramorum in the west of Scotland and already there are cases in the Central Belt. It shouldn't be planted as a major species, for now.
- Native broadleaves, especially oak, birch, willow and hazel, are all very adaptable and should thrive in a range of climatic conditions. Introduced species such as beech and sycamore, are moving north in their requirements and should also grow well under a range of conditions.
- Further minor diversification would be positive. Common alder and sweet chestnut could be considered. Sadly ash is not available as a restocking species for the foreseeable future due to Chalara- Ash Dieback Disease.
- A move towards Shelterwood or Small Group Silviculture, as part of Less Intensive Silvicultural Systems should further mitigate against the effects of climate change.

Community

Diverse Community Opportunities

The West Stormont Woodland Group is already actively engaged with the local community of West Stormont, within which it is embedded. A further formal community consultation based on this Feasibility Study is due to take place in February/ March.



WSWG Vision: "Window on the Woods"

One of the community consultation exercises resulted in a graphic- Window on the Woods, a sketch version of which is inserted above. The whole project is for Community Wellbeing. The management of the woodlands for biodiversity and the Planet supports this.

The image is of a window, through which the community looks at and engages with the woodlands. There are 5 main themes of which the lead theme is Healthy Living.

- **Healthy Living-** encouraging local people and others to live healthier, more active lifestyles away from the sedentary habits that most have adopted. Social isolation can be a problem, especially in rural areas with poor transport connections and dispersed populations. This and other factors, such as lack of employment and poverty, can lead to poor mental health. Overall, there is an increasing disconnect between people and nature which greater connection with the woodlands can help to overcome.
- **Welcome, Access and Accessibility-** the two woods are already attractive but under community stewardship they would become more welcoming and accessible. The main entry points could be improved and expanded. New entry points could be created, for example on the Bankfoot side of Five Mile Wood. New internal paths could be created, linking up the skeleton of forest roads in a more interesting way. The needs of people with a range of disabilities would be considered and provision made for them, as far as possible.
- **Lifelong Learning-** all age groups will be encouraged to use the woods as part of a Green Living Education Programme. The aspiration will be to provide safe and stimulating indoor and outdoor teaching locations. Teachers will be able to train for the Curriculum for Excellence. Projects could be developed together with Perth College and community groups in the wider area. There will probably be a bounce forward to outdoor spaces in the post Covid era.
- **Creativity and Culture-** body, mind and spirit activities carried out in woodland settings have been shown to be very beneficial for physical and mental well-being. Many activities such as mindfulness and forest bathing will be self-organised but there will also be scope for classes and events based around art, therapy and performance.
- **Green Enterprise-** timber and non timber forest products (wild harvest) can form the basis of a myriad of value adding enterprises. From forestry operations at a range of scales to ecological monitoring to foraging to cutting & seasoning boards to making a wide range of timber products to cooking and preserving grown and foraged food items. Few of these enterprises will be full time but could contribute to someone's income or be carried out for pleasure rather than income. This is a long way from the standard forestry model where the primary product is exported to another region and many opportunities are missed.

Seen through the Window on the Woods, the woodlands appear much more multi-dimensional than they did previously. They are well located, close to the West Stormont communities but also close to Perth, Stirling, Dundee and the A9.

Some enterprise ideas to be considered are:

- **Well-being-** art, yoga, mindfulness, forest bathing, socialising. There is much interest in these mind, body and spirit activities, combining creativity and therapy. The key ingredients are attractive surroundings and a beautiful, warm and fit for purpose building which blends into its surroundings.

- **Recreational activities-** the majority of recreation in the future will continue to be informal- walking (with or without a dog) and cycling. Horse riding will be compatible on the forest roads but not on any smaller tracks. The woods are rather too flat for the more exciting kinds of mountain biking. Dog sledging (on wheels) is an up and coming activity. The woods also lend themselves to orienteering and wayfaring as they are mostly fairly open and penetrable. There are, however, large wet holes.



- **Outdoor learning-** from pre school to school classes to students to adult groups, the woods provide many opportunities for outdoor learning. Starter packs and identified sites, based on interest in the community would be valuable. Providing for basic needs- parking, toilets, café, warm welcoming indoor space, will ensure that the woods are well used.
- **Geocaching-** the pursuit of hidden ‘treasure’ using GPS apps is a popular new recreational activity especially amongst the younger generation
- **Hutting-** Huts are small, built largely of wood, off-grid, non-rentable and would fit very well into the woodland setting. The site is within an hour’s drive of Edinburgh, Stirling, Dundee and Perth. The woods are well roaded with many opportunities for car laybys to be created. No extra roads would be required. There is a security



barrier at the two road ends and one could be put up at the level crossing entrance. The huts could be hidden amongst the trees and wouldn’t be visible in the wider landscape. There are many suitable sites and the outstanding ones are:

- In the woods both sides of the King’s Myre (photo)
- At the north end of Five Mile Wood

- **Outdoor events- weddings, namings & funerals-** with the key rights of passage increasingly moving out of churches, some will be attracted to the woods and the group could consider supplying some of this need. Many weddings have already been held in community woodland settings, such as Wooplaw Woods and Abriachan, and judged to be very successful. Namings or christenings should be relatively straightforward. Natural burials are increasing in popularity. The high water table could be an issue for burials in the forest but alternatives would be the scattering of ashes and the dedication of memorial trees. The Humanist Society would be likely to be supportive of woodland settings.



- **Training sessions-** the two woods, under community management, will come under a more detailed management regime for all aspects of the tree stands, open ground and infrastructure. Many techniques, such as respacing natural regeneration and creating paths, will need to be learned and this will create training opportunities. Again, supplying basic needs through parking, toilets, a café and indoor meeting space will create an attractive venue. Local and national organisations, such as Woodland Trust Scotland, would be likely to use these facilities.
- **Post Zoom meeting space-** everyone is looking forward to a post Covid era when face-to-face meetings will be possible again. An attractive building in a forest, with good facilities and just off the A9 could be an attractive proposition. There could be linkages with nearby Battleby and the Birnham Institute, just a few miles up the road.
- **Food growing-** fruit trees and bushes could be planted beside some of the more popular paths, where there is sufficient light. A food growing area has been identified in Taymount Wood by the group. This could be developed as a Forest Garden, using perennials and fruit & nut trees and bushes, as well as raised beds for growing vegetables. A greenhouse or polytunnel could be located on site or close to other forest buildings.

- **Foraging- non timber woodland products-** the foraging of mushrooms, berries and nuts will add to the productivity of the woodland and the well being of the collectors. There are many wild harvest products and many guides to discover them and to outline the necessary safeguards. Reforesting Scotland contributed to a 3 year European research project on the topic and the results can be seen here.



<https://reforestingscotland.org/portfolio/startree/> As well as food items, foliage and other items such as birch sap, can be gathered. Some consider game to be a wild harvest product.

- **Horse logging-** as the woods are fairly flat or gently sloping and the soils are susceptible to wetness problems, there could be a role for horses in the extraction of timber in the more sensitive areas. There are several horse logging teams in Scotland and an organisation which supports and networks them. The horses are particularly valuable when combined with events taking place in the woods. They need to be cared for and looked after so either there could be a resident team based on a farm next to the woods and travelling out to jobs in the wider area or a horse logging contractor could be brought in as required.



- **Value adding timber processing-** timber which is felled, put on a lorry and exported out of the region creates very few jobs for the local community. Converting it in a local sawmill into posts and boards, then seasoning it, adds greatly to its value. There are a number of small sawmills within a 10 mile radius of the woods, including the Taymount sawmill. Mobile sawmills, such as Woodmizer, can come in for a few days and convert a large amount of round timber into sawn timber for sale, seasoning or utilisation. Locally milled timber could be used in the construction of huts and forest buildings.
- **Woodworking-** as the principal timber growing in the woods is Scots pine, then any wood working will need to rely upon this softwood. The principal hardwood is birch, which is mostly in small diameters. Other hardwoods, such as oak, are in short supply but could be bought in from outside or scavenged from windblow and tree

surgery. Many techniques are available- turning, carving, jointing, routing, etc. Craft goods could be sold and training sessions could be organised.

- **Wood fuel-** a steady supply of wood fuel will arise from thinnings (both softwood and birch) and arisings from felling operations. This can be seasoned and sold around the surrounding area where there is a good demand. Burning wood fuel releases captured CO2 back into the atmosphere quite quickly so longer lasting products should utilise the material in preference. Some thinnings should be left as deadwood on the woodland floor to contribute to biodiversity.



- **Deer management-** the Ecoforestry model depends upon natural regeneration to restock felled and thinned sites. Some additional enrichment planting may also be desirable. To achieve this, roe deer numbers will need to be kept at a low level. This is a difficult task but modern thermal imaging equipment can allow deer to be shot at night. Deer control should be carried out by trained and licenced operators. The venison will be another sellable product. Vegetation monitoring will indicate whether cull rates are high enough. Where damage is unacceptable, temporary deer fencing can be used to give added protection for a limited period of time.
- **Habitat Monitoring-** as well as monitoring roe deer damage, vegetation monitoring can be used to track changes in the ecology of the woodlands over time. Biodiversity and naturalness should both increase. Ground vegetation will help to establish the soil fertility and wetness, allowing an Ecological Site Classification to be carried out. This will suggest suitable species for enrichment planting. Training in vegetation monitoring could be offered by the group.
- **Vegetation management-** the main problem is gorse, broom, larch, willow and birch encroaching on some of the forest roads. This should be removed and could be a good job for volunteers. The cut stems could be treated with a flame-gun (rather than herbicide) to prevent them coming back. Invasive exotic species are not currently a problem in the woods.



- **Road, drain and fence maintenance-** the forest roads are generally in good condition although minor repairs are required in places and encroaching vegetation cut back. Drains need to be maintained to take away as much excess water as possible. In some places this will result in a temporary reduction in plant diversity. External fences will also have to be maintained where livestock are an issue. Fortunately, much of the surrounding land is arable agriculture.
- **Path creation and maintenance-** the current system of forest roads is fit for purpose for forest management but inadequate for recreational access. Too many of the roads end in turning circles and the only way is back. People like circular routes and a choice of routes. Community consultation will throw up useful suggestions. Existing muddy desire lines are prime candidates for developing into all weather paths. There is no need for any sealed paths in an informal recreation area such as these woodlands. A simple signposting system would be helpful to first-time visitors.



All of the above ideas for enterprise within the woodlands are feasible but they will have to be phased in over time.

Imaginarium

A section of the WSWG website was imaginatively entitled 'Imaginarium' and generated many interesting and original ideas. They form an appendix to the SLF Position Paper (2019). Just one idea from each section is repeated here to give a flavour of the total.

- **Access-** a link with Cycling Without Age which specialises in trishaw style bikes for people of all ages
- **Education-** Eco Evening Classes and Eco Conversations
- **Nature and Wildlife-** Community wildflower project
- **Health and Well-being-** Zen trail, meditation, forest bathing
- **Activities-** Intergenerational art sessions

- **Climate Change-** Biomass and solar heating
- **Forest Food-** Fruit & nut trees and an orchard
- **Local Business-** Local processing of forest produce- timber, wood fuel, fruit and birch sap

The forthcoming community consultation and future conversations will generate many more ideas, some daft, some very worthwhile. They should be regarded as a reservoir to draw on, not a shopping list.

Facilities & Infrastructure

The aspiration is to have a suite of purpose built woodland buildings to serve as an office, meeting room, workshop space, storage, solar kiln, compost toilets, etc. located in one of the woods, probably Taymount. The group has already started to map out the possibilities. They will become reality when and if funding becomes available.

Recommended Group Structure

The West Stormont Woodland Group has clear aims and objectives, discussed above. Woodland management and community activities are the bedrock of the project. How many of the dreams and aspirations of the group and its community and how quickly they are realised will depend upon the success of fund-raising.

There will be a base-level annual income coming from timber sales (£66,000), rental from huts (10 huts @ £1000 = £10,000) and wood fuel sales (£5,000). This £81,000 income per year will take a few years to achieve but should pay for the first two posts and some external support.

Two part-time (or ideally full-time) managers will be required from Day 1:

- a Woodland Manager to oversee the management of the two woods and the infrastructure. This will include liaising with a Forest Management Company to carry out forest operations.
- a Healthy Living Coordinator to work with volunteers, neighbours, funders and all stakeholders with an interest in the project to deliver a wide range of community activities.

Over time, a team of young trained forest workers could take on some aspects of the woodland management and run the wood fuel business.

A strong committed Board will manage the organisation, provide the strategic planning and oversee the financial situation.

Resources, Constraints, Opportunities and Risks

Resources- the primary resource, the two woods, have been professionally managed. They will be handed on in good condition, once the restocking in Five Mile Wood is completed. The road system is fairly intact. There are no buildings and little other infrastructure.

The community resource is well developed. The West Stormont Woodland Group is well organised and determined to succeed. The community is generally supportive and contains within it people with a wide range of relevant skills for the project. The Shadow Board is well connected and knows where to go for advice and funding.

Constraints- the woods are dominated by Scots pine and other conifers. The current unbalanced age structure is a constraint, although it is useful having a surplus of mature trees. A balanced mixed woodland with a range of well tended hardwoods, would be even better. However, woodlands of this kind are extremely rare in Scotland and the group has to start from where it is now. Likewise, the biodiversity in the woods is only moderate due to the scale of the stands and the previous history. It will increase over time.

Part of the story of the woods is water. Water enhances biodiversity but it also makes species choice and woodland management operations more difficult. The topography, geology and soils makes water a constraint.

A final constraint is the capacity of the people involved. Lives have become busier and with Covid 19 many people in the community have been affected by the loss of loved ones or the economic impact of the lockdowns. However, communities are resilient and the group is hopeful that it can go from strength to strength.

Opportunities- the realisation is dawning amongst many people that the Climate and Ecological Emergency is real. The project provides a focus for combatting this threat and playing a small role in creating a more sustainable future in this part of Scotland. Funding streams are becoming available to support this new reality.

The local community is supportive of the project and individuals will play a role, if and when they are given the opportunity. The community has a wide range of skills and interests.

A wider group of people will be attracted to the project for its vision and for the new opportunities it offers. One of these is hutting which will attract people from further afield looking for respite or family time in a tranquil woodland setting. The hutters will be interested in the wide range of activities happening in the woodlands.

The Community Asset Transfer Scheme is a great opportunity which, hopefully, will result in community ownership of the two woods.

Risks- there are risks. But they can be mitigated.

Management risks Whilst it is expected that excellent, well-motivated staff will run this exciting project, there are potential management risks. These include paid staff lacking in skills, having negative attitudes to others or suffering from burnout. Large numbers of volunteers can require significant staff or volunteer time to organise, support and supervise. There can also be tensions at Board level. Staff recruitment is an important skill. Once recruited, paid staff need to be well supported and trained if new skills are required. Channels of communication need to be open. Volunteers need to be treated almost as staff and given good support, some of which can be mutual. All work relationships need to be based on respect. Channels of communication need to be kept open. The Board has a key role to play in steering the ship. Tensions need to be defused. Fixed terms of office allow the Board to be refreshed and new members of the community to be invited to contribute.

Operational risks include making poor decisions with regard to woodland management or any infrastructure, such as buildings, which will develop. This can be mitigated through the preparation of a Long Term Forest Plan and a Site Management Plan. All stakeholders would contribute to these. Day to day operational decisions would be based on the plans interpreted by skilled and experienced staff. There should be regular review discussions.

Market risks are relatively low. There will always be a demand for softwood timber and hardwood timber will be a niche market for the foreseeable future. Green enterprise will work hard to optimise these niche markets and business costs will grow only in tandem with increased turnover.

Physical risks are always present in land-use such as forestry and working with infrastructure, buildings and equipment. All operations will require risk assessments which will identify mitigating actions. All staff should be trained to be safety conscious and to be able to respond as first-aiders.

Financial risks will increase as the project increases in scale. One of the responsibilities of the Board will be to have an overview of the financial situation and to ensure that appropriate financial systems are in place.

Planning and regulatory risks such as obtaining planning permission for new buildings, including huts, can be overcome through making professional applications. External skill sets may be needed in some situations and should be built into the costs, as well as planning fees. Permission to fell trees will be given through a Long Term Forest Plan approved by Scottish Forestry. The UK Forestry Standard will be adhered to, possibly through UKWAS designation. Other appropriate regulations, such as Health and Safety legislation will be abided by. There are no known environmental designations.

Sustainable Development Goals and Scottish Government Outcomes

The Scottish Government in recent years has based its National Performance Framework (<https://nationalperformance.gov.scot/>) partly on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It intends to achieve all of the goals by 2030. Some are easier to achieve than others. Every project relates to some but probably not all of the goals. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals are below.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. No Poverty | 10.Reduced Inequalities |
| 2. Zero Hunger | 11.Sustainable Cities and Communities |
| 3. Good Health and Well Being | 12.Responsible Production and Consumption |
| 4. Quality Education | 13.Climate Action |
| 5. Gender Equality | 14.Life Below Water |
| 6. Clean Water and Sanitation | 15.Life on Land |
| 7. Affordable and Clean Energy | 16.Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions |
| 8. Decent Work and Economic Growth | 17.Partnerships for the Goals |
| 9. Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure | |



The Scottish Government has taken the 17 SDGs to inform the National Performance Framework which has 11 National Outcomes. These describe the kind of Scotland the Scottish Government wishes to see, aligned with an international sustainable development context. <https://nationalperformance.gov.scot/national-outcomes> The relevance of the West Stormont project to the 11 National Outcomes is now discussed:

1. **Children and Young People-** the project is for the benefit of all ages and young people are a crucial group. There will be recreational and educational activities targeted at this group. They will be consulted on the future of the woodlands.
2. **Communities-** this is a community project and its core driver is the well-being of the local community.
3. **Culture-** the project will be enjoyed by everyone in the local community, seeking to be inclusive of all cultures to be found there. Cultural values will be expressed creatively.
4. **Economy-** green enterprise will add value to primary products such as timber and wild harvest, through processing in the forest. Land-based, artistic, therapeutic and educational skills will be rewarded financially where possible. Rents from huts and other forest buildings will contribute to the forest economy.
5. **Education-** life-long learning is another pane of the window on the woods. All ages will have the opportunity to learn from the project and share skills. All will be informed of the Scottish Right to Responsible Access.
6. **Environment-** the protection and enhancement of the forest environment lies at the heart of the project.
7. **Fair Work and Business-** enterprise and innovation will be encouraged and the workplace will be safe, fair and inclusive for all, as far as is possible.
8. **Health-** the active enjoyment of the woodlands will be encouraged. Activities, paid and unpaid, will take place in a positive, supportive environment. Everyone will be respected, leading to good mental health for all.
9. **Human Rights-** the human rights of all will be respected.
10. **International-** the project will be a beacon regionally, nationally and internationally.
11. **Poverty-** the project will play its part in combatting poverty in the local area.

In conclusion, the West Stormont project is closely aligned with the Scottish National Performance Framework and contributes to all of the National Outcomes.

Conclusion

The two woods are relatively small outliers in the Forestry and Land Scotland portfolio and are currently managed as one unit. They are described in the Forest Plan (2012- 2022) as 'neither particularly interesting nor offensive, internally or externally.' The two woods complement each other and are close together. It is recommended that WSWG tries to buy both woods rather than one or the other. Together they would require a similar amount of organisational input for a much larger and more flexible resource.

In the hands of the West Stormont Woodland Group they would be the jewels in the crown of a wider project to bring many benefits to the local community. The lead theme is Healthy Living.

The woods themselves have been professionally managed. They are well established and have already entered their second rotation in places. Scots pine is the dominant species, complemented by significant areas of other conifers and broadleaved species. Scots pine, here with higher-than-average growth rates, has good commercial value as well as the biodiversity benefits of being a native species.

There should be sufficient annual income from timber sales, hut rentals and wood fuel sales (£81,000 after 2 or 3 years) to pay for an initial two paid posts- a Woodland Manager and a Healthy Living Coordinator. There will be opportunities for a large number of volunteers to participate in the project.

Naturalness is increasing throughout the two woods and they are attractive, as demonstrated by the number of people already visiting. They are flexible too and can provide a natural environment and backdrop for a large range of community inspired activities and events, some of which will support local employment.

The project accords well with the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework.

The West Stormont Woodland Group has shown determination and resilience in bringing the project to its current state of development. It is well embedded in the local community and amongst its members and supporters, has people with a deep knowledge of forestry, land management, ecology and community development. It is also well connected with external sources of advice and expertise.

There are risks in all areas but they can be mitigated.

The group has proved that it is committed to the success of this project in the long term. The climate and ecological challenges which the world faces at present are the context for this project. WSWG gets that and would use the resource of the two woods as tools for more sustainable living in the West Stormont area, linking in with other initiatives in Scotland and around the world.



West Stormont Woodland Group

Business Plan Appendix BP2: WSWG Stakeholder Report

1. WSWG Development Phase (2018-2022)

Community engagement has been a core part of the WSWG journey from when local residents discovered that Taymount and Five Mile Woods were being put up for sale by Forestry and Land Scotland to raise funds for the New Woodland Investment Programme.

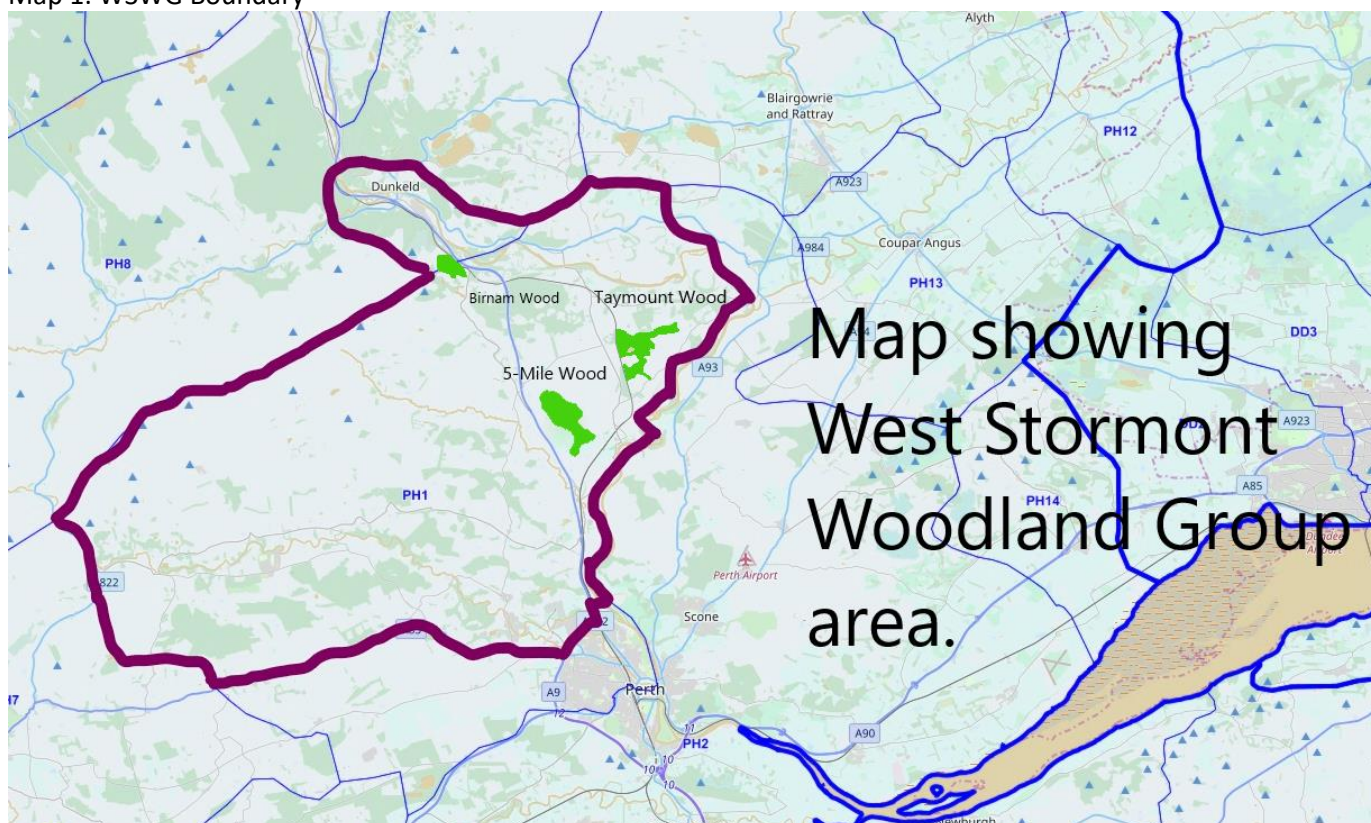
Under the Community Empowerment Act (Scotland) 2015, when a public body such as FLS wishes to dispose of assets, local communities have first refusal. This right to buy is known as Asset Transfer. The Community Asset Transfer Scheme is the FLS scheme for communities to buy their assets, usually woodlands. There is a presumption in favour of success for communities, but it is not guaranteed and the local community must present a proposal which is viable and plausible, practically, financially and administratively.

It also requires evidence of demonstrable community input into the project development and clear support for the proposal being put forward to the CATS Panel, which this Stakeholder Report seeks to do.

1.1 Community engagement and involvement

1.1.1 Demographics of the WSWG core area

Map 1: WSWG Boundary



Map showing
West Stormont
Woodland Group
area.

Taymount and Five Mile Wood are located between four main rural settlements: Stanley, Bankfoot, Murthly and Kinclaven.

Stanley and Kinclaven are in Stanley and District Community Council area
 Bankfoot is in Auchtergaven Community Council area
 Murthly is in Spittalfield and District Community Council area.

Taymount Wood lies wholly within Stanley and District.
 The southern part of Five Mile Wood lies in Stanley and District.
 The northern part of Five Mile Wood lies in Auchtergaven.

Due to enthusiasm from people in an outer ring of nearby settlements, WSWG extended its boundary of its core area to include all or part of those geographical community council areas as shown below.

Due to recent changes in PKC’s methodologies for recording demographic data, it has been quite difficult to get precise population figures for the different settlements, so the following are our best estimates.

Community Council	Area (km ²)	Population share in WSWG area (estimated PKC 2020)	
• Stanley & District	35 km ²	1,850	
Subtotal A	35 km²		
• Auchtergaven/Bankfoot	60 km ²	1,600	
Subtotal B	95 km²		
• Luncarty, Redgorton & Moneydie	29 km ²	1,950	
Subtotal C	124 km²		
• Spittalfield & District of 108 km ²	est 10 km ²	est 300 (of 1,950)	
• Dunkeld & Birnam of 326 km ²	est 10 km ²	est 1,000 (of 2,150)	
• Methven of 180 km ²	est 60km ²	est 300 (of 5,150)	
Total WSWG core area	204 km²	7,000	(c. 3,250 households)
• Strathtay	710 km²	12,841	18 people/km ²
• Perth and Kinross	5,300 km²	151,910	29 people/km ²
• Scotland	80,077 km²	5,470,000	68 people/km ²

1.1.2 The Breadth of Support for the WSWG Project

Through its diverse Community Engagement Programme since September 2018, WSWG has secured huge support for and contributions to the project to date.

- The original Expression of Interest to FLS was supported by 186 local signatories in a matter of days, including key community organisations and local politicians as well.
- Initial Working Group comprised people from Kinclaven, Stanley, Murthly and Luncarty – 15 individuals
- Steering Group - many participants over time, rolling average 8 people
 Shadow Board – no-obligation widening of participation at Steering Group level

Board of Trustees – 6 nominated and elected at GM June 2022/co-opted by Trustees

- Membership Scheme at December 2022 (free)
 - 505 of which 351 Members (resident within WSWG area), 154 Associates (resident outwith)
 - c. 100 children under 16 signed up within family membership
 - c. 200 additional supporters and contacts
- Local community organisations:
 - Stanley and District Community Council (currently disbanded)
 - Auchtergaven (Bankfoot) Community Council
 - Luncarty, Redgorton and Moneydie Community Council
 - Spittalfield and District Community Council (currently disbanded)
 - Dunkeld and Birnam Community Council
 - West Stormont Historical Society (WSHS)
 - Spittalfield & District Active Recreation Sports Hub (SADAR)
 - Strathtay Action Partnership
 - Bankfoot Gala
 - Murthly Gala
- Primary Schools
 - Stanley Primary
 - Auchtergaven Primary
 - Murthly Primary
 - Luncarty Primary
 - Glendelvine Primary
 - Logiealmond Primary
 - Royal School of Dunkeld
- Businesses
 - Active Kids
 - Ballathie House Hotel
 - Taymount Sawmill
 - Aviva Perth
 - Claire Dalby, Botanical Artist (free design of WSWG logo)
 - Stanley Store
 - Bankfoot and Murthly NISA Stores
 - Gerry Burke TV (drone photographs Five Mile Wood)
 - Highland Community Energy Society
 - Many others for displaying WSWG posters
 - Many others for participating in WSWG events
- Organisations from wider networking
 - Dronley Community Woodland (initial mentor to WSWG)
 - Mountblair Community Development Trust (Dalrulzion CATS project – bid withdrawn)
 - Aigas Community Woodland
 - Borders Forest Trust
 - Perth and Kinross Health & Social Care Partnership
 - PKC Community Education
 - Tayside Biodiversity Partnership
 - Perth and Kinross Countryside Trust
 - Perthshire Nature Connections Partnership
 - Perth Sustainable Small City Initiative
 - Care and Wellbeing CIC
 - Dunkeld and Birnam Climate Café

Energy4All
Highland Community Energy Society
Growbiz
Community Woodland Association

1.1.3 Community Engagement and Involvement Methodologies

- Outreach activities
 - Community Monthly Updates (circulation: website + full emailing list + poster round of 25)
 - Member Notices – email (WSWG and relevant third-party information and notices)
 - Deliveries of information by post or by hand to members not on-line
 - Margaret Lear WSWG Blog
 - Barefoot Woodland Wanderer WSWG Blog
 - Community Council meetings, area-wide; regular reporting attendance at Stanley pre covid
 - WSWG website – relaunched February 2021 (funded by PKC Community Investment Fund)
 - WSWG Facebook page
 - Imaginarium (website, events, consultations)
 - Publicity - The Bridge on-line Dunkeld and Birnam newsletter, The Atholl Quair, Perthshire Advertiser, Courier, Heartland FM, North Perthshire Locality Newsletter, other community newsletters, etc
 - Flyers
 - Membership Letter to families in 7 local Primary Schools
 - Murthly Gala 2018 & 2019 and Bankfoot Gala 2019
 - Stanley Development Trust AGM 2018
 - Stalls 2019 and 2022 - Birnam Big Climate Conversation, Gazebo Sundays (3 times) - Active Kids, Stanley Swift Awareness Week, Aviva Perth, Picnic on the Pitch (Spittalfield), Stanley Store, Bankfoot and Murthly Nisa Stores.
 - Talks and Workshops – Luncarty Lunch Club, CWA 2021 & 2022 Conferences, From the Ground Up (pre COP26 Workshop 2020), Tayside Recorders, Tayside Biodiversity Partnership Joint Farmland, Upland & Woodland Working Group, Perth Sustainable Small City Biodiversity Conference 2022
 - Litter-picking and leafleting for WSWG - Conservative Party volunteers
 - WSWG Litter-picking for C406 Tackle Litter Group
 - Enclosed noticeboard at Taymount Wood main entrance
 - DIY noticeboards at west entrance to Taymount and south and north entrances to Five Mile
 - Royal Mail door-drop leaflets for Community Consultations
 - Expressions of support: WSWG logo, children’s art, poems, art and craft pieces, song composed for WSWG “This Tender Land”, historical research, freebies (pyrograph logo badges & fridge magnets) and fundraising merchandise (slide bracelets), event feedback, letters and emails. For examples of contributions see 1.1.3 below and [Community - West Stormont Woodland Group](#)
- Events (free)
 - Guided Walks – October 2018, July 2019:
Feeling Good in the Woods 2019 (number of sessions) – funded by PKC Community Investment Fund (*Total participants: 418 against target of 150-200*)
 - Mindfulness Walks (4)
 - Herbal day (2)
 - Forest School (4)
 - Bushcraft for Brownies and Rainbows (4)
 - Woodland Art (2)
 - Foraging (1)
 - Minibus Picnic Lunch and Picnic Tea for elderly (2)
 - Cycling Without Age for less mobile (1)

- Seated Mindfulness for less mobile (1)
- Woodland in a Backpack – 10 sessions at 7 local Primary Schools & Nurseries
- Citizen Science (eg Grow Project)
- Community tree planting 2019 & 2020 – under Big Climate Fightback, sponsored by energy company OVO and The Conservation Volunteers
- Access Recces 2020 and 2021: infrastructure improvement and access management planning Taymount and Five Mile Woods
- Covid recovery – socially distanced events 2020-21
 - Little Acorns Project
 - Tayside Biodiversity Partnership's 21 Days of May
 - woodland walks – bird-spotting, WSWG Proposal catch-up
 - Survey Skill Share
 - iRecord promotion
 - Carol Singing in Taymount Wood
- Protect a Wild Tree - tubing natural regeneration in Taymount Wood 2021 (2)

1.1.4 Some expressions of support along the way

Member response to WSWG viewing Taymount and Five Mile Wood as One Wood With A Gap In The Middle

I realise that WSWG must concentrate on the woods that it was established to acquire & manage, but I think the opportunity should really be seen as *three* woods with a couple of gaps. Whatever benefits are to be gained by considering Five-Mile and Taymount Woods together can only be magnified by including the Woodland Trust's nearby Kinclaven Bluebell Wood. I think a great start would be if P&K Council and landowners could be encouraged to work together to close the short gaps between all three woods in the Core Path network, reinstating the historic route connecting Bankfoot, Airntully and Kinclaven Church.

Message from Wee Adventures when posting WSWG Monthly Community Update for October 2019 on their FB page

Have you heard of the West Stormont Woodland Group yet? They are an amazing group of Perthshire locals bringing huge energy to a Community Association whose aim is to bring Five Mile Wood and Taymount Wood (near Stanley) into community ownership.

As part of their 'Feeling Good in the Woods' project they have been promoting broad community access to the woods with a variety of fantastic sessions for all ages. We are delighted to have played a part in this with Bush Craft sessions for local Rainbow and Brownie groups and a series of 'Woodland in a Backpack' sessions for local Nurseries and Primary Schools.

It's all very positive! Check them out, like their page, become a member, get involved and help them with their mission if you can 😊

Message from member in response to Forest School taster session.

Thank you so much for sending us the photos of our time in Forest School at Taymount Woods. I'm impressed that you managed to identify us in those photos - you were correct in every case.

We all enjoyed it, in fact toyed with coming back for the afternoon, but tired toddlers don't always respond as you'd hope, so it seemed safer to make the most of the weather at home. Several of the ideas were carried on, though. I.... made potions in the garden, we finished off winding the coloured wool onto the 'magic wand', and S.... and I practised our wild flower identification. I have every intention of repeating the Mud Kitchen, which was the highlight for I..., once I have gathered the necessary pots and utensils.

The great thing for us is that we can pop along to Taymount Woods whenever we have the grandchildren with us.

S.... had a good chat with Wild Sparks and would have liked I.... and E.... to attend their Forest School if she lived here.

Messages at Leila Mayne's Herbal Workshop

Thank you for the herbal medicinal walk. Was very interesting and enjoyable. Would love to learn more.

Herbal Event - thoroughly enjoyable and informative.

Thank you for the lovely day. It was very interesting. It would be good to see the medicinal plants not go to waste.

Email from new WSWG member, November 2021:

Dear Friends

Thank you very much for what you are doing to secure Five Mile Wood and Taymount Woods for the community. My husband and I have just retired to (the area). We have two border collies and frequently walk in these woods. We greatly appreciate these natural surroundings and the rewilding that is taking place. These areas of biodiversity are vital for our planet as well as being wonderful places for recreation and education.

Thank you for all you are doing.

Please could you tell me if there is anyone who is concerned about the disappearance of hedges, dykes and grass verges in the area.

Just near our cottage in the last few years we have noticed two major hedge and dyke removals to make vast fields. Just below our cottage is now a single field of 180 acres we are told. Last year all this area was given over to peas. No biodiversity here and fewer hedges for birds and other forms of wildlife. From (here) we used to enjoy a walk towards Five Mile Wood over a farm track which linked up to another track to bring us back (via) Stanley. A hedge, dyke and verge have been removed and the area ploughed up making this circular walk impossible. The farm track by a pond has also fallen into disrepair and fences removed.

I would be grateful to link up with anyone who has similar concerns.

1.2 WSWG Research: Surveys, Studies and Consultations

1.2.1 Landowner and Neighbour Surveys 2019-20 – 21 surveys

WSWG produced a short Survey Questionnaire to give neighbouring landowners and householders to Taymount and Five Mile Woods an opportunity to express their opinions and concerns about the prospect of community ownership and possible implications, positive and negative, for them. The survey was carried out through face-to-face interviews in which most landowners and near neighbours to Taymount Wood and one landowner and two near neighbours to Five Mile Wood participated in the survey. (WSWG has additionally been in close contact with other neighbours not involved in this particular survey.)

Summary of feedback

There was no significant variation in responses from properties adjoining Taymount or Five Mile Woods, so they have been considered together. Three local landowners and one business owner participated, therefore points from businesses and larger-scale landowners have been placed into one

Benefits expected:

RESIDENTIAL/DOMESTIC NEIGHBOURS	LANDOWNERS
Access improvement to/in woods: paths & trails, parking. For all ages and abilities	Higher footfall could mean more trade for local businesses
New activities & events: eg. foraging, mountain biking; bushcraft, archery, Christmas/other woodland craft-making	
Bins – addressing litter & dog waste issues	
Expansion of “natural” woodland with wildlife benefits- more biodiversity	
Opportunities for knowledge-sharing/education- venue for learning, leisure & well-being. Also for local schools forest education	
Opportunities for community businesses/outputs to benefit community; support for existing local businesses eg. Local fuel wood, cycle hire, green economy, green tourism	
Creating a sense of identity for Kinclaven as a dispersed population especially; bringing communities together, social interaction	
Sense of ownership = engagement & community cohesion	
Sense of safety from unwanted development over which residents have no control	
Public perception of woods – not just trees	
Sustainable revenue supply	
Better path signage	
Picnic areas	
Local climate action focus	

Drawbacks and Negative issues raised:

RESIDENTIAL/DOMESTIC NEIGHBOURS	BUSINESSES & LANDOWNERS
Parking problems – attempted access where parking/turning impractical or dangerous	Health & safety issues if access assumed over farmed land – need for signs and warning when crops sprayed
Loss of privacy	Unauthorised & irresponsible access: vehicles, pedestrians
Cars using private tracks	Safety issues for users from wet ground/falling trees
Littering and disposal of waste	Risks to farm livestock in adjacent fields and woodland from more people & dogs
Attempted access by vehicles	Perception of more need for control of deer (plus other species considered a threat to crops) by farm estates
Safety issues (slips, trips & falls, boggy ground); health issues (Lyme disease)	May need to re-route or open rights of way to avoid larger numbers of visitors going through or very close to private property/farmyards
Path maintenance issues	Need potentially for extra keeping on estate to control the increase in “vermin”
Lack of toilet facilities	
Contractual & financial obligations for community – risk of divisive conflicts	
Volunteer burden/burnout	
General perception by many residents that more people in woods could have negative impacts	

Quick takeaway: overall support from residential neighbours but with valid concerns. No relevant business info. Landowners see negatives, but farms have valid concerns. We may disagree with one major landowner's description of deer and other wildlife as "vermin" whose increase is inevitable and detrimental; however, deer control may indeed need to be stepped up if tree planting is to be successful – this should be turned into a positive benefit if it occurs. Unease over future liabilities and management from many – how will this work? Given length of time spent by most visitors at present, are toilet facilities necessary? This should be monitored. Can we negotiate at least limited access over arable land with landowner – permissive paths? – rather than make right of access a divisive issue? (No-one wants to stroll through a field of glyphosate anyway.)

Questions/issues WSWG will need to address if taking ownership:

- Need to notify neighbours of felling/other forest operations ie. Good lines of communication
- Need to ensure whole community aware of "how it works" – responsibilities and financial implications of community ownership – engage in management where possible
- Address need for access for all – across range of ages/abilities and any social barriers. Engage with all ages through involving differing groups – whole community must buy into it. Keep wide range of types and duration of activities, and avoid clashes between incompatible uses.
- Address all issues relating to increase in numbers using woods. Some solutions could be to:
 - a. Design path routes, events and trails to avoid intruding on neighbours' privacy (negotiation with neighbours crucial)
 - b. Provide clear and adequate parking in designated sites – and don't provide any on or by private roads/tracks
 - c. Vehicle barriers
 - d. Provide waste disposal bins at car parks at least
 - e. Signage for dogs to be kept on lead in areas close to livestock
 - f. Risk-assess on a regular, dynamic basis, and take action where necessary eg. Warn of tick season, repair or close damaged paths, remove rubbish.

Volunteers will always be vital – look after volunteers well to keep up morale and reward them. However, funding should be sought to contract or employ professionals to carry out major tasks which could be burdensome or disheartening to some volunteers. Have range of work and tasks so no-one feels they have to do everything. Woodland Trust at bluebell woods is a good model. Respondents also have an expectation of better communication/access routes between settlements – the West Stormont Connects vision.

1.2.2 Gateway User Surveys taken at main entrances to woods (2019-20) – 43 surveys

WSWG produced a one-page Survey Questionnaire to find out:

- number of adults, children, dogs, horses, wheelchairs
- means of transport to the woods
- purpose and duration of visit
- frequency of visits
- postcode and how long to travel to the woods
- what aspects of the woods they particularly value
- did they know the wood was for sale
- do they support community ownership
- would they join WSWG /like to be on the mailing list
- other comments

Summary of feedback

Taymount Wood

Timings of visits were not taken into account as there is insufficient data to make observations, but the surveys were undertaken at differing times of day, days of the week and in differing weather conditions and represent a fair sample.

Most users spent 11 – 20 minutes to get to the wood, using differing transport but the vast majority by car. A few had a journey of under 5 minutes. A number of users had incorporated the wood into a longer walk or cycle ride, rather than specifically visiting Taymount Wood.

A large proportion of those surveyed stated they were regular users. Most spent under an hour, with the largest number spending under 30 minutes, at the wood. Visitors spending longer were rare. There were several users who said they used the car park merely as a pit-stop, to make phone calls, have a coffee etc.

Ease of access, specifically parking, and convenience were the things which most attracted these visitors, though tranquillity, wildlife and landscape aesthetics also were quite important. The main purposes given by users for visiting were to walk, mostly but not always with dogs, to escape from town and get some fresh air. Landscape, scenery and taking photos were the next most popular purposes. A smaller number stated their purpose was to watch and enjoy wildlife, or to enjoy trees and wildflowers. There was a small number of runners and one horse-rider. Specific mention was made by one group of walkers of the contribution of the wood to physical and mental well-being, especially as a group activity.

Some of those surveyed referred specifically to King's Myre Loch. This was appreciated especially as a destination – a focal point of their walk. It is likely that most users did not spend enough time in the wood to actually reach King's Myre.

Although easy access was a plus point in terms of parking and the main path, the overgrown nature of some paths, mud and prohibitive fencing in places was seen as a major impediment to access by some. One survey identified a need for a path network – of easy, accessible paths and less formal trails or “escape routes”.

Conclusions on Visitor Experiences at Taymount Wood

It would seem that most visitors do not spend very long at the wood and therefore miss most of its features and attractions. This could be due to the lack of a circular route, uncertainties about whether the main uphill track from the car park was “going anywhere” and also that most visitors, judging from the time travelled, were not extremely local so unlikely to have explored the wood on a regular basis. It is noteworthy that comments from people in the wood as part of a longer expedition were more appreciative of its landscape, botanical and wildlife interest (although more critical of undefined and difficult paths).

From this, priorities to enhance user experience at Taymount Wood should include:

- **A path network, incorporating large/small circular routes**
- **Better signage/maps**
- **Removal of obstacles to path usage such as old fencing, overgrown vegetation, mud**
- **Focal destination (one group referred to an information cabin with seating at Dunnet Forest)**

Five Mile Wood

Timings of visits were not taken into account as there was insufficient data to make observation, but surveys were undertaken at differing times of day, days of the week and in differing weather conditions, representing a fair sample.

Visitors to Five Mile Wood surveyed had mostly spent less than 5 minutes getting there (8). Four had taken 5-10 minutes, while only six had taken longer. Although most travel was by car, we can infer that most of these visitors live nearby, and this is their “local wood”. Only three of those surveyed stayed for less than 30 minutes, with the bulk of respondents spending around an hour or between 1-2 hours. A few spent longer. Most had come specifically to the wood, rather than called in on the way to somewhere else.

The features which attracted those surveyed were very varied, but ease of access was by far the most often-given reason, together with convenience, it being local to their residence. After that, wildlife, the trees and type of woodland were appreciated, along with peace and tranquillity. One respondent mentions the smell of the trees, and another pin-pointed shelter, as desirable features.

As with Taymount Wood, the contribution of walking here to physical fitness and mental well-being was remarked on. There was a small number of runners and one horse-rider. Five Mile wood is particularly popular for dog-walking, including commercial walking and training. One commercial trainer surveyed also enjoys wildlife watching, and appreciated the open-ness of the woodland landscape for ensuring the dogs are readily in sight and thus do not surprise or disturb wildlife. It was commented that several local dog walking businesses would strongly support community ownership. Wildlife, flora and fauna, scenery, taking photographs and fresh air were the other main activities aside from walking, with foraging for wild food also mentioned.

Impediments to enjoyment of Five Mile Wood were the poor accessibility of some paths, and a tendency for fly tipping at the car park. It was suggested that future plans should avoid the wood becoming a stop-off for motorists on the A9 heading north.

Conclusions on Visitor Experiences in Five Mile Wood

The time most people spend at Five Mile Wood correlates with the time taken to undertake the main circular route round the centre of the wood. This route is well-known locally and clear on maps. Thus, it encourages longer visits, from mostly local people. Circular paths are popular – one comment was that it was “a good walking route”. Five Mile Wood also has smaller circular paths and alternative routes which are beginning to become established. However, certain access problems remain, and the centre of the wood lacks a focal point.

Future plans for visitors should include:

- **Clarification and emphasis of the developing path network**
- **Improved access at the north end, the centre, and other key points**
- **Some signage and perhaps finger-posted walks**
- **Improvement/enlargement of car park**
- **Address issues of fly-tipping/litter/dog waste**

OBSERVATIONS ON BOTH SETS OF DATA

There appears to be a correlation between distance travelled and time spent in both woods, people coming short distances staying longer. Perhaps this is explained by local people being more aware of the attractions of the site and having explored more, therefore find more to see and do. In both woods, most respondents stated they are regular visitors, and there seems to be a link between time spent/distance walked and how regularly people come. This suggests the woods are attractive destinations for people locally. All participants in the survey supported the idea of community ownership of both woods, with the proviso in one case that support would be subject to what purpose the community found for the wood. Comments were made at both sites that the woods should not be “over-managed” or changed in a way which would detract from their tranquillity and wildlife value. A back-seat approach, led by nature, seemed to be favoured.

Addendum

- Many users were already WSWG members; others signed up; others took website details; one wanted to see WSWG plans before supporting fully; one Fifer wouldn't join but thought it was a great idea; another said the noticeboard kept him abreast of the project but that he was not a “joiner”.
- Some had attended WSWG events.
- The one person who advised beware of opening up as an A9 stop-off point felt the car park area could offer an informal road tourer chemical toilet emptying site.
- Destination site for formal Walking Groups – some car share from meeting points eg Broxden P&R. One group commented on the challenges in accessing Taymount Wood from the surrounding fields.
- One expressed wish for improved path links eg between Taymount Wood and Kinclaven Bluebell Wood.
- Not all visitors during survey periods participated in the survey. The car numbers listed pertains only to the people who completed the surveys, not the numbers present in the car parks.
- One user suggested solar panels as a possible development.
- One user said they were 110% behind WSWG's efforts to bring Taymount and Five Mile Woods into community ownership.
- No-one surveyed had come with a wheelchair.

Summary of Gateway User Survey Sessions undertaken by WSWG

TAYMOUNT WOOD										
Date	Survey period	Surveys	Adults	Children	Dogs	Cars	Bike	Foot	Bus	Horse
09.06.19 (Sunday)	5 - 6pm	3	4	0	2	2	0	1	0	0
16.06.19 (Sunday) *	10am - 4pm	0	22	6	8	32	2	2	0	0
17.06.19 (Monday)	4.20 – 6pm	5	7	2	5	5	0	0	0	0
18.06.19 (Tuesday)	2.30 - 3.30pm	3	5	0	0	3	0	0	0	0
13.07.19 (Saturday)	10am -12pm	2	3	0	0	1	0	2	0	0
13.07.19 (Saturday)	1.15 - 2pm	1	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
25.07.19 (Thursday)	11.30am	1	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	0
25.07.19 (Thursday)	2 - 4pm	4	5	0	2	3	1	0	0	0
08.02.20 (Saturday)	10am– 2.40pm	4	17	0	3	5	0	1	2	1
TOTALS		23	66	8	23	48	3	6	2	1

** This data in the table above relates to a visitor head count during a period when there was a WSWG event in Taymount Wood. It excludes those participating in the WSWG event. 32 cars relates to both visitor numbers and event participants. No survey questionnaires were carried out on this occasion.*

FIVE MILE WOOD										
Date	Survey period	Surveys	Adults	Children	Dogs	Cars	Bike	Foot	Bus	Horse
09.06.19 (Sunday)	10am– 1.15pm	7	11	0	5	7				
20.06.19 (Thursday)	1.10 - 2.10pm	3	3	0	9	3				
13.07.19 (Saturday)	12.10- 12.50pm	1	1	0	1	1				
18.07.19 (Thursday)	10 – 11am	2	3	0	6	2				
15.02.20 (Saturday)	10.30am- 1.30pm	7	12	5	9	8				
TOTALS		20	30	5	30	21				

1.2.3 Access Audits

With so many members interested in the potential access improvements which could be delivered under community ownership, it was important to involve a mix of people with different expertise and perspectives on the matter. Despite eight such members being poised for the task, early attempts to deliver a cohesive programme of access audits and workshops were impacted by circumstances. Eventually the task was done in a more piecemeal but equally effective way, involving separate small groups of very local individuals undertaking recces within and between the woods as covid lockdown eased. Their appraisals and plans formed the basis of the Welcome, Access and Accessibility Programmes for Taymount and Five Mile Woods which are presented, costed and scheduled according to priority in the WSWG Proposal 2022. The auditing and planning processes sought to respect the privacy and security of residential properties in the immediate vicinity of the woods.

1.2.4 Key Studies by WSWG Volunteers

Sustainable Timber Production

As part of the considerable discussion as to the optimum woodland management system to put forward in the WSWG Proposal in terms of the relative balance between timber production and nature recovery, WSWG Associate, Professor Alastair Fraser produced a very valuable report looking at a long-term option for sustainable timber production and carbon sequestration in the growing crop for Taymount Wood, entitled “An Option for the Management of Taymount Wood”. A Woodland Management Plan based on those sustainable timber production principles was then drawn up by the WSWG Forestry Sub-Group for consideration.

Woodland Management for Nature Recovery

Woodland Management Plans with nature recovery at their heart were drawn up by WSWG ecologist, Alan Ross. These incorporated Proforestry principles plus the concept of Living Forest products which would enhance and diversify the woodland ecology and provide income generation, alongside a limited area dedicated to sustainable timber production under LISS, thus allowing reduced reliance on timber extraction and sales over time. The added contribution this approach would make to soil carbon storage as well as the above ground storage in the woodlands is one reason WSWG decided to choose this management option for both woods under community ownership. See WSWG Woodland Management Plans and accompanying maps.

Botanical Survey

In 2021, Dunkeld and Birnam based WSWG member and professional ecologist, Adrian Davis, carried out a Phase 1 Habitat and botanical survey of Taymount and Five Mile Woods for WSWG, waiving his fee, which was very much appreciated.

Hedgehog Recovery Plan

This valuable report for WSWG by The Conservation Volunteers (TCV), which includes a statement of support for the WSWG Project, promotes action to provide a range of nesting opportunities, high quality feeding areas and ensuring varied habitats are well-connected, highlighting how well the WSWG Woodland Management Plan will deliver these aims for hedgehog recovery in the local area.

Case Study - developing community woodland infrastructure

In 2021, Lisa Davidson, a WSWG member with an MSc in Ecotourism, volunteered to research examples of ecotourism and other development projects undertaken by different community woodlands in Scotland, producing a very useful background report "Development of Infrastructure in Scottish Community Woodlands: A case study analysis".

Historical Research

Eminent professional landscape historian and WSWG Associate, Christopher Dingwall sourced a range of archives to produce a superb academic report for WSWG entitled "Notes on the Early History of Five Mile Wood & Taymount Wood" with no fee, for which WSWG is extremely appreciative.

WSWG member, Hugh Green, donated the excellent and fascinating research he did a decade ago on the old road through Five Mile Wood.

WSWG member, Laura Burns, also passed on to WSWG, from family anecdotal records and discoveries on the internet, information on Camp 53 - "The Newfie Camp" – which was located at Taymount Wood and manned by Canadian loggers from Newfoundland as part of the war effort from 1940-41.

WSWG would like to thank all the above people for their extremely helpful research contributions to the WSWG Project.

1.2.5 Community-wide Consultations

- Community Consultation 1: WSWG Draft Proposal - February-March 2021
- Community Consultation 2: WSWG Proposal 2022 "*Going Forward*" - October 2022

Both these on-line community consultations were widely publicised to members and non-members alike through email, facebook, Royal Mail door-drop leaflet in Strathtay ward, local and posters. The few members not on email were sent survey packs by post with an SAE to return the completed survey form. The surveys were primarily based on 5-option tick box responses to a range of questions, from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree, with the opportunity to add comments at each stage.

The purpose of Community Consultation 1 was to consult on the content of the Draft Proposal and to use comments both for good ideas which came forward and for discerning the general steer from the community as to what was finding favour and, just as importantly, to identify aspects which met sufficient doubt or disapproval to merit being dropped from the Proposal.

The purpose of Community Consultation 2 was primarily to endorse the final WSWG Proposal *Going Forward* as the basis for the CATS Application. In that survey, the value of the comments was primarily in terms of reiterating the degree of support or otherwise from respondents.

There are too many comments from both consultations to include with this report but WSWG appraised how supportive or otherwise they were by mapping all comments received against four headings:

Positive Positive with advisory note/concerns General Negative

Whilst comments from all respondents were assessed in this way in both consultations, for Consultation 1 we have summarised below those from Stanley & District (including Kinclaven and Airntully) and Auchtergaven (Bankfoot) as the two community council areas in which the woods are actually located.

Community Consultation 1 (4-week period February-March 2021)

- 😊 367 Surveys completed – representing 769 adults and 131 children
- 😊 More than half of respondents were not members and 100 new members joined WSWG
- 😊 92% of respondents agree or strongly agree with WSWG’s Eco-forestry proposals for the woods
- 😊 95% agree or strongly agree that the woods should be managed for climate and biodiversity
- 😊 95% agree or strongly agree with WSWG’s proposals for Welcome, Access and Accessibility in the woods
- 😊 Walking was the favourite activity of all, with nature walks in next highest demand, followed by environmental education, cycling and foraging. Over 40% of respondents selected the following as activities which appealed to them most: dogwalking, local history, biodiversity surveying and monitoring, children’s events, family events, forest school and bushcraft/outdoor adventure.
- 😊 Overwhelming support for working with local businesses as well as creating jobs and community enterprise.
- 😊 Bothy and Hutting in Taymount Wood were more popular than Wigwams in Five Mile Wood.
- 😊 Only 0.83% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with WSWG’s Vision for the woods.

Summary of Responses to Multiple Choice Questions in Community Consultation 1

		Responders		Proportion		Comments
Q1	Replied as individuals Replied as household	277 responses 92 responses		c. 75% c.25%		
Q2	>16 years < 16 years	768 adults 131 children				
Q3	Postcodes			100%		
Q4	Very familiar with WSWG Somewhat familiar Not so familiar Not at all familiar	95 165 64 41		c. 25% c. 50% <20% c. 10%		
Q5	c. 25% WSWG Full Members < 20% WSWG Associate Members c. 50% Non-members	96 71 198				Errors corrected in “Full” or “Associate” may have slightly affected statistics.
Q6	Read Full Proposal Read Proposal Summary on website Read both	142 103 144		c. 40% c. 30% c.40%		
Q7	How well do you know the woods? Visit often Visit less often Don’t visit Unaware	TW	FMW	TW	FMW	
		95	112	26.1%	30.68%	
		138	142	37.91%	38.90%	
		109	98	29.95%	26.85%	
		25	14	6.87%	3.84%	
Q8	I support the Eco-forestry Management Proposals: Strongly Agree Agree +/- Disagree Strongly Disagree	TW	FMW	TW	FMW	
		188	191	60.06%	61.02%	
		100	97	31.95%	30.99%	
		22	19	7.03%	6.07%	
		1	3	0.32%	0.96%	
		3	4	0.96%	1.28%	

Q9	I agree that the forests should be managed for climate and wildlife: Strongly Agree Agree +/- Disagree Strongly Disagree	TW 238 60 12 2 2	FMW 238 60 12 2 2	TW 75.8% 19.11% 3.82% 0.64% 0.64%	FMW 75.8% 19.11% 3.82% 0.64% 0.64%	
Q10	I agree that the forests should be managed for community benefit: Strongly Agree Agree +/- Disagree Strongly Disagree	TW 198 94 17 2 2	FMW 198 94 17 2 2	TW 63.26% 30.03% 5.43% 0.64% 0.64%	FMW 63.26% 30.03% 5.43% 0.64% 0.64%	
Q11	Too complex to summarise here.					Q11 does drill down into technical forest management
Q12	I support the proposals for improved Welcome, Access & Accessibility in the woods: Strongly Agree Agree +/- Disagree Strongly Disagree		204 88 11 3 1	66.45% 28.66% 3.58% 0.33% 0.98%		
Q13	I support the proposals for Bothy and Hutting in Taymount Wood: Strongly Agree Agree +/- Disagree Strongly Disagree		70 84 109 30 14	22.80% 27.36% 35.5% 9.77% 4.56%		Would have been useful to have had separate questions for these.
Q14	I support the proposals for Wigwams in Five Mile Wood: Strongly Agree Agree +/- Disagree Strongly Disagree		57 63 118 44 25	18.57% 20.52% 38.44% 14.33% 8.14%		
Q15	I support the idea of working with existing local businesses to promote green enterprises within the woods such as timber and woodland products, outdoor education and leisure activities, and wildlife conservation. Strongly Agree Agree +/- Disagree Strongly Disagree		162 108 25 10 2	52.77% 35.18% 8.14% 3.26% 0.65%		

Q16	<p>I am supportive of WSWG creating local jobs and training opportunities, as well as development of new community enterprises promoting products and activities from within the forest. This includes establishing key posts for a Forest Manager and Healthy Living Coordinator, in addition to creating apprenticeships and other outdoor occupational training provision.</p> <p>Strongly Agree Agree +/- Disagree Strongly Disagree</p>	<p>175 95 26 4 7</p>	<p>57% 30.94% 8.47% 1.3% 2.28%</p>	
Q17	<p>I like the WSWG Window on the Woods Vision:</p> <p>Strongly Agree Agree +/- Disagree Strongly Disagree</p>	<p>103 91 44 0 2</p>	<p>42.92% 37.92% 18.33% 0% 0.83%</p>	
Q18	<p>I like the proposals for year-round activities:</p> <p>Strongly Agree Agree +/- Disagree Strongly Disagree</p>	<p>117 86 31 3 3</p>	<p>48.75% 35.83% 12.92% 1.25% 1.25%</p>	
Q19	<p>Which if these activities appeal to you most?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Walking 2. Nature Walks 3. Environmental Education 4. Cycling 5. Foraging 6. Dogwalking 7. Local History 8. Biodiversity Survey & Monitoring 9. Children's events 10. Family Events 11. Forest School 12. Bushcraft/Outdoor Adventure 13. Woodland Art 14. All Abilities Activities 14. Forest Gardening 16. Running 17. Walking Groups 17. Mindfulness 19. Inclusive Orienteering 19. Theatre/Performing Arts 		<p>95.42% 71.25% 56.25% 55.42% 49.58% 47.50% 45.83% 45.42% 45.00% 44.58% 44.17% 42.50% 38.75% 37.92% 37.92% 36.25% 35.00% 35.00% 29.17% 29.17%</p>	

General	1	2	2	0	0	0	12
Negative + advice/concerns	6	2	1	2	2	0	0
Totals	31	19	8	13	18	0	22

Community Consultation 1: Comments analysis – Stanley and Bankfoot (cont.)								
Subject	Bothy and Hutting in TW	Wigwams in FMW	Working with existing businesses	WSWG Jobs and training opportunities	Year-Round Activities	Which activities most appeals to you?	Totals	%
Essence:								
Positive	0	2	5	4	6	0	72	37.5%
Positive + advisory/concerns	5	8	6	5	2	5	57	29.7%
General	2	0	0	0	0	0	19	9.9%
Negative + advice/concerns	14	10	3	3	1	0	44	22.9%
Totals	21	20	14	12	9	5	192	100%

Stanley and Auchtergaven respondents added a further 81 comments when asked to suggest one other thing to the WSWG Draft Proposal, across all elements as follows, perhaps showing a particular interest in access, nature and site amenities and maintenance issues:

Welcome, Access and Accessibility	21	25.9%
Culture and Creativity	5	6.2%
Health and Wellbeing	5	6.2%
Life-Long Learning	2	2.5%
Green Enterprise	6	7.4%
Amenities and Site maintenance	9	11.1%
Nature	10	12.3%
General	23	28.4%
Total	81	100%

Community Consultation 2 (2-week period October 2022)

- 😊 173 responses representing 376 adults and children
 - 71.3% of responses from the WSWG area; 28.7% from outwith the WSWG area
 - 52.3% of responses from members, 47.7% from non-members
- 😊 Support for different elements of the WSWG Proposal – **average score out of 5:**
 - Year-Round Activities Programmes 4.6
 - Access Improvements 4.6
 - Taymount Wood Hub (Flagship Project TW) and Community Enterprises 4.3
 - Woodland Observatory Project (Flagship Project FMW) 4.5
 - Woodland Management Plans 4.7
 - Governance 4.5
 - Operations 4.3
 - Funding 4.2
 - Overall support 4.6

Community Consultation 2: Respondents							
Area	Household Responses				Number of people represented in responses		
	Members	Associates	Non-members	Totals	Adults	Children	Totals
Auchtergaven	13		12	25	51	11	62
Stanley and District	42		29	71	134	15	149
Rest of WSWG area	11		16	27	53	10	63
Outwith WSWG area		24	26	50	79	21	100
Postal responses	1			1	2	0	2
Totals	67	24	83	174	319	57	376

Community Consultation 2: Comments analysis											
Subject	YRA	Access	TW Flagship	FMW Flagship	Woodland Management	Governance	Operations	Funding	Overall support	Totals	%
Essence:											
Positive	29	27	14	16	15	5	8	8	24	146	41.2%
Positive + advisory/ concerns	11	20	14	7	4	3	7	9	5	80	22.6%
General	3	7	11	10	14	15	10	9	13	92	26.0%
Negative	3	9	8	1	0	2	6	3	4	36	10.2%
Totals	46	63	47	34	33	25	31	29	46	354	100%

Both these Community Consultations have achieved the objective of providing evidence of local community support for the WSWG Project and submitting the WSWG Proposal *Going Forward* as part of the CATS Application.

1.3 Resourcing and Contributions

1.3.1 Funding

Financial donations between 2018 and 2022 have amounted to almost £36,000 in total. The key financial contributors are listed below.

Public funding:

Scottish Land Fund Stage 1 Development Funding	£18,453.00
Perth and Kinross Council Community Investment Fund (two awards)	£5,932.50
Community Learning Exchange	£740.00
Total public funding	£25,125.50

Private funding:

Highland Community Energy Society (Littleton Burn Hydro Scheme) via Energy4All	£9,551.55
WSWG Website donations	£597.21
Stanley Store Plastic Bag Fund	£200.00
Other	£390.96
Total private funding	£10,739.72

Grand total development funding **£35,865.22**

1.3.2 Contributions-in-kind and Volunteer time

There have been numerous and continuous contributions-in-kind gifted to WSWG during its development phase by core and other volunteers. WSWG kept detailed records of these for the first year of operations between July 2018 and August 2019, from the Steering Group members alone, including equipment, materials (stationery, printer ink, displays, etc), facilities, IT, services, software and travel, totalling £3,351. This does not include gifts and interest-free loans from other members and supporters, and small donations from plant sales and other miscellaneous sources which amounted to several hundred pounds in the same time period.

Timesheets for this period for the main contributors to the WSWG process amounted to almost 6000 volunteer hours, which at the 2018 minimum wage of £8.75 totalled £51,754.

This gave a combined figure of £55,105 for the first year. Estimates for the next six months to the end of 2019 raised this figure to around £80,000. During 2020, volunteer input was majorly impacted by the covid pandemic, which would have resulted in a much lower value for the subsequent 6-12 months. However, since early 2021, the rate of volunteer time input has at the very least been maintained at first year levels, and very probably increased quite substantially.

WSWG's early time-accounting exercise has not, however, been sustained, such were the demands of what, for many reasons, has been an extremely time-consuming and exhausting couple of years. However, with simple extrapolation, and a likely underestimate of time input for 2021 and 2022, it is reasonable to assume at least the following on the same basis as above:

2018-2019:	18 months - calculated	£80,000
2020:	12 months - indicative	£20,000
2021:	12 months – estimated	£50,000
2022:	12 months – estimated	£50,000
Indicative value of time input by core volunteers:		£200,000

It would be true to say that the WSWG process has been very time-inefficient for the core WSWG volunteers, as is so often the case with community projects and their working groups, particularly on complex projects such as this under the challenging societal and personal circumstances that have prevailed since 2018. However, were the degree of skilled and professional input to be acknowledged, evaluating at minimum wage as above can only be seen to be a considerable underestimate of the true value of the time core volunteers have given to the development of the WSWG Project to date.

1.4 Concluding statement

The range and breadth of stakeholder contribution to the development phase of the WSWG Project has been substantial and sustained to an extraordinary degree.

It has not all gone smoothly by any means, with mistakes made, lessons learned, some solutions found and more yet to find, but such is the potential value of the WSWG project to current and future generations in our local community and beyond, what the immense input to date represents is absolute evidence of the level of support this project has from local people, both in the defined WSWG area and more widely in Perthshire and the city of Perth just a few miles away.

2 WSWG SCIO – Going Forward: Stakeholder Development Plan

Given the current ecological, climate and social emergencies will continue into the foreseeable future, we are all stakeholders, directly or indirectly, in the WSWG Project going forward, both within the local community and beyond. This section looks at how WSWG intends to engage and deliver for the different categories of stakeholders we have identified and networked with to date and others we intend to draw in to empower our local community in the years of community ownership ahead.

2.1 Members and Volunteers

Figure 1: WSWG Window on the Woods Vision



Community engagement will be at the heart of all future SCIO activity, in line with the WSWG marketing strategy..... *that everything we do is for the Community, for its wellbeing, its resilience, and its future.*

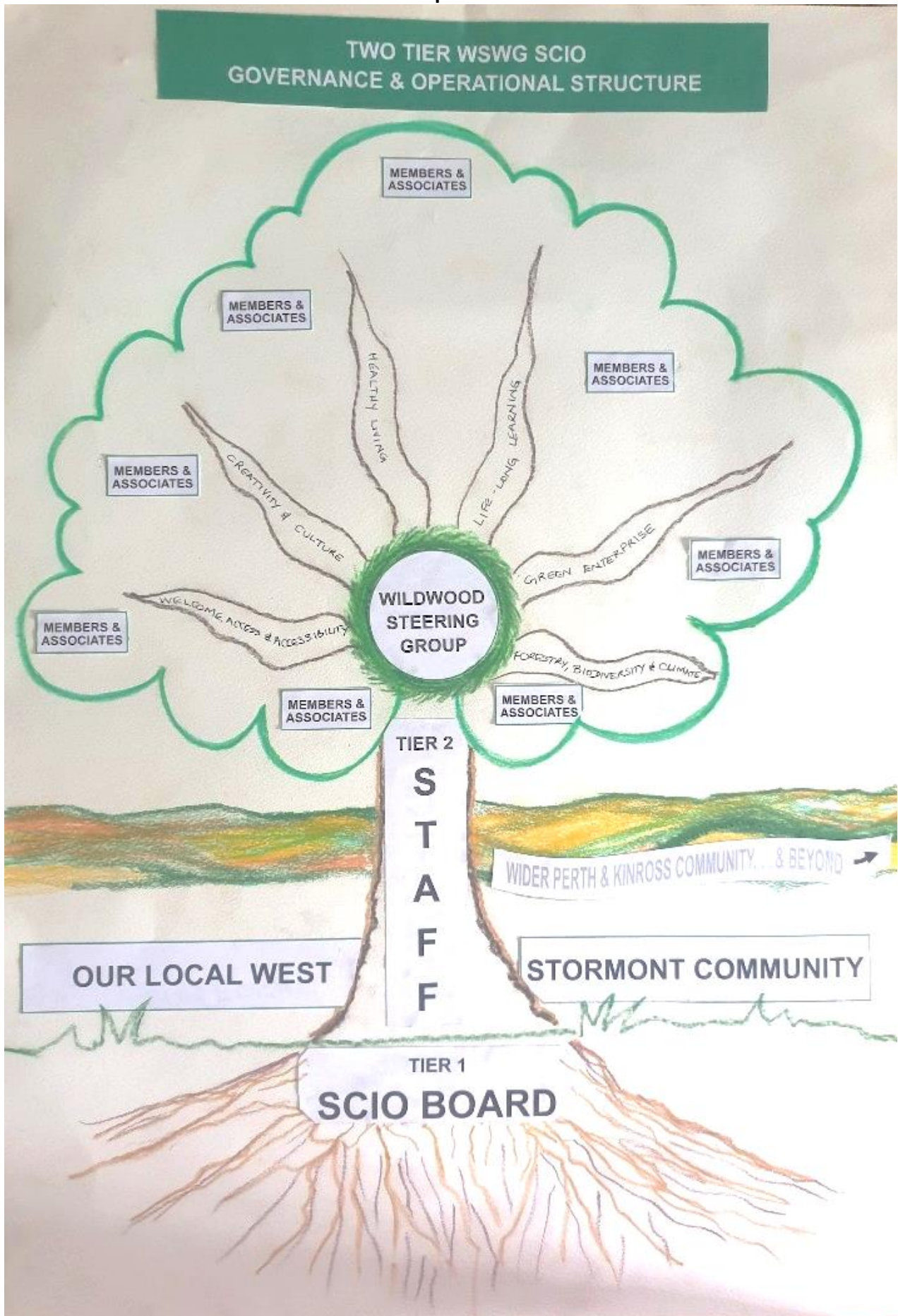
The primary stakeholders in the WSWG Project going forward will be the Members and Associates to whom the WSWG SCIO belongs, plus all those in the local community who will benefit directly and indirectly from community ownership of Taysmount and Five Mile Woods.

Volunteering will be a fundamental part of that community engagement, it being one of WSWG's main aims to provide a wide-ranging, inclusive and rewarding portfolio of volunteering opportunities for as many people as wish. Volunteering must be a pleasure for them, not a burden or obligation without which the WSWG project could not survive.

As well as for roles in governance, advice, mentoring or administration on the **Board of Trustees** or the **Wildwood Steering Group**, key volunteering opportunities will be available under each of the Window on the Woods themes (Figure 1). Individuals interested in particular themes could volunteer through the corresponding **Community Working Groups** to help ensure development of those themes through grass-roots involvement of members and associates and others in our community. Associated with that will be a raft of volunteering opportunities available to people of all ages and abilities in running the events and activities in the funded woodland-based, Window on the Woods-themed Year-Round Activities programmes. For example, volunteering activities under the Forestry, Ecology and Climate theme could include planning or practical involvement with wildlife surveys and monitoring – perhaps with the Woodland Observatory Project in Five Mile Wood -, tree planting, seed collection, woodland maintenance, tree nursery management and working in the Food Forest amongst others. Or perhaps to volunteer in Taysmount and Five Mile Wood as part of the Tayside Tree Warden scheme. For the Creativity and Culture theme, it may be woodland arts and crafts or a WSWG choir, whatever activities each group wishes to develop for its Year-Round Activities Programme at any given time. Volunteer numbers will vary accordingly depending on the appeal or needs of different activities. Volunteer recruitment will range from general members of the public to corporate and public sector employees looking for team-building and environmentally-friendly output opportunities. As well as the immediate pleasures and rewards of participating in activities of particular interest to different people, these will build skills and confidence of participants, leading to greater employment opportunities as well as skill-building within the local communities. The idea is very much that the WSWG Project is influenced and developed in response to input at grassroots level.

Figure 2 below shows the proposed integration of these different levels of governance and operational activity through which the WSWG Project will go forward, represented as a tree.

Figure 2: The WSWG 2-tier SCIO Governance and Operational Tree



At December 2022, the WSWG membership scheme stands at 505, of which 351 are Members (living within the WSWG area) and 154 are Associates (living outwith the WSWG area), with supporters and other regular contacts taking the regular mailing list up to about 700 individuals. There have been over 50 new sign-ups in 2022, including around 30 in October when WSWG was publicising and running Community Consultation 2. It is expected that there will be a surge of new members and associates once the woods come into community ownership.

The membership scheme will remain free to ensure it is always inclusive and equitable for all. The basic system at present will be reviewed and improved to better suit a community woodland project to cater for different purposes, such as the idea for Woody’s Kids’ Club; Youth Ranger Group/Tayside Under25s Young Recorders, etc for older children and young people. It will also be important to have young people on the Wildwood Steering Group. Events, activities and services will be open to members and non-members alike.

In terms of WSWG going forward with its programme of staff-supported activities and services, there is huge potential for involving large numbers of members, associates and others from the local community. Although impossible to predict with any certainty at this stage, particularly for events and activities, the following suggests prospective numbers of volunteers and participants which could prevail per year, depending on the type and format of “events and activities”.

Core involvement

Board of Trustees	3 – 10
Wildwood Steering Group	15-30
WotW Community Working Groups (6)	30-60 (5-10 per group)
Young People’s Volunteering	10-20

Events and Activities

6 themed Year-Round Activities Programmes:

- Welcome, Access and Accessibility
- Creativity and Culture
 - *Creativity and the Arts*
 - *History and Heritage*
- Healthy Living
 - *Active People, Active Places*
 - *Healthy Eating*
 - *Social Wellbeing*
- Life-Long Learning
- Green Enterprise
 - *Forest Enterprises*
 - *Community Enterprises*
- Forestry, Biodiversity and Climate

Eg average 1 event/activity per week for each group over time

300 events/activities per year	1500 participations (5 per event)
Additional volunteer helpers	50

Annual Totals:

Volunteers – all ages)	100
Participants (allowing for repeat participations)	500

Thinking about future Social Return on Investment (SROI) from volunteering, the above numbers compare favourably with participation levels in research by the Central Scotland Forest Trust which found that from 185 volunteers participating over one year, the Net Present Value to society was £976,552 over five years. Based on the volunteer and participant numbers suggested above for the WSWG Project, a similar Net Present Value could realistically be achieved by WSWG in its overall future SROI calculations. For more information about SROI as a measure of project value, see [Appendix BP8: Social Return on Investment \(SROI\) for Taymount and Five Mile Woods](#).

2.2 Landowners and Neighbours

WSWG envisages close and considerate working relationships with neighbouring residents and landowners based on effective communication and co-operation on joint issues.

With regard to WSWG's aspirations and 25-year Mission "beyond the woods", landowners and managers in the WSWG core area will be critical to achieving these.

2.3 Staff

The staff team will be the single most important mainstay of resourcing and delivering the WSWG Proposal. It is therefore vital that WSWG's recruits and retains a highly competent, creative, enthusiastic team of employees dedicated to the ethos and purpose of the project and delivering the best in community benefit across the whole WSWG Vision.

As such, WSWG will ensure the staff are fully provided for with supportive line-management and working conditions to enable them to work to the best of their abilities in an enjoyable and motivating environment and atmosphere.

The nature of the project will require staff to be closely involved in its early stages of development in ways which will require a good deal of pragmatism and learning on the job until everything beds in with working routines and necessary infrastructure.

2.4 Partnership Working

WSWG will keep working and networking with the many local community organisations, primary schools, local businesses and other relevant organisations it has already connected with to deliver optimum community benefit and connectedness with the woods. WSWG see great value in further developing functional partnership working by increasing the involvement of relevant specialists in the local area through the Wildwood Steering Group and also to developing stronger links to the Perth Sustainable Small City initiative and also various academic, conservation and other research partners.

2.5 Future potential for the Tourism Market

A key attribute of the WSWG Project in terms of tourism markets is that both Taymount Wood and Five Mile Woods lie within the immediate corridor of the A9 trunk road from central Scotland to Inverness and onwards to Scrabster harbour, which has been called "the spine of Scotland".

In March 2018, Malcolm Roughead, VisitScotland Chief Executive, described the importance of the A9 as follows: *"The A9 is much more than just a road. It connects visitors to some of the best tourism experiences in Scotland, taking them through the heart of Perthshire and up to the Highlands. Scotland's reputation as a quality destination relies on innovation and considering new and creative ways to reach out to visitors, showcasing all we have to offer."*

Whilst not yet on Tripadvisor's "A9 Places to Stop", situated as they are at the south end of the 100-mile section of the A9 from Perth to Inverness, WSWG does see the potential for both woods, and Five Mile Wood in particular, to feature in that list one day. In 2014, 142,000 vehicles were said to use the A9 every day. However, it is felt that it will first need a robust community-focussed WSWG project to be in place before decisions can be made about bigger scale endeavours. As such, an A9 "Aire" at Five Mile Woods is presented in Budget Level 4 as an uncoded aspirational project alongside other bigger ventures such as a Community Energy Project and new access links in the wider landscape on land "beyond the woods".

Many people already travel to Taymount and Five Mile Woods from as far afield as Fife and Dundee, with the woods featuring as destination sites on the rotas of several walking groups as well. The prospective route for the River Tay Way, a long distance walking and cycling route from Aberfeldy to Perth and potentially on to Dundee being developed by Perth and Kinross Countryside Trust, takes in the Taymount Wood area, holding great ecotourism potential for WSWG in the future.

2.6 Communications and Marketing

The WSWG Publicity and Communications Strategy will be based on:

- WSWG communications: website, Facebook (and other social media platforms), membership direct, plus woodland-based and local community noticeboards
- Local Media & papers – The Perthshire Advertiser, The Courier, The Bridge On-line, The Atholl Quair, The Blairie, etc
- Local Radio - Heart Radio/Tay FM

Selected specialist platforms will be used to publicise specific aspects of the project as it develops to reach relevant audiences, for example for letting the The Artists' Bothy and, in due course, reaching out to the A9 and other tourist markets.

2.7 Funders

The WSWG Proposal includes a graduated introduction and growth of a variety of community benefit-based income generating enterprises to provide funding for WSWG Charitable Activities and Services. With good design, management and marketing, WSWG believes they could provide potentially much more income than is currently included in the financial projections which have been pitched at a deliberately modest level.

The Proposal is also designed for flexibility and scalability so that activities and services can be tailored to the level of resources available. However, with a stable and integrated staff team being so fundamental for the delivery of the project, whether on a relative shoestring or plentiful resources beyond basic operational costs, external fundraising will be a routine part of the project for the foreseeable future.

WSWG looks forward to developing mutually beneficial relationships with a wide range of funders as key stakeholders in the success of the WSWG Project.

Table 1 below shows in matrix form the many stakeholders WSWG envisages engaging in the WSWG Project going forward, either overall or set against particular themes in the Window on the Woods Vision.

Table 1: WSWG Stakeholders December 2022

Colour-coding

WSWG In-house stakeholders	Stakeholder organisations for WSWG Priority stakeholders for WSWG	Contact made	No contact to date Priority stakeholders for WSWG
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1. WSWG Key Current or Potential Stakeholders relating to themes in the Window on the Woods Vision						
General	Forestry & Ecology	Welcome, Access ...	Creativity & Culture	Healthy Living	Life-long Learning	Green Enterprise
Members Associates Trustees Wildwood Steering Group Staff	WSWG Forestry, Ecology and Climate Community Working Group: a. Climate b. Biodiversity	WSWG Welcome, Access and Accessibility Community Working Group	WSWG Creativity and Culture Community Working Group: a. Creativity & the Arts b. History and Heritage	WSWG Healthy Living Community Working Group: a. Active People, Active Places; b. Healthy Eating; c. Social Wellbeing	WSWG Life-long Learning Community Working Group	WSWG Green Enterprise Community Working Group: a. Forest Enterprises b. Community Ents
Supporters Wider Community	Scottish Forestry				University of Edinburgh Dr Markus Ketola	Growbiz
Forestry and Land Scotland	Forestry and Land Scotland	Stanley Development Trust	West Stormont Historical Society	Stanley Development Trust	West Stormont Historical Society	
Scottish Land Fund	Local sawmills	Skinny Tyres		Cycling Without Age		
Strathtay Action Partnership	Local conservation organisations & businesses	Strathtay Action Partnership	Strathtay Action Partnership	Strathtay Action Partnership	Strathtay Action Partnership	
Perth Leadership Forum – Perth Sustainable Small City initiative	Community Woodlands Association	Local walking groups (Strollers, Stride for Life, Friday Walking Group)	PKC Community Education	Lyndsay McManaman, Community Engagement Worker, P&K Health & Social Care Partnership	PKC Community Education	Community Woodlands Association
Perth and Kinross Countryside Trust: widespread scope for WSWG and PKCT to collaborate across all WSWG themes.	Perthshire Nature Connections Partnership	Perth and Kinross Countryside Trust		Jeni Guthrie, Social prescriber, Highland and Strathtay	U3A Perth	

Energy4All/Highland Community Energy Society	Local landowners	Spittalfield and District Active Recreation Hub		Spittalfield & District Active Recreation Hub	Tayside Biodiversity Recorders Tayside Under-25s Young Recorders Committee	Energy4All
Investing in Communities, (funding applications submitted and pending)	Tayside Biodiversity Partnership: a. Joint Farming, Upland & Woodland Working Group b. Biodiversity Villages c. Under 25 Young Recorders Committee	Local horse riders	Local schools/cluster schools	Care & Wellbeing CIC	Schools (WSWG links with 7 primary & nursery schools to date)	The Bothy Project
Local community councils	Tree Warden Scheme	Perth Active Travel Group (PATH)	Local Forest School providers (eg Wild Sparks)	Local Forest School providers (eg Wild Sparks)	Local Forest School providers (eg Wild Sparks)	
	The Food Forest Project	Greenspace Ranger Service	Outdoor Education providers (eg Wee Adventures)	Local Forest School providers (eg Wild Sparks)	Outdoor Education providers (eg Wee Adventures)	
	Tayside Woodland Partnerships					
	Buglife	LiveActive		Local church groups	Local church groups	
	BTO Surveys eg Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS)	Paths for All		Care Homes (elderly, other supported living)	Westbank: (Probation Service/ Community Payback)	
	The Conservation Volunteers (TCV)	P&K Outside Access Forum		Sheltered Housing complexes		
WSWG Programme Funders (Public, lottery, charitable, corporate, benefactors, Wellbeing sources, etc)	WSWG Programme Funders	WSWG Programme Funders	WSWG Programme Funders	WSWG Programme Funders	WSWG Programme Funders	WSWG Programme Funders



West Stormont Woodland Group

Business Plan Appendix BP3 - WSWG Inspirations

Although no-one in our community had had any idea the woodlands were coming on the market in 2018, members of what became WSWG had been working for several years on an outline landscape-scale project for bringing about a step-change in environmental sustainability for the local area and community – principally how to do our bit locally collectively to half our carbon emissions and double our biodiversity over the next ten years - which found inspiration in a range of exciting models, theories and frameworks several of which are fast becoming mainstream as ways to help our society transition to a sustainable future.

With the climate emergency and mass extinction now hard upon us, not only do we need major transition to a sustainable future but we need it to happen much faster than normal rates of change in society usually occur.

If one was on a familiar and safe journey to a scheduled destination where, as one got closer, it became apparent big trouble lay ahead both in the journey and the intended destination, there comes a point where it is dangerous to go any further without changing direction. If when looking around for a safer alternative, an unfamiliar but clearly viable option increasingly comes into view, that is surely the way to go.

That is the junction we are at on Planet Earth now.

“I will be a hummingbird”

[The Story of the Hummingbird](#), as told by celebrated Kenyan environmental activist, women’s rights advocate, and [2004 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Professor Wangari Maathai](#):

We are constantly being bombarded by problems that we face and sometimes we can get completely overwhelmed.

The story of the hummingbird is about this huge forest being consumed by a fire. All the animals in the forest come out and they are transfixed as they watch the forest burning and they feel very overwhelmed, very powerless, except this little hummingbird. It says, ‘I’m going to do something about the fire!’ So it flies to the nearest stream and takes a drop of water. It puts it on the fire, and goes up and down, up and down, up and down, as fast as it can.

In the meantime all the other animals, much bigger animals like the elephant with a big trunk that could bring much more water, they are standing there helpless. And they are saying to the hummingbird, ‘What do you think you can do? You are too little. This fire is too big. Your wings are too little and your beak is so small that you can only bring a small drop of water at a time.’

But as they continue to discourage it, it turns to them without wasting any time and it tells them, ‘I am doing the best I can.’

And that to me is what all of us should do. We should always be like a hummingbird. I may be insignificant, but I certainly don’t want to be like the animals watching the planet goes down the drain. **I will be a hummingbird, I will do the best I can !**

WSWG is doing the best it can to turn Taymount and Five Mile Woods into forests where people and planet come first. Together we are greater than the sum of our parts.

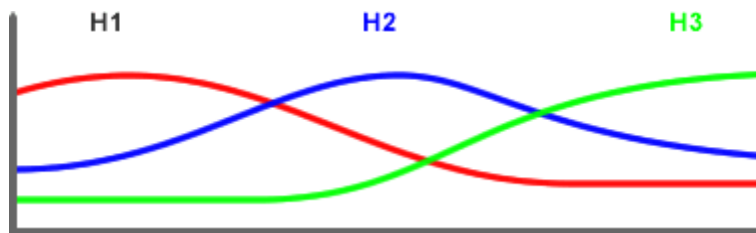
Three of the main models WSWG is taking its inspiration from are:

- (i) **Three Horizons Approach to Planning** (International Futures Forum - IFF - an international group with a small organisational infrastructure based in Scotland.) <http://www.iffpraxis.com/three-horizons> Book to read: "Three Horizons – The Patterning of Hope" by Bill Sharpe

Three Horizons

IFF has found a 'three horizons' model of longer term change a useful framework both in workshop settings and for deeper analysis. IFF builds on previous versions of the model, for example in business planning, to adapt and deepen the analysis such that it becomes useful as a framework for thinking about longer term social change. We have developed a suite of practical tools and resources to use the framework in practice which are available in the [Three Horizons section](#) of our IFF Practice Centre.

We have been exploring and expanding the theoretical underpinnings of the model whilst at the same time using it in practice to prompt discussion of [transformative innovation](#) in a variety of settings - eg energy policy, rural development, broadcasting, health services, financial services etc. In [education](#) we have used the model as the basis for a strategic thinking kit for schools produced jointly with Education Scotland and called 'Opening Up Transformative Innovation'. The model itself is simple and familiar. The first horizon - H1 - is the dominant system at present. It represents 'business as usual'. As the world changes, so aspects of business as usual begin to feel out of place or no longer fit for purpose. In the end 'business as usual' is superseded by new ways of doing things.



Innovation has started already in light of the apparent short-comings of the first horizon system. This forms a second horizon - H2. At some point the innovations become more effective than the original system – this is a point of disruption. Clayton Christensen called it the 'innovator's dilemma' – should you protect your core business that is on the wane or invest in the innovation that looks as if it might replace it? Meanwhile, there are other innovations happening already that today look way off beam. This is fringe activity. It feels like it is a long way from H1, based on fundamentally different premises. This is the third horizon - H3. It is the long term successor to business as usual – the radical innovation that introduces a completely new way of doing things. The model offers a simple way into a conversation about:

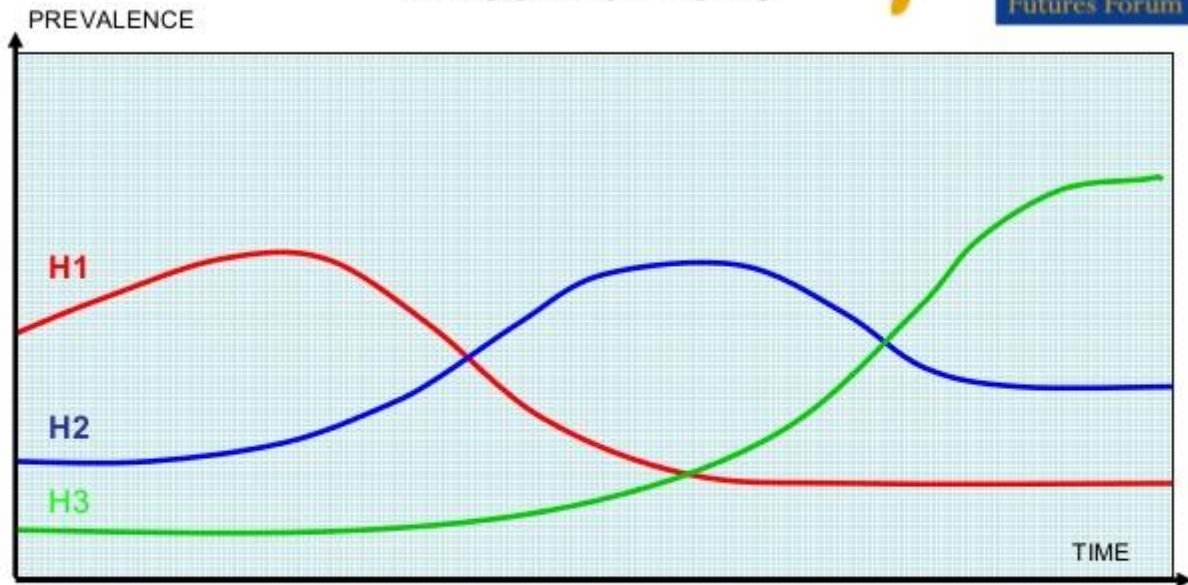
- the dominant system and the challenges to its sustainability into the future, ie the case for change (horizon 1) the desirable future state, the ideal system we desire and of which we can identify elements in the present that give us encouragement (horizon 3) the nature of the tensions and dilemmas between vision and reality, and the distinction between innovations that serve to prolong the status quo and those that serve to bring the third horizon vision closer to reality (horizon 2) a mature perspective that accepts the need both to address the challenges in the first horizon and foster the seeds of the third. This is not an either/or, good/bad discussion. We need to 'keep the lights on' today, and think about how to keep them on a generation from now in very different circumstances. IFF calls this the gentle art of 'redesigning the plane whilst flying it'.

IFF has used this model with a number of different groups. One observation has been that most policy making, and most policy discussion, occurs by default in the first horizon. It is about fixing the failing system, innovating in order to maintain it, 'keeping the lights on'. The extended model of the three horizons opens up a new policy domain for most people: second horizon policy making underpinned by third horizon aspirations.

Three Horizons



International
Futures Forum



H1 sees
H2 as too risky
H3 as irrelevant.

H2 sees
H1 as obstructive
H3 as inspiring.

H3 sees
H1 as lunacy
H2 as promising.

www.internationalfuturesforum.com



(ii) Wellbeing Economy Alliance

WEAll is the leading global collaboration of organisations, alliances, movements and individuals working together to transform the economic system into one that delivers human and ecological wellbeing.

WEAll hubs are place-based groups that facilitate collaboration and activity towards building a wellbeing economy, and link in to the global movement.

At city, state, regional or country level, WEAll hubs exist wherever people are coming together to promote new narratives, policies, ideas and models to make the wellbeing economy a reality in their own localities.

Are you thinking of creating a brand-new local hub where you can collaborate and co-create a wellbeing economy with key organisations and key actors from within your community/area? Or perhaps you would like to join up existing local initiatives committed to the wellbeing economy in your local area?

Working locally with a global vision is a must to achieve the systemic change is needed in our planet.

WEAll Citizens is an initiative to provide ways for individuals and communities to engage with the wellbeing economy. The brand new Citizens online platform provides a space for WEAll Hubs to coordinate digitally, and engage with people in their own area and around the world.

Can WSWG be part of the WEAll Scotland Hub through membership of WEAll Citizens?

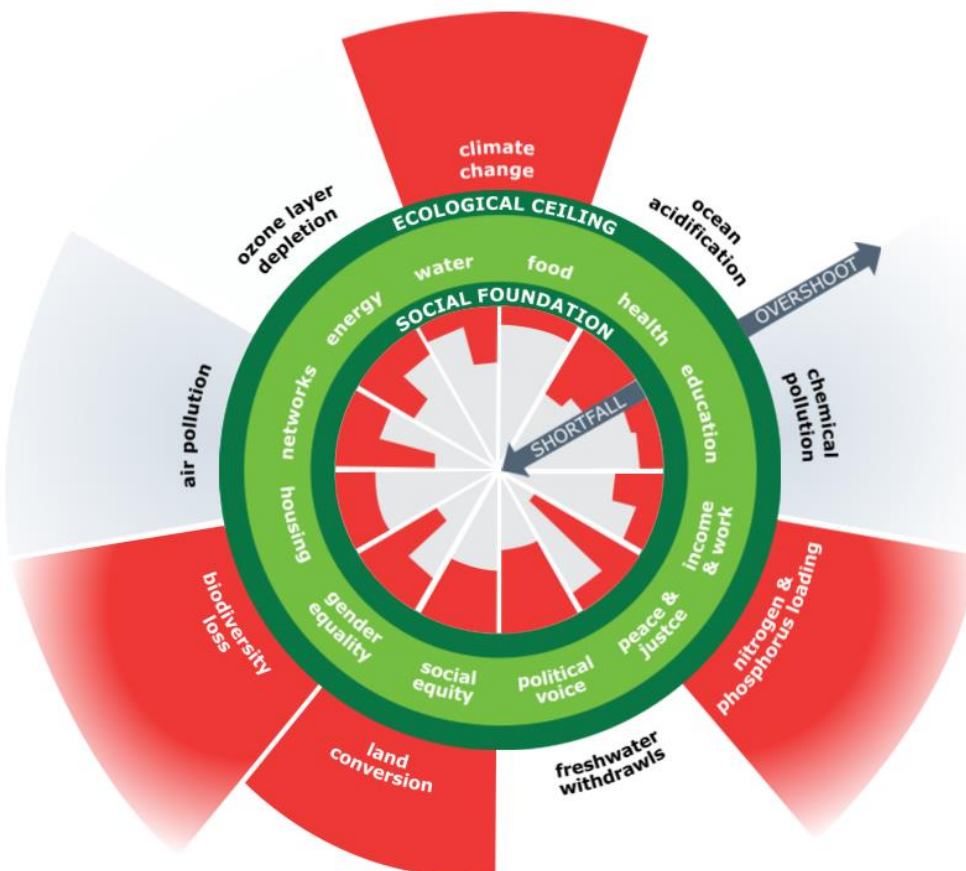
(iii) Doughnut Economics

What on Earth is the Doughnut?...

Humanity's 21st century challenge is to meet the needs of all within the means of the planet. In other words, to ensure that no one falls short on life's essentials (from food and housing to healthcare and political voice), while ensuring that collectively we do not overshoot our pressure on Earth's life-supporting systems, on which we fundamentally depend – such as a stable climate, fertile soils, and a protective ozone layer. The Doughnut of social and planetary boundaries is a playfully serious approach to framing that challenge, and it acts as a compass for human progress this century.

The environmental ceiling consists of nine planetary boundaries, as set out by [Rockstrom et al](#), beyond which lie unacceptable environmental degradation and potential tipping points in Earth systems. The twelve dimensions of the social foundation are derived from internationally agreed minimum social standards, as identified by the world's governments in the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015. Between social and planetary boundaries lies an environmentally safe and socially just space in which humanity can thrive.

Since the first iteration of the Doughnut was published as a discussion paper by Oxfam in 2012, it has had traction in very diverse places – from the UN General Assembly and the Global Green Growth Forum, to Occupy London. Why such interest? I think it is because the doughnut is based on the powerful framework of planetary boundaries but adds to it the demands of social justice – and so brings social and environmental concerns together in one single image and approach. It also sets a vision for an equitable and sustainable future, but is silent on the possible pathways for getting there, and so the doughnut acts as a convening space for debating alternative pathways forward.



Here's a [one-minute introduction](#) to the Doughnut, by the brilliant animator Jonny Lawrence.

And here's a [commentary](#) published in *The Lancet Planetary Health*, May 2017.

Doughnut Principles of Practice

In order to ensure the integrity of the ideas of Doughnut Economics as they are put into practice, we have turned the Seven Ways to Think, and the five key design traits of organisations, into the Doughnut Principles of Practice. We ask that these principles are followed by any initiative that is working to put the ideas of Doughnut Economics into practice.



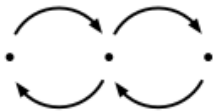
Embrace the 21st century goal. Aim to meet the needs of all people within the means of the planet. Seek to align your organisation's purpose, networks, governance, ownership and finance with this goal. Expect the work to be challenging, innovative and transformative.



See the big picture. Recognise the potential roles of the household, the commons, the market and the state – and their many synergies – in transforming economies. Ensure that finance serves the work rather than drives it.



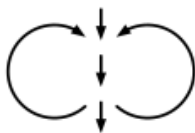
Nurture human nature. Promote diversity, participation, collaboration and reciprocity. Strengthen community networks and work with a spirit of high trust. Care for the wellbeing of the team.



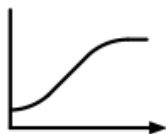
Think in systems. Experiment, learn, adapt, evolve and aim for continuous improvement. Be alert to dynamic effects, feedback loops and tipping points.



Be distributive. Work in the spirit of open design and share the value created with all who co-created it. Be aware of power and seek to redistribute it to improve equity amongst stakeholders.



Be regenerative. Aim to work with and within the cycles of the living world. Be a sharer, repairer, regenerator, steward. Reduce travel, minimize flights, be climate and energy smart.



Aim to thrive rather than to grow. Don't let growth become a goal in itself. Know when to let the work spread out via others rather than scale up in size.

Other important inspirations

Good Ancestor

Roman Krznaric, a leading public philosopher, and author of “The Good Ancestor – How to think long term in a short-term world” asks us “How can we be good ancestors?”

He goes on to say, “We live in the age of the tyranny of the now, driven by 24/7 news, the latest tweet, and the buy-now button. With such frenetic short-termism at the root of contemporary crises – from the threats of climate change to the lack of planning for a global pandemic – the call for long-term thinking grows every day. But what is it, has it ever worked, and can we even do it?”

From the pyramids to the NHS, humankind has always had the innate ability to plan for posterity and take action that will resonate for decades, centuries, even millennia to come. If we want to be good ancestors and be remembered well by the generations who follow us, now is the time to recover and enrich this imaginative skill.

Good Ancestor thinking lies around six profound ways in which we can all learn to think long, exploring uniquely human talents like ‘cathedral thinking’ that expand our time horizons and sharpen our foresight. Drawing on radical innovations from around the world, it celebrates the time rebels who are reinventing democracy, culture and economics so that we all have the chance to become good ancestors and create a better tomorrow.”

Nature Recovery Networks

David Attenborough’s work to raise awareness of the planet’s crises at the present time are well known. In 2019, along with the Wildlife Trusts he launched the Nature Recovery Networks – joined-up networks of habitats that allow wildlife and people to thrive – in housing estates, on farms, in nature reserves, on road verges, along riverbanks, in parks and gardens, on office roofs, in the hills.

Make the WSWG area a Nature Recovery Network. Turn it from depleted fragmented, fragile in 2020 to green, healthy, happy in 2030.

CONSTITUTION OF

West Stormont Woodland Group

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Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005

West Stormont Woodland Group

In this constitution, the following definitions apply throughout:

- **“2005 Act”** means the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and every statutory modification and re-enactment thereof for the time being in force.
- **“AGM”** means an Annual General Meeting.
- **“Board”** means the Board of Trustees.
- **“Charity”** means a body entered in the Scottish Charity Register as defined under section 106 of Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005.
- **“Trustees”** means the persons having the general control and management of the Organisation.
- **“Clauses”** means any clause.
- **“Clear days”**, in relation to notice of a meeting, means a period excluding the day when notice is given and the day of the meeting.
- **“Community”** has the meaning given in clause 4.
- **“GM”** means a General Meeting.
- **“Group”** means those other Organisations (incorporated or not) that are not this Organisation.
- **“Individual”** means a human/person.
- **“Members”** means those individuals and groups who have joined this Organisation.
- **“Organisation”** means the SCIO whose constitution this is.
- **“OSCR”** means the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator
- **“Property”** means any property, assets or rights, heritable or moveable, wherever situated in the world.
- **“SCIO”** means Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation.
- **“Them”** and **“their”** refer to individuals or groups (either he, she or they).

Words in the singular include the plural and words in the plural include the singular.

These Clauses supersede any model clauses. Any words or expressions defined in the 2005 Act shall, if not inconsistent with the subject or context, bear the same meanings in the Clauses.

The Schedule to these Clauses is deemed to form an integral part of these Clauses.

CONSTITUTION OF

West Stormont Woodland Group

	NAME
1	The name of the Organisation is West Stormont Woodland Group (“ the Organisation ”).
2	The Organisation will, upon registration, be a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO).

	REGISTERED OFFICE
3	The principal office of the Organisation will be in Scotland (and must remain in Scotland).

	DEFINITION OF COMMUNITY AND PURPOSES
4	The Organisation has been formed to benefit the community of people living in, or registered to vote in, the postcode areas of PH1 3, PH1 4 and PH8 0 surrounding Taymount and Five Mile Woods (the “Community”), within the boundary defined therein by West Stormont Woodland Group, with the following purposes (the “Purposes”):
4.1	The advancement of environmental protection or improvement.
4.2	The provision of recreational facilities, or the organisation of recreational activities, with the object of improving the conditions of life for the persons for whom the facilities or activities are primarily intended.
4.3	The advancement of citizenship and community development.
4.4	Any other purpose that may reasonably be regarded as analogous to any of the preceding purposes.

	POWERS
5	The Organisation (SCIO) has power to do anything which is calculated to further its purposes or is conducive or incidental to doing so. In particular, (but without limiting the range of powers available under the 2005 Act), the SCIO has power:
5.1	to encourage and develop a spirit of voluntary or other commitment by, or cooperation with, individuals, unincorporated associations, societies, federations, partnerships, corporate bodies, agencies, undertakings, local authorities, unions, cooperatives, trusts and others and any groups or groupings thereof willing to assist the Organisation to achieve the Purposes;
5.2	to promote and carry out research, surveys and investigations and to promote, develop and manage initiatives, projects and programmes;
5.3	to provide advice, consultancy, training, tuition, expertise and assistance;

5.4	to prepare, organise, promote and implement training courses, exhibitions, lectures, seminars, conferences, events and workshops, to collect, collate, disseminate and exchange information and to prepare, produce, edit, publish, exhibit and distribute clauses, pamphlets, books and other publications, tapes, motion and still pictures, music and drama and other materials, all in any medium;
5.5	to purchase, take on lease, hire, or otherwise acquire any property suitable for the Organisation;
5.6	to construct, convert, improve, develop, conserve, maintain, alter and demolish any buildings or erections whether of a permanent or temporary nature, and manage and operate (or arrange for the professional or other appropriate management and operation of) the Organisation's property;
5.7	to sell, let, hire, license, give in exchange and otherwise dispose of all or any part of the property of the Organisation;
5.8	to establish and administer a building fund or funds or guarantee fund or funds or endowment fund or funds;
5.9	to employ, contract with, train and pay such staff (whether employed or self-employed) as are considered appropriate for the proper conduct of the activities of the Organisation;
5.10	to take such steps as may be deemed appropriate for the purpose of raising funds for the activities of the Organisation;
5.11	to accept subscriptions, grants, donations, gifts, legacies and endowments of all kinds, either absolutely, conditionally or in trust;
5.12	to borrow or raise money for the Purposes and to give security in support of any such borrowings by the Organisation and/or in support of any obligations undertaken by the Organisation;
5.13	to set aside funds not immediately required as a reserve or for specific purposes;
5.14	to invest any funds which are not immediately required for the activities of the Organisation in such investments as may be considered appropriate, which may be held in the name of a nominee Organisation under the instructions of the Board of Trustees, and to dispose of, and vary, such investments;
5.15	to make grants or loans of money and to give guarantees;
5.16	to establish, manage and/or support any other charity, and to make donations for any charitable purpose falling within the purposes;
5.17	to establish, operate and administer and/or otherwise acquire any separate trading Organisation or association, whether charitable or not;
5.18	to enter into any arrangement with any Organisation, government or authority which may be advantageous for the purposes of the activities of the Organisation and to enter into any arrangement for co-operation, mutual assistance, or sharing profit with any charitable Organisation;
5.19	to enter into contracts to provide services to or on behalf of others;
5.20	to effect insurance of all kinds (which may include indemnity insurance in respect of Trustees and employees);
5.21	to oppose, or object to, any application or proceedings which may prejudice the interests of the Organisation;

5.22	to pay the costs of forming the Organisation and its subsequent development;
5.23	to carry out the Purposes as principal, agent, contractor, trustee or in any other capacity.

GENERAL STRUCTURE OF THE ORGANISATION	
6	The Organisation is composed of:
6.1	Members (comprising Ordinary Members as defined below);
6.2	Associates ; and
6.3	Trustees (comprising Elected Trustees, Appointed Trustees; and Co-Opted Trustees, following the first GM).

MEMBERSHIP	
7	The members of the Organisation shall consist of those individuals who made the application for registration of the Organisation and such other individuals as are admitted to membership under the following clauses.
8	The Organisation shall have not fewer than twenty members at any time; and
8.1	In the event that the number of members falls below twenty the Board may conduct only essential business other than taking steps to ensure the admission of sufficient Ordinary Members to achieve the minimum number.
9	Membership of the Organisation is open to:
9.1	Individuals aged 16 or over who are members of the Community (“Ordinary Members”); and
9.2	If an Individual ceases to fulfil the criteria within clause 9.1 or 9.2, that Individual must inform the Organisation.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP	
10	No Individual may become a Member unless that Individual has submitted a written application for membership in the form prescribed by the Trustees and the Trustees have approved the application.
10.1	The Trustees shall consider applications for membership promptly. The Trustees shall assess each application to determine whether the applicant meets the criteria for becoming an Ordinary Member.
11	Membership of the Organisation may not be transferred by a member.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS	
12	There is no annual membership subscription.

RE-REGISTRATION OF MEMBERS	
13	The Board will maintain an up-to-date membership database but will not require re-registration of members.

LIABILITY OF MEMBERS	
14	The members of the Organisation have no liability to pay any sums to help to meet the debts (or other liabilities) of the Organisation if it is wound up; accordingly, if the Organisation is unable to meet its debts, the members will not be held responsible.
15	The members and Trustees have certain legal duties under the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005; and clause 14 does not exclude (or limit) any personal liabilities they might incur if they are in breach of those duties or in breach of other legal obligations or duties that apply to them personally.

CESSATION OF MEMBERSHIP	
16	A member shall cease to be a member if:
16.1	that Member sends a written notice of resignation to registered office of the Organisation; they will cease to be a member as from the time when the notice is received by the Organisation;
16.2	that Member moves out of the defined geographic area;
16.3	a resolution that that Member be expelled (where that Member's conduct, in their/its capacity as a Member, has been detrimental to the effective functioning of the Organisation) is passed by special resolution at a GM (notice of which shall state: (a) the full text of the resolution proposed; and (b) the grounds on which it is proposed) at which the Member is entitled to be heard;
16.4	in the case of an Individual, that Individual has died (membership of the Organisation not being transferable);
16.5	where the Member is a Trustee of the Organisation, that Member has failed to comply with the code of conduct for Trustees in a manner which would result in them ceasing to be a Trustee and a member.

REGISTER OF MEMBERS	
17	The Board must keep a register of members, setting out for each current member: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) their full name; b) their address; and c) the date on which they were registered as a member of the Organisation.
17.1	For each former member the register must set out, for at least six years from the date on they ceased to be a member: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) their name; and b) the date on which they ceased to be a member.
17.2	The Board must ensure that the register of members is updated within 28 days of receiving notice of any change.

17.3	<p>If a member or Trustee of the Organisation requests a copy of the register of members, the Board must ensure that a copy is supplied to them within 28 days, providing the request is reasonable.</p> <p>If the request is made by a member (rather than a Trustee), the Board may provide a copy which has the addresses blanked out.</p>
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ASSOCIATES	
18	Individuals and Groups wishing to support the Purposes who are not members of the Community may become associates of the Organisation (“Associates”). Associates may attend and speak at GMs but may not participate in such meetings for voting or quorum purposes.
18.1	No Individual or Group may become an Associate unless that Individual or Group has submitted a written application to become an Associate in the form prescribed by the Trustees and the Trustees have approved the application. An application submitted by a Group must be signed on behalf of that Group.
18.2	The Trustees shall consider applications for associateship promptly. The Trustees shall assess each application to determine whether the applicant meets the criteria for becoming an Associate.
19	<p>The Trustees shall cause a register of associates to be maintained containing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the name and address of each Associate; (b) the date on which each Individual or Group was registered as an Associate; and (c) the date at which any Individual or Organisation ceased to be an Associate.
20	An Associate shall cease to be an Associate if:
20.1	that Associate sends a written notice of resignation to the Organisation;
20.2	that Associate becomes a member of the Community;
20.3	a resolution that that Associate be expelled from being an Associate (where that Associate’s conduct, in their capacity as Associate, has been detrimental to the effective functioning of the Organisation) is passed by special resolution at a GM (notice of which shall state: (a) the full text of the resolution proposed; and (b) the grounds on which it is proposed) at which the Associate is entitled to be heard);
20.4	in the case of an Individual, that Individual has died;
20.5	in the case of a Group, that Group goes into receivership or liquidation, or is dissolved or otherwise ceases to exist.

GENERAL MEETINGS (Meetings of the Members)	
21	The Board may call a GM at any time and must call a GM within 28 days of a valid requisition. To be valid, such requisition must be signed by at least 5% of the Members, must clearly state the purposes of the meeting, and must be delivered to the registered office of the Organisation. The requisition may consist of several documents in like form each signed by one or more of the Members.

Annual General Meeting	
22	The Board shall convene one GM a year as an AGM. An AGM need not be held during the calendar year during which the Organisation is incorporated, provided an AGM is held within 15 months of the date of incorporation. Thereafter, not more than 15 months shall elapse between one AGM and the next.
22.1	The business of each AGM shall include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a report by the Chairperson on the activities of the Organisation; (b) the election of Elected Trustees; (c) consideration of the accounts of the Organisation; (d) a report of the auditor if applicable; and (e) the appointment of the auditor if applicable.

Notice of General Meetings	
23	Subject to the terms of clause 67, notice of a GM shall be given as follows:
23.1	At least 14 Clear Days' notice must be given of any GM.
23.2	The notice must specify the place, date and time of the GM, the general nature of business to be dealt with at the meeting; and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) in the case of a resolution to alter the constitution, must set out the exact terms of the proposed alteration(s); and (b) in the case of any special resolution (as defined in clause 30) must set out the exact terms of the resolution.
23.3	Notice of every members' meeting must be given to all the members of the Organisation, and to all the Trustees; but the accidental omission to give notice to one or more members will not invalidate the proceedings at the meeting.

CHAIRPERSON OF GENERAL MEETINGS	
24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The Chairperson of the Organisation shall act as Chairperson of each GM. (b) If the Chairperson is not present or willing to do so the Vice-Chairperson of the Organisation shall act as Chairperson of the GM. (c) If neither the Chairperson nor the Vice-Chairperson is present or willing to act as Chairperson of the GM within 15 minutes after the time at which it was due to start, the Trustees present shall elect from among themselves one of the Elected Trustees who will act as Chairperson of that GM.

QUORUM AT GENERAL MEETINGS	
25	The quorum for a GM shall be the greater of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) eleven Members; or (b) 5% of the Members, present either in person or by proxy. <p>No business shall be dealt with at any GM unless a quorum is present.</p>

25.1	If a quorum is not present within 15 minutes after the time at which the GM was due to start (or if, during a GM, a quorum ceases to be present) the GM shall be adjourned until such time, date and place as may be fixed by the Chairperson of the GM.
25.2	The Board may make arrangements in advance of a GM to allow members (or their proxies) to fully participate remotely, so long as all those participating in the meeting can communicate with each other; and all Members (or their proxies) may vote during the meeting. A Member or proxy participating remotely by such means shall be deemed to be present in person at the GM.

VOTING AT GENERAL MEETINGS	
26	The Chairperson of the meeting shall endeavour to achieve consensus wherever possible but, if necessary, questions arising shall be decided by being put to the vote.
26.1	Each Member shall have one vote, to be exercised in person or by proxy, by a show of hands
26.2	A secret ballot may be demanded by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the chairperson of the GM; or b) at least two Members present at the GM, <p>before a show of hands and must be taken immediately and in such manner as the chairperson of the GM directs. The result of a secret ballot shall be declared at that GM.</p>
27	Whilst the attendance of Members at GMs is encouraged, a Member may appoint a proxy to attend a GM on behalf of that Member. A proxy appointed to attend and vote at a GM on behalf of a Member need not be a Member and shall have the same rights as the Member who appointed them to speak and vote at the GM.
27.1	The form appointing the Proxy shall be in the form set out in Schedule 1 annexed to these Clauses;
27.2	The form appointing a proxy and the power of attorney or other authority (if any) under which it is signed, or a certified copy thereof, shall be lodged at the Registered Office not less than 48 hours before the time of the GM at which the proxy is to be used; and
27.3	No form of proxy shall be valid more than 12 months from the date it was granted.
28	In the event of an equal number of votes for and against any resolution, the Chairperson of the meeting shall have a vote in their capacity as a member of the Organisation.

Resolutions	
29	At any GM an Ordinary Resolution put to the vote of the meeting may be passed by a simple majority of the Members voting (in person or by proxy).

30	<p>Certain resolutions must be passed as Special Resolutions, including resolutions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) to alter the name of the Organisation; or b) to amend the Purposes; or c) to amend these Clauses; or d) to wind up the Organisation in terms of clause 72. <p>At any GM a Special Resolution put to the vote of the meeting may be passed by not less than two thirds of the Members voting (in person or by proxy).</p>
31	<p>Ordinary and Special Resolutions may be passed in writing, rather than at a General Meeting, and shall have effect as if they had been passed at a GM, provided the terms of this Clause are followed.</p>
31.1	<p>An Ordinary Resolution may be passed in writing if signed by a simple majority of all the Members.</p>
31.2	<p>A Special Resolution to wind up the Organisation may be passed in writing if signed by all the Members.</p>
31.3	<p>Any other Special Resolution may be passed in writing if signed by not less than two thirds of all the Members.</p>
31.4	<p>Written resolutions must be sent to all Members at the same time (the “Circulation Date”) in hard copy (posted or hand-delivered) or electronic form (faxed or e-mailed), or by means of a website.</p>
31.5	<p>Written resolutions must be accompanied by a statement informing the Member:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) how to signify agreement to the resolution; (b) how to return the signed resolution to the Organisation (in hard copy (posted or hand-delivered) or electronic form (faxed or e-mailed)); (c) the date by which the resolution must be passed if it is not to lapse (that is, the date which is 28 days after the Circulation Date); and (d) that they will not be deemed to have agreed to the resolution if they fail to reply.
31.6	<p>A written resolution may consist of several documents in the same form, each signed by or on behalf of one or more Members.</p>
31.7	<p>Once a Member has signed and returned a written resolution in agreement thereto, that Members’ agreement is irrevocable.</p>
31.8	<p>The Members may require the Organisation to circulate a written resolution.</p>
31.8.1	<p>The resolution must be requested by at least 5% of the Members. Requests must be in hard copy (posted or hand-delivered) or electronic form (faxed or e-mailed), must identify the resolution and may be accompanied by a statement not exceeding 1,000 words which the Organisation will also be required to circulate.</p>
31.8.2	<p>The Board may reject the resolution but must provide reasons for doing so to the members requesting the resolution.</p>

31.8.3	If accepted, the Organisation must circulate the resolution and any accompanying statement within 21 days, and may require the requesting Members to cover the expenses it incurs circulating the resolution.
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MEETING ADJOURNMENT	
32	The Chairperson of the GM may, with the consent of a majority of the Members voting (in person or by proxy), adjourn the General Meeting to such time, date and place as the Chairperson may determine.

ORGANISATION MANAGEMENT	
33	The affairs, property and funds of the Organisation shall be directed and managed by a Board of Trustees. The Board:
33.1	shall set the strategy and policy of the Organisation;
33.2	shall, where no employees or managers are appointed, be responsible for the day-to-day management of the Organisation;
33.3	shall hold regular meetings between each AGM, meeting as often as necessary to despatch all business of the Organisation;
33.4	shall monitor the financial position of the Organisation;
33.5	shall direct and manage the affairs and Property of the Organisation;
33.6	shall generally control and supervise the activities of the Organisation;
33.7	may, on behalf of the Organisation, do all acts which may be performed by the Organisation (other than those required to be performed by the Members at a GM);
33.8	may exercise the powers of the Organisation; and
33.9	may not also be paid employees of the Organisation.

INTERIM BOARD	
34	Upon incorporation of the Organisation, the individuals who signed the Trustee declaration forms which accompanied the application for incorporation of the Organisation shall be deemed to have been appointed by the members as Trustees with effect from the date of incorporation of the Organisation.
34.1	The Interim Board shall retire at the first GM, which shall be held as soon as practicable following incorporation, but shall remain eligible for re-election (the period of office between the date of incorporation and the date of the first GM not being regarded as a "term of office" for the purposes of clause 24.6).

COMPOSITION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES	
35	The number of Trustees shall be not less than three and the total number of Trustees shall not be more than ten.

APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES	
36	From and after the first General Meeting of the Organisation, the Board shall comprise the following individual persons (a majority of whom shall always be Elected Trustees):
36.1	up to ten individual persons elected as Trustees by the Members in accordance with clause 37 (“the Elected Trustees”), who must themselves be Ordinary Members; and
36.2	an individual from a community representative body for each of Stanley and Bankfoot; and
36.3	up to two individual persons co-opted in accordance with clause 39 (“the Co-opted Trustees”), so as to ensure a spread of skills and experience within the Board.
36.4	Employees of the Organisation may not be nominated as or become Trustees.

ELECTED TRUSTEES	
37	At the first General Meeting of the Organisation, the Members shall elect up to ten individual Ordinary Members as Elected Trustees.
37.1	Elected Trustees must be nominated in writing by at least two Members. Such nominations must contain confirmation from the nominee that they are willing to act as an Elected Trustee and must be delivered to the registered office of the Organisation at least seven days before the GM.
37.2	Each Member has one vote for each vacancy in the Elected Trustees on the Board.
37.3	Provided the first GM is not also the first AGM, there shall be no changes in the Trustees at the first AGM (except to fill any vacancies left following the first GM or caused by retirements since the first GM).
37.4	At the second and subsequent AGMs, one-third of the Elected Trustees (rounding upwards if this is not a whole number) shall retire from office at the close or adjournment of that meeting.
37.5	A retiring Trustee shall be eligible for re-election after one term of office. A retiring Trustee shall not be eligible for re-election after two consecutive terms of office until a period of one year in which they have not been a Trustee has passed.
37.6	The Elected Trustee(s) to retire at an AGM shall be those who have been longest in office since their election/re-election (unless other Elected Trustee(s) have agreed to retire at that AGM). As between Individuals who were appointed as Elected Trustees on the same date, the Elected Trustee(s) to retire shall be agreed between the Individuals appointed on the same date or determined by lot.

APPOINTED TRUSTEES	
38	Subject to clause 36.2, an individual from a community representative body for each of Stanley and Bankfoot; and in respect of which the following shall apply:

38.1	Nominations, which must contain confirmation from the nominee that they are willing to act as an Appointed Trustee, must be delivered to the registered office of the Organisation at least two days before the first GM or at least two days before an AGM. If no new nomination is delivered in accordance with this clause, any Trustee previously appointed shall remain in office.
38.2	For the avoidance of doubt, an Appointed Trustee may attend and vote at Board meetings (subject to clause 63).
38.3	The community representative body for each of Stanley and Bankfoot may appoint or remove its Appointed Trustee at any time, by written notice to that effect delivered to the Registered Office not less than 2 days before the change is to take effect.

CO-OPTED TRUSTEES	
39	Subject to clause 35, the Trustees may appoint Individuals as Trustees to ensure a spread of skills and experience within the Board (“Co-opted Trustees”) and may remove a Co-opted Trustee at any time.
39.1	A Co-opted Trustee shall retire at the AGM following their appointment unless reappointed by the Trustees.
39.2	A Co-opted Trustee can be removed from office at any time by a simple majority of the Board.
39.3	For the avoidance of doubt, a Co-opted Trustee may participate fully in at all Board meetings which they attend and is eligible to vote at them.

VACANCY	
40	The Board may from time to time fill any casual vacancy arising as a result of the retiral (or deemed retiral for any reason) of any Elected Trustee from or after the date of such retiral or deemed retiral until the next AGM.

TRUSTEES – GENERAL DUTIES	
41	Each of the Trustees has a duty, in exercising functions as a Trustee, to act in the interests of the Organisation; and, in particular, must:
41.1	seek, in good faith, to ensure that the Organisation acts in a manner which is in accordance with its purposes;
41.2	act with the care and diligence which it is reasonable to expect of a person who is managing the affairs of another person;
41.3	in circumstances giving rise to the possibility of a conflict of interest between the Organisation and any other party, put the interests of the Organisation before that of the other party; where any other duty prevents them from doing so, disclose the conflicting interest to the Organisation and refrain from participating in any deliberation or decision of the other Trustees with regard to the matter in question;
41.4	ensure that the Organisation complies with any direction, requirement, notice or duty imposed under or by virtue of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005.
42	In addition to the duties outlined in clause 41, all of the Trustees must take such steps as are reasonably practicable for the purpose of ensuring:

42.1	that any breach of any of those duties by a Charity Trustee is corrected by the Trustee concerned and not repeated; and
42.2	that any Trustee who has been in serious and persistent breach of those duties is removed as a Trustee.
43	Provided they have declared their interest -- and have not voted on the question of whether or not the Organisation should enter into the arrangement -- a Trustee will not be debarred from entering into an arrangement with the group in which they have a personal interest; and (subject to clause 61 and to the provisions relating to remuneration for services contained in the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005), they may retain any personal benefit which arises from that arrangement.
44	No Trustee may serve as an employee (full time or part time) of the Organisation; and no Trustee may be given any remuneration by the Organisation for carrying out their duties as a Trustee.
45	The Trustees may be paid all travelling and other expenses reasonably incurred by them in connection with carrying out their duties; this may include expenses relating to their attendance at meetings.

	CODE OF CONDUCT FOR TRUSTEES
46	Each of the Trustees shall comply with the code of conduct (incorporating detailed rules on conflict of interest) prescribed by the Board from time to time.
46.1	The code of conduct shall be supplemental to the provisions relating to the conduct of Trustees contained in this constitution and the duties imposed on Trustees under the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005; and all relevant provisions of this constitution shall be interpreted and applied in accordance with the provisions of the code of conduct in force from time to time.

	REGISTER OF TRUSTEES
47	The Board must keep a register of Trustees, setting out for each current Trustee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the name of the Trustee; b) the address of the Trustee; c) the date on which they were appointed as a Trustee; and d) any office held by them in the Organisation.
47.1	Where a Trustee is not an individual the register must also contain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) any other name by which the Trustee is known; b) the principal contact for the Trustee; c) any number assigned to it in the Scottish Charity Register (if it is a charity); and d) any number with which it is registered as a company, if it is a company.
47.2	Where the Trustee is appointed by OSCR under section 70A of the 2005 Act it must be recorded in the register.

47.3	For each former Trustee the register must set out, for at least 6 years from the date on which they ceased to be a Trustee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the name of the Trustee; b) any office held by the Trustee in the Organisation; and c) the date on which they ceased to be a Trustee.
47.4	The Board must ensure that the register of Trustees is updated within 28 days of receiving notice of any change.
47.5	If any person requests a copy of the register of Trustees, the Board must ensure that a copy is supplied to them within 28 days, providing the request is reasonable; if the request is made by a person who is not a Trustee of the Organisation, the Board may provide a copy which has the name and address of any of the Charity Trustees blanked out. The name of a Trustee may only be blanked out if the Organisation is satisfied that including that information is likely to jeopardise the safety or security of any person or premises.

TERMINATION OF TRUSTEES OFFICE	
48	A Trustee will automatically cease to hold office if:
48.1	they give the Organisation a notice of resignation, signed by them;
48.2	they become an employee or paid contractor of the Organisation;
48.3	in the case of a Trustee elected under clause 37) they cease to be a member of the Organisation;
48.4	in the case of a Trustee appointed under clause 38) they cease to be a member of the appointing group;
48.5	in the case of a Trustee co-opted under clause 39) the Board under clause 39.2) vote to end the appointment;
48.6	they become disqualified from being a Trustee under the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005;
48.7	they are absent (without good reason, in the opinion of the Board) from more than three consecutive meetings of the Board - but only if the Board resolves to remove them from office;
48.8	they become incapable for medical reasons of carrying out their duties as a Trustee - but only if that has continued (or is expected to continue) for a period of more than six months;
48.9	they are removed from office by resolution of the Board on the grounds that they are considered to have committed a material breach of the code of conduct for Trustees (as referred to in clauses 46);
48.10	they are removed from office by resolution of the Board on the grounds that they are considered to have been in serious or persistent breach of their duties under section 66(1) or (2) of the 2005 Act;
48.11	they become prohibited from being a Trustee by virtue of section 69(2) of the 2005 Act

48.12	they commit any offence under section 53 of the 2005 Act.
49	Clauses 48.9 and 48.10 apply only if the following conditions are met:
49.1	the Trustee who is subject of the resolution is given reasonable prior written notice of the grounds upon which the resolution for removal is to be proposed;
49.2	the Trustee concerned is given the opportunity to address the meeting at which the resolution is proposed prior to the resolution being put to a vote; and
49.3	at least two thirds of the Trustees then in office vote in favour of the resolution.

CHAIRPERSON AND VICE-CHAIRPERSON	
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50	The Board shall meet as soon as practicable meeting immediately after each AGM or following the resignation of the existing Chairperson/Vice-Chairperson to appoint: (a) an Elected Trustee to chair Board meetings and GMs (the “Chairperson”), and (b) an Elected Trustee to chair Board meetings and GMs in the event that the Chairperson is not present and willing to do so (the “Vice Chairperson”).
50.1	In the event that: (a) the Chairperson is not present and willing to act within 15 minutes of the time at which the GM/Board meeting is due to start, or no Chairperson is currently appointed; and (b) the Vice-Chairperson is not present and willing to act within 15 minutes of the time at which the GM/Board meeting is due to start, or no Vice-Chairperson is currently appointed, the Trustees present must appoint an Elected Trustee to chair the GM/Board meeting.

BOARD MEETINGS	
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51	The quorum for Board meetings shall be not less than 50% of all the Trustees, a majority of whom are Elected Trustees. No business shall be dealt with at a Board meeting unless such a quorum is present.
51.1	A Trustee shall not be counted in the quorum at a meeting (or at least the relevant part thereof) in relation to a resolution on which, whether because of personal interest or otherwise, they are not entitled to vote.
51.2	The Board may make any arrangements in advance of any Board meeting to allow members to fully participate in such meetings so long as all those participating in the meeting can clearly comprehend each other; a member participating in any such means other than in person shall be deemed to be present in person at the Board meeting.
52	7 Clear Days’ notice in writing shall be given of any meeting of the Board at which a decision in relation to any of the matters referred to in clause 30 is to be made, which notice shall be accompanied by an agenda and any papers relevant to the matter to be decided.
52.1	All other Board meetings shall require not less than 7 days’ prior notice unless all Trustees agree unanimously in writing to dispense with such notice on any specific occasion.
52.2	On the request of a Trustee the Chairperson shall summon a meeting of the Board by notice served upon all Trustees, to take place at a reasonably convenient time and date.

53	No alteration of the Clauses and no direction given by Special Resolution shall invalidate any prior act of the Board which would have been valid if that alteration had not been made or that direction had not been given.
54	The Board may act notwithstanding any vacancy in it, but where the number of Trustees falls below the minimum number specified in clause 35, it may not conduct any business other than to appoint sufficient Trustees to match or exceed that minimum.
55	The Board may invite or allow any person to attend and speak, but not to vote, at any meeting of the Board or of its sub-committees.
56	The Board may from time to time promulgate, review and amend any Ancillary Regulations, Guidelines and/or Policies, subordinate at all times to these Clauses, as it deems necessary and appropriate to provide additional explanation, guidance and governance to members/Trustees.

	VOTING AT BOARD MEETINGS
57	The Chairperson of the Board meeting shall endeavour to achieve consensus wherever possible but, if necessary, questions arising shall be decided by being put to the vote.
57.1	Each Trustee present (and who is eligible to vote) has one vote. In the event of an equal number of votes for and against any resolution at a Board meeting, the Chairperson of the meeting shall have a casting vote as well as a deliberative vote.
57.2	A resolution in writing shall be as valid and effectual as if it had been passed at a meeting of the Board or of a sub-committee. A resolution may consist of one or several documents in the same form each signed by one or more Trustees or members of any relative sub-committee as appropriate.

	SUB-COMMITTEES
58	The Board may delegate any of its powers to sub-committees, each consisting of not less than one Trustee and such other person or persons as it thinks fit or which it delegates to the committee to appoint.
58.1	Any sub-committee so formed shall, in the exercise of the powers so delegated, conform to any remit and regulations imposed on it by the Board. The meetings and proceedings of any such sub-committee shall be governed by the provisions of these Clauses for regulating the meetings and proceedings of the Board so far as applicable and so far, as they are not superseded by any regulations made by the Board.
58.2	Each sub-committee shall ensure the regular and prompt circulation of the minutes of its meetings to all Trustees.

	CONSTRAINTS ON PAYMENTS/BENEFITS TO MEMBERS AND TRUSTEES
59	The income and property of the Organisation shall be applied solely towards promoting the Purposes and do not belong to the members. Any surplus income or assets of the Organisation are to be applied for the benefit of the Community.

60	No part of the income or property of the Organisation shall be paid or transferred (directly or indirectly) to the members of the Organisation, or to any other individual, whether by way of dividend, bonus or otherwise, except in the circumstances provided for in clause 61.
61	No benefit (whether in money or in kind) shall be given by the Organisation to any member or Trustee except the possibility of:
61.1	repayment of out-of-pocket expenses (subject to prior agreement by the Board);
61.2	reasonable remuneration in return for specific services actually rendered to the Organisation (in the case of a Trustee such services must not be of a management nature normally carried out by a Trustee of an Organisation);
61.3	payment of interest at a rate not exceeding the commercial rate on money lent to the Organisation;
61.4	payment of rent at a rate not exceeding the open market rent for property let to the Organisation;
61.5	the purchase of property from any member or Trustee provided that such purchase is at or below market value;
61.6	the sale of property to any member or Trustee provided that such sale is at or above market value; or
61.7	payment by way of any indemnity, where appropriate in accordance with clause 94.
62	Where any payment is made under clause 61, the terms of clause 63 must be observed.

PERSONAL INTERESTS & CONFLICTS OF INTEREST	
63	Whenever a Trustee finds that there is a personal interest, as defined in sub-clauses 63.3 and 63.4, they have a duty to declare this to the Board meeting in question.
63.1	A Trustee must not vote at a Board meeting (or at a meeting of a sub-committee) on any resolution which relates to a matter in which they has a personal interest or duty which conflicts (or may conflict) with the interests of the SCIO.
63.2	It will be up to the Chairperson of the meeting in question to determine: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) whether the potential or real conflict simply be noted in the Minutes of any relevant meeting, or (b) whether the Trustee in question, whilst being permitted to remain in the meeting in question, must not partake in discussions or decisions relating to such matter, or (c) whether the Trustee in question should be required to be absent during that particular element of the meeting. Where a Trustee leaves, or is required to leave, the meeting they no longer form part of the quorum for that meeting.
63.3	An interest held by an individual who is “connected” with the Trustee under section 68(2) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 (husband/wife, partner, child, parent, brother/sister etc) shall be deemed to be held by that Trustee;

63.4	A Trustee will be deemed to have a personal interest in relation to a particular matter if a body in relation to which they are an employee, director, member of the management committee, officer or elected representative has an interest in that matter.
63.5	The Board shall determine from time to time what interests shall be relevant interests and shall ensure that a Register of Notices of Relevant Interests is maintained, which shall be open for inspection by both the Board and members of the Organisation and, with the express prior written approval of the Trustee or employee concerned, by members of the public.

OFFICER BEARERS	
64	The Board may appoint office bearers for such term and upon such terms and conditions as they think fit. Any officer bearer may be removed by the Board at any time
64.1	<p>The Board may appoint a treasurer for such term and upon such terms and conditions as they think fit. The treasurer may be removed by the Board at any time. The treasurer may be required to attend Board and sub--committee meetings but:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) may not participate in such meetings for voting or quorum purposes unless they are also a Trustee; (b) may not attend meetings (or parts of meetings) at which their remuneration or employment is to be discussed; and (c) (if the treasurer is not a Trustee) may not attend meetings at which confidential matters are to be discussed.

FINANCES & ACCOUNTS	
65	The Board shall determine:
65.1	which banks or building societies the bank accounts of the Organisation shall be opened with;
65.2	how bank accounts shall be maintained and operated; and
65.3	how cheques and other negotiable instruments, and receipts for monies paid to the Organisation, shall be signed, drawn, accepted, endorsed or otherwise executed.
66	The Board shall cause accounting records to be kept for the Organisation in accordance with the requirements of the 2005 Act and other relevant legislation.
66.1	The accounting records shall be maintained by the Treasurer (if there is one) and overseen by the Principal Officer (if there is one), or otherwise by, or as determined by, the Board. Such records shall be kept at such place or places as the Board thinks fit and shall always be open to the inspection of the Trustees.
66.2	The Board must prepare annual accounts, complying with all relevant statutory requirements, and must ensure the accounts are examined or audited, as appropriate, by a qualified examiner or auditor.
66.3	At each AGM, the Board shall provide the members with a copy of the accounts for the period since the last preceding accounting reference date (or, in the case of the first account since the incorporation of the Organisation). The accounts shall be accompanied by proper reports of the Board.

66.4	Copies of such accounts shall, not less than 21 clear days before the date of the AGM, be delivered or sent to all members, Trustees, the Office Bearers and the auditor, or otherwise be available for inspection on the website or other location of the Organisation (with all members, Trustees, the Organisation Secretary and the auditor being made aware that they are so available for inspection there).
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NOTICES	
67	The Organisation may serve a notice on a Member in hard copy (addressed to the address given for that Member in the register of members and posted or hand-delivered) or electronic form (faxed or emailed). A notice is deemed to have been served on the day following the day on which it is hand-delivered, posted, faxed or emailed.
68	The Organisation may communicate with a Member by electronic means (including fax and email) unless the Member has requested that communications from the Organisation be sent in hard copy. The Organisation may publish notifications by means of a website provided the Organisation has advised Members of this and taken reasonable steps to notify Members who have informed the Organisation that they do not have internet access.

RECORDS OF MEETINGS	
69	The Board shall cause minutes to be made of all appointments of officers made by it and of the proceedings of all General Meetings and of all Board meetings and of sub-committees, including the names of those present, and all business transacted at such meetings and any such minutes of any meeting, if purporting to be signed after approval, either by the Chairperson of such meeting, or by the Chairperson of the next succeeding meeting, shall be sufficient evidence without any further proof of the facts therein stated.

INDEMNITY	
70	Subject to the terms of the 2005 Act and without prejudice to any other indemnity, the Trustees, or member of any sub-committee, the Organisation Office Bearers and all employees of the Organisation may be indemnified out of the funds of the Organisation against any loss or liability (including the costs of defending successfully any court proceedings) which he, she or they may incur or sustain, in connection with or on behalf of the Organisation.

ALTERATION TO THE CLAUSES	
71	Subject to the terms of this clause, this constitution may be altered by a Special Resolution of the members passed in accordance with clause 30 or 31.3
71.1	Any changes to the purposes set out in clause 4 are subject to written consent being obtained from OSCR (and its successors) in terms of section 16 of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005
71.2	The Board must notify OSCR (and its successors) of any changes to the constitution not relating to the purposes, in terms of section 17 of The Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005

DISSOLUTION	
72	The Organisation may be wound up or dissolved only on the passing of a Special Resolution for that purpose in accordance with clauses 30 and 31.4, and subject to written consent being obtained from OSCR.
72.1	<p>If, on the winding--up of the Organisation, any property or assets remains after satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, such property shall be given or transferred to such other community body or bodies or charitable group, which has purposes which resemble closely the purposes of the Organisation, as may be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) determined by not less than two thirds of the Ordinary Members of the Organisation voting (in person or by proxy) at a General Meeting called specifically (but not necessarily exclusively) for the purpose; and (b) approved by OSCR (and its successors).

Schedule 1 Form of Proxy

West Stormont Woodland Group

I,,

residing at,

being a Member of the above Organisation hereby appoint

.....,

of,

and, failing him or her,,

of,

as my proxy to vote on my behalf at the [Annual General Meeting / General Meeting] of the Organisation to be held on

..... and at any adjournment thereof.

I hereby instruct my proxy to vote in favour of/against the following resolution[s]:

[insert resolution(s)]

Signed the day of

Signature of member appointing proxy

Business Plan Appendix BP5: WSWG 10 Year Staffing Plan

WSWG’s goal of bringing Taymount and Five Mile Woods into community ownership will be achieved through the Forestry and Land Scotland Community Asset Transfer Scheme. This facility falls within Scottish Government obligations contained within the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, which has introduced the right for community organisations and groups to request ownership, lease or use of public sector assets through acquiring them at a discount upon market values on the basis of investing in community benefits. The WSWG Project has been developed around its Window on the Woods Vision which captures the intention to deliver Community Wellbeing through a range of Community Benefit Themes and Woodland Management for Nature Recovery.



A fundamental objective of the WSWG Project is that of community engagement at all levels of project development and delivery. Run as a staffed organisation, the WSWG SCIO project will be overseen by the Board of Trustees in conjunction with the Wildwood Steering Group, comprising people with specialist knowledge and expertise relevant to the WSWG Vision. Staff will be engaged to develop and deliver work programmes across the Window on the Woods Vision in conjunction with volunteer Community Working Groups for each of element of the Vision.

The following sets out the indicative ten-year staffing plan which WSWG has developed to achieve this, with corresponding summary job descriptions below.

Year 1	Years 2-5	Years 6-10	>Year 10
Basic Staffing of WSWG Project – both Woods – Window on the Woods Year-round Activities Programmes			
Project Co-ordinator and Community Benefit Manager (Senior Post): WSWG Project: 3 d Creativity & Culture – 1 d Healthy Living & LLL – 1 d 5	Project Co-ordinator and Community Benefit Manager (Senior Post): WSWG Project: 2 d Creativity & Culture – 1.5 d Healthy Living – 1.5 d 5	Project Co-ordinator and Community Benefit Manager (Senior Post): WSWG Project: 2 d Creativity & Culture – 1.5 d Healthy Living – 1.5 d 5	Project Co-ordinator and Community Benefit Manager (Senior Post): WSWG Project: 2 d Creativity & Culture – 1.5 d Healthy Living – 1.5 d 5
Forestry, Ecology and Site Manager: WSWG Project: 1 d Forestry & Biodiversity - 2 d Forest Food – 1 d Welcome, Access & Accessibility – 1 d 5	Forestry, Ecology and Site Manager: WSWG Project: 1 d Forestry & Biodiversity - 2 d Forest Food – 1 d Welcome, Access & Accessibility – 1 d 5	Forestry, Ecology and Site Manager: WSWG Project: 1 d Forestry & Biodiversity-2 d Forest Food – 1 d Welcome, Access & Accessibility – 1 d 5	Forestry, Ecology and Site Manager: WSWG Project: 1 d Forestry & Biodiversity-2 d Forest Food – 1 d Welcome, Access & Accessibility – 1 d 5
Office Manager /Fundraiser: Admin – 2.5 d Fundraising – 2.5 d 5	Office Manager /Fundraiser: Admin – 2.5 d Fundraising – 2.5 d 5	Office Manager /Fundraiser: Admin – 2 d Fundraising – 3 d 5	Office Manager /Fundraiser: Admin – 2 d Fundraising – 3 d 5
Living Forest Enterprise Developer: 1	Living Forest Enterprise Developer: 1	Living Forest Enterprise Developer: 1	Living Forest Enterprise Developer: 1
	Lifelong Learning Manager: WSWG Project: 0.5 d Woodland Observatory– 2 d Other LLL – 2.5 d 5 (from Year 3)	Lifelong Learning Man’r: WSWG Project: 0.5 d Woodland Observatory-2d Other LLL – 2.5 d 5	Lifelong Learning Man’r: WSWG Project: 0.5 d Woodland Observatory-2d Other LLL – 2.5 d 5
		Taymount Hub Manager/ Green Enterprise Lead 5	Taymount Hub Manager/ Green Enterprise Lead 5

WSWG Summary Job Descriptions

WSWG Project Co-ordinator and Community Benefit Manager (Senior Post)

Full time – 5 days per week from Year 1

Salary: £30,000

The WSWG Project Co-ordinator and Community Benefit Manager will have the lead role in delivering and managing the WSWG Project in accordance with its Business Plan, sustainable operational policies and community engagement ethos. They will lead the staff team, oversee the management of volunteers and have principal responsibility for liaison with the Board of Trustees as well as overall responsibility for budgetary management of the WSWG Project.

They will also have specific responsibility for developing and implementing WSWG's Creativity and Culture and Healthy Living Programmes. This will include:

- establishing and supporting the Creativity and Culture and Healthy Living Community Working Groups
- delivering the Creativity and Culture and Healthy Living Year-Round Activities Programmes developed by their respective Community Working Groups, including managing involvement of session workers and other contracted service providers
- budgetary management of the Creativity and Culture and Healthy Living Programmes
- Development of Community-led design process for the Taymount Hub

They will also have similar responsibility for the Life-Long Learning Programme until appointment of the Life-Long Learning Manager in Year 3.

This post requires a person with relevant qualifications and demonstrable experience in project management, community engagement, a good understanding of business development, excellent general organisational and management skills, a good attention to detail and a talent at problem solving.

Excellent communication skills and an ability to motivate and inspire others with a commitment to development at a local level are also required.

Forestry, Ecology and Site Manager

Full time – 5 days per week from Year 1

Salary: £27,000

The Forestry, Ecology and Site Manager will be a key part of the WSWG staff team but will have specific lead responsibilities within that team and the WSWG Project as a whole.

The Forestry, Ecology and Site Manager will be responsible for development and delivery of and budgetary management for:

- the WSWG Woodland Management Plans for Nature Recovery
- the WSWG Forest Food Project
- All aspects of site management including deer control and appointment of forestry and other external contractors.
- establishing and supporting the Forestry, Biodiversity and Climate Community Working Group and other volunteer management in respect of the above in its Year-Round Activities Programmes.

They will also have specific responsibility for developing and implementing WSWG's Welcome, Access and Accessibility Plan. This will include:

- establishing and supporting the Welcome, Access and Accessibility Community Working Group
- delivering the infrastructure improvements of the Welcome, Access and Accessibility Plan with input from the Welcome, Access and Accessibility Working Group and its Year-Round Activities programmes.
- budgetary management of the Welcome, Access and Accessibility Plan.

WSWG proposes a number of buildings and structures to be created around the site, the aim being low impact and ideally of carbon neutral construction, potentially using timber harvested on site. Structures provisionally include the

initial staff base and store, the Loggers Shieling and rain shelters, but may later include structures relating to further development of the Taymount Hub and WSWG's Green Enterprise programme, including Artist's off-grid Bothy and Craft Hamlet. Depending on the nature of the construction, it is envisaged that the postholder may take the lead role in or work with those who are supervising contractors on construction projects and supervising volunteers or apprentices on any self-build projects.

This post requires a person with relevant qualifications and demonstrable experience in forest management, a good understanding of business development, excellent general organisational and management skills, a good attention to detail and a talent at problem solving.

Excellent communication skills and an ability to motivate and inspire others with a commitment to development at a local level are also required.

Office Manager/Fundraiser

Full time – 5 days per week from Year 1

Salary: £25,000 pro-rata

The Office Manager/Fundraiser will be a key part of the WSWG staff team but will have specific lead responsibilities within that team and the WSWG Project as a whole.

Their main Office Management duties will include:

- Providing day-to-day team and office functioning and support
- HR services to achieve a positive working environment through organisation and support of team members
- Financial management, including bookkeeping, insurance billing, payroll etc
- General WSWG Project and administrative support

Their main Fundraiser duties will include:

- Immersive familiarisation with WSWG project and programme development
- Development of funding applications in liaison with team members and Community Working Groups
- Ensuring a submission and success rate from funding applications commensurate with the minimum needs and aspirational targets of the Window on the Woods themed programmes and corresponding operational requirements.

This post requires a person with relevant qualifications and demonstrable experience in office and financial management and fundraising, excellent general organisational and communication skills, a good attention to detail and a talent at problem solving.

Living Forest Enterprise Developer

Part time – 1 day per week from Year 1

Salary: £25,000 pro-rata

This position, which could be either as an employee or on a self-employed basis, will focus on developing income streams from the Living Forest enterprises. This will range from the Forest Food Project including birch sap to Novel Forest Income such as tree dedication schemes and new planting, plus Natural Capital-based revenue opportunities.

This post requires a person with a creative outlook, good IT, communications and numeracy skills, preferably with experience in on-line marketing and web-based business development, good attention to detail and a talent at problem solving.

Life-Long Learning Manager

Full time – 5 days per week from Year 3

Salary: £25,000 pro-rata

The Life-Long Learning Manager will be a key part of the WSWG staff team but will have specific lead responsibilities within that team and the WSWG Project as a whole.

The Life-Long Learning Manager will be responsible for development and delivery of and budgetary management for:

- The Five Mile Wood “Woodland Observatory Project” – a long term community education project to monitor, compare and contrast this special woodland of two halves: rewilding in the northern “Gap Site” and sustainable forest management of the mature plantation woodland in the southern half of the site.
- WSWG’s general Life-Long Learning programme across both Five Mile Wood and Taymount Wood
- Volunteer management, including establishing and supporting the Life-Long Learning Community Working Group
- Life-Long Learning Year-Round Activities programmes developed with the Life-Long Learning Community Working Group, including engagement and management of session workers and other contracted service providers for this programme.

This post requires a person with relevant qualifications and demonstrable experience in environmental education, working with people of all ages and abilities, excellent general organisational and management skills, a good attention to detail and a talent at problem solving.

Excellent communication skills and an ability to motivate and inspire others with a commitment to development at a local level are also required.

Taymount Hub Manager/Green Enterprise Lead

Full time – 5 days per week from Year 6

Salary: £25,000 pro-rata

The Taymount Hub Manager/Green Enterprise Lead will be a key part of the WSWG staff team but will have specific lead responsibilities within that team and the WSWG Project as a whole.

Their main duties will include:

- Management of Taymount Hub
- Line management for Taymount Hub staff and other community enterprise employees
- Development of other proposed income generating Community Green Enterprises
- Volunteer management, including supporting the Green Enterprise Community Working Group and its Year-Round Activities Programmes.

This post requires a person with relevant qualifications and demonstrable experience in business, community projects and/or venue management, excellent general organisational and communication skills, a good attention to detail and a talent at problem solving.

This post should aim to be financially self-sustaining within the WSWG Green Enterprise Programme by Year 10.

Further information.

Whilst it is more likely that WSWG would offer these positions on the basis of direct employment as a WSWG staff member, either full time or on a part time basis, there could be opportunities for some positions being offered on a self-employed basis.

There may also be opportunities for job sharing, including possibilities for splitting posts into lead and trainee positions.

All staff members will be required to engage fully with the fundraising processes relating to all aspects of their responsibilities within the WSWG Project.

All staff members will be required to engage fully with the responsibilities of volunteer management including risk assessment, first aid, police disclosure procedures, etc.

All staff members will be required to engage fully with WSWG operational standards and training requirements of their role.

All positions will be on a two-year contract basis in the first instance, with a 3-month probationary period, and performance will be subject to regular review. It is hoped the positions would become permanent in due course.

The WSWG full time working week will be 35 hours, and pro-rata in part-time positions. All employed staff will have 6-8 weeks paid leave including all entitlements to public and bank holidays.

WSWG will eventually operate with personnel presence on site seven days a week, particularly once the Taymount Hub is in operation. Staff rotas will therefore apply to ensure appropriate cover, potentially involving flexible working and time off in lieu as required for all staff.

WSWG has an equal opportunities policy to ensure all members of staff employed by WSWG and all applicants for employment will be given equal opportunity irrespective of sex, marital status, race, colour, nationality or ethnic origin, in all aspects of recruitment, employment, promotion and training. WSWG is committed to giving full and fair consideration to people with disabilities applying for positions who possess the relevant skills and experience.



West Stormont Woodland Group

Business Plan Appendix BP6: The WSWG Imaginarium - The Long-List

The following is a list of potential ideas suggested, requested, contributed, dreamed of and discussed for Taymount and Five Mile Wood with Community Benefit in mind during the early stages of the development phase of the WSWG journey by many, many local people through a range of:

- Meetings
- Mindshowers and brainstorms
- Events and guided walks
- Interactive activities/message boards
- Exchange visits
- Website and email
- Word of Mouth

These community ideas and extensive networking with diverse local stakeholders in the WSWG Window on the Woods Vision, informed the initial WSWG Draft Proposal which was presented for community consultation in February/March 2021. Feedback from that survey led to the revised WSWG Proposal 2022 “Going Forward” which was widely supported in a second community consultation in October 2022.

* Indicates suggestions definitively included in the WSWG Proposal 2022. However, the format advanced in the WSWG Proposal 2022 for future and ongoing community engagement means any of the following could potentially be revisited with the Board, the staff, the Wildwood Steering Group and the Window on the Woods themed Community Working Groups once the woods are in community ownership.

Welcome, Access and Accessibility*

- Walking routes*
- Upgrade path at north entrance of Five Mile Wood*
- All abilities access*
- Cycle paths
- Horse and pony riding provision and jumps
- Improve bridge over Benchil Burn from Active Kids to Five Mile Wood
- Benches, picnic areas*
- Toilet provision at main entrances*
- Improved car parking*
- Information and Listening boards – eg local history, natural history, fitness/trim trail, etc*
- Bird hide*
- Children’s attractions:
 - Gruffalo Trail/Peter Rabbit-land/Teddy Bears’ Picnic Site
 - Mini-gauge railway
 - Geocache events with hotspots in the forest to find things. This could also be an app to find hidden virtual wildlife.
 - Item finding/treasure hunts
 - Pony club

Creativity and Culture*

- Art
- Open air theatre space

- Musical events, concerts, live music
- Dougie McLean concert in the woods – live streaming
- Chainsaw art
- Intergenerational art sessions

Healthy Living*

- Kinclaven Walking Group: path audit feedback for Taymount Wood
- WSWG Stride for Live Group: currently Bankfoot and Stanley walking groups
- Lots of walks, cycles, and fun activities in the woods!
- Zen trail
- Meditation/forest bathing
- Herbal walks
- Remembrance
 - Memorial Wood
 - Legacy Garden
 - War Memorial/Armistice Space
 - Woodland burial site
- Cycling Without Age (CWO) – trishaws
- Sporting activities
 - Running courses in both woods
 - Inclusive Orienteering (able-bodied and disabled on same team)
 - Mountain biking
- Dog training facility

Life-Long Learning*

- Forest School*/playgroups/nursery
- Playgroups/Parent and toddlers club
- Forest Church
- Forest Prison (community payback)
- Bushcraft
- Family Walk Questionnaires re plant and tree identification
- Green Living Support Centre
- Eco-evening Classes/Eco Conversations
- Carbon Conversations

Community Green Enterprise for income generation*

- Social enterprise activity/development*
- Posh snack bar!*
- Location/venue for appropriate third-party enterprise activity*
- Community Tree Shares/Sponsor a Tree*
- Community BBQ
- Weddings
- A9 Gap development: parking/minibus; caravan “Biscuit Box”; campervan stop-off - “Aire” at FMW*
- Community Energy Project*:
 - Solar/wind power
 - Bees and Solar Power/solar panels in wildflower meadows – solar power and improved biodiversity can go hand in hand (article in Ecologist magazine <https://theecologist.org/2018/jul/23/are-biodiversity-and-solar-natural-partners-asks-ross-grier-nextenergy3>)

Woodland Management for Nature Recovery*

- Ecological forest management regenerating habitats for increased biodiversity*
- Multiple parcels for different uses/disturbance levels within woodland – mosaic of land uses*
- Bat boxes/bird boxes/bug houses*
- Beaver plan
- Community Wildflower Project

Forest Enterprises for income generation

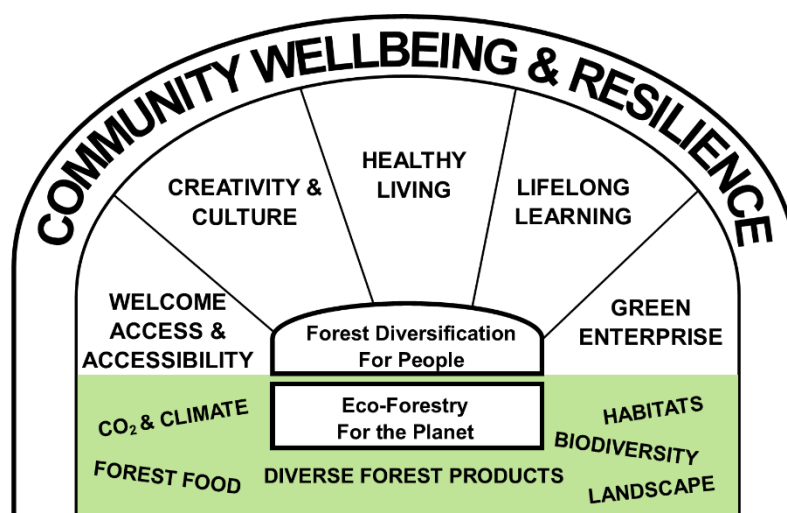
- Timber*
- Biomass
- Charcoal
- Christmas trees*

Community Engagement ideas


- Community engagement philosophy of The Glass-House Community Led Design (for built environment and open spaces) would invite all the senses, feelings and emotions to be incorporated in dreaming, planning and working towards imaginative spatial outcomes “with a difference” *
- 3D model-based community engagement
- Surveying, designing, planning, managing and recording could be developed like GIS mapping layers; can also be visualised like the layers of a wedding cake with people as support pillars.
- Help communicate and community involvement in WSWG project using:
 - Drone surveys/aerial photo-mapping
 - 3D model-based community engagement
 - surveying, designing, planning, managing and recording could be developed like GIS mapping layers; can also be visualised like the layers of a wedding cake with people as support pillars.
- The project will inevitably involve a combination of creative enthusiasm and grinding detail.
- Time Bank
- WSWG to tie community engagement activities in with Local and National Programmes (Actions Days, Weeks, Months, Years) etc
- Wwoofing
- All ages use*
- Four Seasons Four Themes
- Night-time use
- Encourage considerate use and enjoyment of both woods
- Long term commitment to donate from proceeds from WSWG operations to fund local art support and other good causes beyond the woods*

Beyond the Woods

- New path link from Taymount Wood to Kinclaven Bluebell Wood
- New paths from Airtully to Five Mile Wood
- New Boots on the Ground – training and helping young people into land-based livelihoods
- Alternatives to traditional farming and food production.*
- Use local land for more woodland, orchards, crops for human consumption
- Ownership of farm
- Local broadband/IT/wifi



WSWG Vision: “Window on the Woods”



Development of Infrastructure in Scottish Community Woodlands: A case study analysis

Report commissioned by the West
Stormont Woodland Group

Lisa Davidson

November 2021



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OVERVIEW

Community woodlands are becoming more widespread in Great Britain as the recognition of the benefits of community ownership within government grows. In Scotland, there are approximately 200 community woodlands, of which 20 acquired their woodlands through the Community Asset Transfer Scheme (CATS). Infrastructure development comprises a key part of most community woodland management plans, which can be costly and difficult to plan. Therefore, this report aims to identify the barriers and facilitators of infrastructure development in community woodlands as well as provide some insight into CATS.

This report was completed through a desk-based case study analysis of three Scottish community woodlands primarily using online sources and supported by a semi-structured interview. In this report, the background of, leisure activities undertaken, and infrastructure developed in the CWs are outlined in the case study section. This is followed by a discussion and conclusion of the findings.

This report highlights several aspects of infrastructure development that are key to the success of such projects within community woodlands. This includes a thorough understanding of the scope of the project, the enthusiasm of the community, the level of engagement with the community and how it relates to the proposed development, the skills within the group and the ability of leadership to reflect the stage of development. Moreover, this report found that having a clear vision for the asset acquisition, demonstrating previous success, committing own funds, and evidencing substantial community engagement were important aspects to a successful CATS application for the community woodlands discussed.

ABBREVIATIONS

Community woodland - CW

Community Asset Transfer Scheme - CATS

Community Woodlands Association - CWA

Abriachan Forest Trust - AFT

Mull and Iona Community Trust – MICT

Ardura Community Forest - ACF

Valley Renewables Group – VRG

Etrick and Yarrow Community Development Company – EYCDC

Forestry Commission Scotland – FCS (Now known as Scottish Forestry)

Forest Enterprise Scotland – FES (Now known as Forestry and Land Scotland)

INTRODUCTION

COMMUNITY WOODLANDS

Community woodlands (CWs) or forests are those that are managed to some extent by a community group. The bottom-up structure empowers communities to address their needs while providing social, economic, and environmental benefits such as improved social cohesion, job creation, promoting traditional skills, and improving physical and mental health (Lawrence and Ambrose-Oji, 2013; Forest Research, n.d.; Dean, 2017). While in the UK community woodlands are a relatively new concept, it is well established in Europe for example 20% of French forest cover is managed by forest communes (Woodland Trust, 2011). CWs can vary in terms of their motivations, legal structure, group organisation, partnerships, business model, woodland management, benefits distribution, and main funding source. Moreover, some of these differences may be driven by the different policies and legal structures developed by the devolved governments of the United Kingdom, which may favour different community woodland structures (Community Woodlands Association, 2012; Ambrose-Oji, Lawrence, and Steward, 2015; Lawrence and Ambrose-Oji, 2013).

In Scotland, the Community Empowerment Act of 2015 aims to empower communities to have more influence in the “planning and delivery of services” (Local Government and Communities Directorate and Economic Development Directorate, 2021). CATS is a key outcome of this legislation, which acts as a framework from which a community can take control of public land or buildings, by making an Asset Transfer Request outlining the motivations, benefits and how the plan will be actualised which will then be evaluated by an independent panel (Community Ownership Support Service, n.d.; Forest Enterprise Scotland and Forest Commission Scotland, 2017). While there are approximately 200 community woodland groups in Scotland (Community Woodlands Association, n.d.), few have gone through CATS. As of July 2021, Forestry and Land Scotland has received 25 asset transfer requests of which 20 have been approved, one has been withdrawn and one has been refused (S. Watson, 2021, Personal Communication, 30 June).

Physical infrastructure is often a core part of a CW management plan, such as creating or restoring paths or buildings. It can be used to facilitate recreation activities or to manage the impacts of visitors, for example, some might develop cycling paths or outdoor classrooms. Infrastructure does not only refer to the physical infrastructure, but it can also refer to soft forms like human capital (Investopedia Team, 2021). Developing infrastructure is often a core issue in any CW management plan and can require balancing the environmental damage it will cause, any consequential social issues and the costs of building and maintaining. Therefore, the purpose of this report is to identify the main barriers and facilitators of infrastructure development in community woodlands which can be used as a guide by prospective CW development projects and to gain an understanding of the CATS process.

METHOD

This report analyses three Scottish community woodland case studies: Abriachan Forest, Ardura Forest and Carron Valley Community Woodland. Where Abriachan Forest Trust was developed in response to the sale of the woodland in the 1990s and is considered the standard for success, Mull and Iona Community Trust (MICT) and Valley Renewable Group (VRG) were both already established community-led initiatives before developing a CW. Both MICT and VRG underwent the CATS process allowing for some insight into the scheme and how it may have influenced the infrastructure development plans.

The data was collected through a combination of desk-based research and document analysis. The majority of the data collected are from CATS application documents (feasibility studies, business plans, woodland management plans, decision notice), research articles, CWA documents, newsletter, news articles, and social media posts. It was further supported by a semi-structured interview with the former chair of the Carron Valley woodland group. Attempts have been made to contact MICT and Abriachan to undertake similar interviews however these were unsuccessful. As such, information and analysis relating to both community woodlands are limited to what could be found online.

CASE STUDIES

ABRIACHAN FOREST

INTRODUCTION

The village of Abriachan in the Scottish Highlands is a small rural community made up of approximately 130 people (Smith, 2021). The community founded the Abriachan Forest Trust (AFT), and acquired approximately 540 hectares of land, made up of a pine plantation and open hill land from the Forestry Commission in 1998 for community use (Woodland Trust, n.d.; Community Woodlands Association, 2012). The original aim of the trust was to develop infrastructure, create local employment & outdoor learning opportunities and improve the environmental value of the forest by diversifying the plantation (Forest Policy Group, 2016). 20 years later, they have become the leading example for CWs in Scotland, with an award-winning forest school education program that employs 4 staff members and hosts several successful skills training programs. They recently became recipients of the 1919 Forestry Act Centenary Award awarded by Scotland's Finest Woods Award (Transition Black Isle, n.d.). Moreover, they have improved access in the woodland with 40km of paths, planted more than 200,000 native trees, and have achieved relative economic stability through commercial felling, sawlogs & roundwood production in addition to grants and donations (Forest Policy Group, 2016; Ritchie and Haggith, 2005).

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

The Trust has significantly improved public access to the woodland through the creation of a car park, approximately 40km of paths, including all abilities trails (CWA, 2012; Forest Policy Group, 2016) and a sustainable development themed QR code trail designed by local artists, schools, and Highland One World (CWA, 2021a; Community Land Scotland, 2021). There is also 14km of bike trails designed and developed by Rik Allsop, divided into 3 trails of varying length and difficulty (Visit Scotland, n.d.; Smith, 2021). There are plans to expand the network of trails by creating a literacy trail (CWA, 2012), extending one of the existing mountain-biking trails and developing a new mountain-biking trail (Visit Scotland, n.d.).

The trust has developed a series of buildings to further their aims of outdoor learning such as a classroom for the forest school, a roundhouse, a bird hide, and an internet connection (Forest Policy Group, 2016; Nominet, 2018). Additionally, they have built two treehouses, rain shelters and workshops. The AFT proposed the creation of a bunkhouse and affordable housing however, these projects did not move forwards due to the cost, competition with another local project and the location (CWA, 2012; Forest Policy Group, 2016). Furthermore, in late July 2020, the roundhouse that was built 21 years ago burned down forcing the forest school and nursery to be temporarily relocated while funds are raised to rebuild the bronze age replica structure (Dixon, 2020; MacLennan, 2020).

ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN BY THE TRUST

The trust is very active and undertakes many different activities with a variety of outcome aims and target audiences. In particular, it is recognised for its award-winning outdoor education programme that has been reported to have had consequential social impacts. They work with external bodies such as the NHS, local council, and the John Muir Trust to ensure the employability, skill and mental health programs are fit for purpose and effective, highlighting the importance of partnerships. Recently they have expanded the outdoor education program to include a nursery for children aged 2-5, have classes focusing on children who require additional support and have a Roots program to target long term unemployed people referred by job centres (Forest Policy Group, 2016).

For people with and orbit those with dementia, the AFT has developed an outdoor exercise program including walks, body percussion, Gaelic singing lessons and nature-based craft activities (Forest Policy Group, 2016). The AFT also run a community garden to educate members about the benefits of local produce and reusing and recycling household waste, gardening skills, cooking classes, and distributing food to the community (CLS, 2021)

Further outdoor activities include, Nordic walks, sledging, x-country ski, hiking, geocaching, woodcraft, and children play areas (CWA, 2012, Visit Scotland, n.d., Forest Policy Group, 2016; CWA and NHS Highland, 2013; Scottish Natural Heritage, 2015). The AFT has focused a lot of resources toward mountain biking, expanding the number of trails, having a bike hire and private car hire services to transport bikes to the trails as well as a bike maintenance service (Visit Scotland, n.d.; CWA and NHS Highland, 2013; Forest Policy Group, 2016).

ARDURA FOREST

INTRODUCTION

In 2018 transfer of 200ha of Ardura Forest to Mull and Iona Community Trust (MICT) was approved (Wilkie, 2018; Mull and Iona Community Trust, 2019). MICT was founded in 1997 as a Company Limited by Guarantee and a charity, and have since built a Community Centre used as an office, meeting, and training space and developed a ranger service in partnership with NatureScot and Forestry and Land Scotland among others, and developed affordable housing and transport for the community (MICT, 2013, 2017)

The aims outlined for Ardura Forest in the Asset Transfer Request are to increase benefits to the community by generating income for the Trust, increase amenity value that provides a “low-visitor impact experience” while ecological restoring the site (FES, 2017b; MICT, 2017).

To achieve these aims, the Trust plans to lease the woodland to Torosay Hill Estate who are committed to the ecological restoration of the estate, and border 3 sides of the acquired Ardura Forest. Torosay Hill Estate will remove and replant the forest with native broadleaf and Caledonian pine, bear the cost of the restoration and share the profits of the estimated 40,000-50,000 tonnes of commercial timber worth approximately £747,000 – 1.1 million (based on two crop mensurations). In return, MICT will invest in infrastructure requirements and agree to the removal of non-mature commercial trees while retaining full access to the forest for all activities that will be undertaken in the community forest (MICT, 2017).

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

MICT carried out community consultation on infrastructure priorities. This revealed that the community were highly concerned about overdevelopment and related consequences, such as increased litter, noise, illegal overnight camping, and vandalism. However, despite these concerns, the community did highlight several visitor and recreational facilities and improvements they would like to see developed. In response, MICT developed a £365,000 infrastructure development proposal, with consideration to the community consultation results (MICT, 2017).

One of the main infrastructure development plans outlined by MICT is to restore 2 miles of the old road that passes through the forest and leads to a particularly scenic area of the forest, where they plan to build a Forest School. This will connect to the Craignure – Fionnphort path and has the potential to generate an additional £1 million for the island economy from increased tourism (MICT, 2017; Wood-Gee, 2014). The restoration project was conducted by TSL contractors and completed in early November 2020 (MICT, 2020a, 2020b).

The community consultation revealed that the development of a forest school was perceived to be the most beneficial project. Therefore, MICT planned to build an uninsulated shelter built by contractors of sawn and whole logs from on-site timber, to be used as a forest school classroom and was expected to cost approximately £20,000 (MICT, 2017). As of April 2021, the Forest School is operational and running a toddler group called Ardura Acorns (MICT, 2021a).

The Social Enterprise Plan outlines the expected site maintenance. It estimates that scraping and grading of the car park biannually, annual inspections of all-abilities trails, repairs and regular maintenance of composting toilets will cost approximately £6,000 annually (MICT, 2017). By the end of 2020, most of the infrastructure development that was planned has been completed. This includes a long-distance track, 2 circular walking trails, parking areas, several picnic areas, a wild camping site and composting toilets (CWA and Scottish Forestry, 2020).

ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN

The Forest School will not create revenue for the MICT and although it is primarily aimed at local school pupils, is thought it has the potential to take on school pupils from the mainland (MICT, 2017). At the time of the request, the local school only had 5 children, however, it is expected that as many as 10 children will attend the Forest School once a week, with local plans to increase the number of families with children in the area (District Valuer, 2017). There were also plans to combine the Forest School with swimming lessons in the local pool nearby to create a full day of activity. Since the spring of 2021, the toddler group Ardura Acorns have been undertaking a variety of activities such as playing in the river, scavenger hunting in the woodland, sowing wildflowers to feed pollinators and making bug hotels. Additionally, 2 out-of-school Care Playworker jobs (part-time) have been advertised (ACF, 2021; MICT 2020c).

Wellness activities have also been organised and undertaken in spring 2021. A Forest Bathing session took place, with the expectation that it will run twice a month, led by an experienced practitioner. A springtime bird song identification walk also took place in Ardura woodland. It is unclear how many people attended these activities however both events had approximately 3-5 people engage with the Facebook posts advertising the event (ACF, 2021). Furthermore, a Community Well-being Officer position was advertised in April 2021 (MICT, 2021b).

At the time of the successful transfer of 200ha of Ardura Forest to MICT, approximately 4ha had already been felled and half of the woodland had been planted with commercial timber (CWA and Scottish Forestry, 2020). In June 2021, the process of felling diseased larch began (ACF, 2021) and the forest joined the Northwoods Rewilding Network, aiming to the ecological restoration of smaller landholdings (Marjoribanks, 2021; Scotland The Big Picture, 2021).

CARRON VALLEY COMMUNITY WOODLAND

INTRODUCTION

The Valley Renewables Group (VRG) operates as both a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) and a company that is run by volunteers and has no capital assets (FES, 2017a; Grant and Tunnicliffe, 2017). The trust was created to manage funds designated for community benefit from the Craigenfelt windfarm into schemes such as the grants for improved home energy efficiency and education and environmental skills programmes for young people, with further ambitions to build a community centre (VRG, n.d.a.). The Asset Transfer Request was approved in 2018, shifting 21 hectares of woodland into community ownership and making it one of the first CWs approved through CATS (FES, 2017a; Hodge, 2018).

Carron Valley Community Woodland aims to reduce local fuel poverty and support home heating through timber harvesting, as well as improving biodiversity and develop community activities and events (Grant and Tunnicliffe, 2017). The VRG feasibility report proposes delivering these aims in three stages. Stage one is funded by VRG profits and a Scottish Land Fund grant. It is dedicated to setting up the community woodland by employing staff, delivering woodland management plan, develop basic infrastructure such as storage for equipment, improved paths, notice boards and a bird hide, as well as regular small events for locals (Grant and Tunnicliffe, 2017). Stage 2 involves developing a Community Open Day site to host community events such as BBQs, picnics and farmers markets is to be undertaken after stage one and funded by the VRG. Stage 3 starting at year 5 is to initiate a community-building, however, it is loan dependent and does not detrimentally impact the project should it not continue as stages 1 and 2 will deliver significant positive outcomes for the community (Grant and Tunnicliffe, 2017).

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

As of 2021, they have made progress in their infrastructure development plan, and have developed an all abilities core path as well as new paths within the mature woodland with benches at good viewing points. They have also placed a lockfast steel container with electricity access in the woodland to be used as storage and shelter for

volunteers. Additionally, they have set up an account with the iNaturalist app allowing visitors to gather information and record wildlife

Most of the work was undertaken by contractors with specialised equipment & machinery and was planned and overseen by a steering group that included relevant skills such as engineering. Activities that occur at the weekend such as tree and weed control, grass cutting, pruning, seeding, and replanting is undertaken by volunteers under the guidance of the woodland manager (VRG, 2019).

A three year financial and management plan has been created and supported by a forestry consultant group, the community council and BRG board, with an approved future 3-year plan. Future plans include building a community hub, an additional meeting area, a toilet block area, foraging and exercise trails, wildlife hides and wood fuel weekends (VRG, 2019).

ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN

Covid-19 restrictions have limited the community activities that have been able to take place. The official opening of the woodland was in April 2019, attracting approximately 200 people with the Woodland group hosting a BBQ at the woodland and offering tours. This provided an opportunity to directly communicate with members of the community and raise donations for the work that will be conducted in the woodland.

The woodland group aimed to host and create courses to develop the skills of community members. They have made strides towards this goal, by hosting an event with a guest speaker in March 2021. The guest speaker taught attendees how to harvest, store, preserve fruit as part of the community woodland orchard project (Valley Renewables Group, n.d.b.). In the future they would like to develop a chain saw training course (Valley Renewables Group, 2019).

In response to significant interest in a community orchard, the VRG provided fruit trees for interested community members to plant an orchard in their gardens. This was accompanied by an event to teach members how to care for and harvest their fruit trees, with the aim to host annual events where those who have taken part in the orchard project can bring their harvest and as a community make products such as cider (VRG, 2019).

To trial their method for accomplishing their aim of reducing fuel poverty in the community, a small area of windblown trees was felled. This provided an opportunity to understand the costs of contractors to fell the trees, as well as the logistics of distributing the wood to the community. Currently, large areas of woodland have been previously felled and 9000 native broadleaf trees have been replanted and a pond has been created. While this was mostly undertaken by contractors, the woodland group hosted a tree planting day for the community.

The woodland is rich in biodiversity having recorded several protected species and species of high conservation concern. To increase community engagement, the woodland group organised for the local scouts' group to help seeding around the pond and build bat and bird boxes and place them, with plans to develop a red squirrel project (VRG, 2019).

To measure the success of the community woodland projects and community engagement, the feasibility report outlined several indices, including (Grant and Tunnicliffe, 2017):

- Number of volunteers, engaged community members, people access facilities, learning opportunities and families accessing free wood fuel
- Improved habitat diversity based on a baseline set by a professional ecological survey
- Progress of Woodland Management Plan
- Increased confidence and skills
- Satisfaction and quality of life of community members

DISCUSSION

Project Scope

Project scope is exceptionally important in all aspects of project development, from planning and implementing through to maintenance. It involves a clear idea of why the project is needed, the intended outcomes of the project, what will determine success and assumptions that have been made (Team Clarizen, 2020). Having clearly defined goals and outcomes that are effectively communicated supported by indicators of success, will help avoid project creep potentially leading to wasted money or reduced stakeholder satisfaction (Bellenger, 2003). In terms of community woodland acquisition through CATS, it can be a significant factor in the decision to approve the asset transfer.

Relation to project aims

The infrastructure development proposal should be clearly tied to the aims of the CW and demonstrate how the proposed infrastructure will aid in achieving those aims. In response to the geographical isolation and lack of infrastructure experienced by the Abriachan community (Forest Policy Group, 2016; Smith, 2021), the AFT developed a forest school to create a focal point for the local children to be educated and entertained. The school now has internet access, hosts events for all ages and accredited skills training programs which are supported by the local council and the John Muir Trust (CWA, 2021b; Forest Policy Group, 2016; Nominet, 2018).

Similarly, the restoration of the old road proposed by MICT and connecting it to another path, has the potential to generate £1 million in economic contributions from the island, accomplishing their aims of increasing the amenity value of the woodland. Furthermore, they may be able to capture some of the economic contributions to the island, which can tie into their aim of providing long term income (MICT, 2017).

Scope size

In general, a common mistake in developing infrastructure is having a project scope that is too large, which may be undesired by the community where overdevelopment is a concern or impractical to build and maintain. An example could be taken from the restoration or development of new paths, as all CW groups analysed in this report set out to achieve. Balancing the needs of all stakeholders can be difficult, while some would want significantly improved access resulting in paths of concrete, brick, or board walk, these might be expensive to build and maintain while consequently giving the appearance of too developed. On the other hand, a minimalistic approach may feel less intrusive, is less expensive to build and maintain but may limit access to certain users. Furthermore, the infrastructure plan must be aligned with the size of the project, the importance of which is highlighted by the EYCDC unsuccessful CATS application. The decision notice discussed that the main aim of restoring the boardwalk was not sufficient to justify taking control of 173ha of land (Hodge, 2017).

These projects may also fall victim to unexpected costs. AFT build an outdoor classroom as part of their forest school which burned down in 2020, requiring expensive reparations. Because AFT is a long running and successful CW group they were able to raise significant funds online from the community, however not all groups will be able to appropriately manage unexpected exogenous impacts. Similarly, Carron Valley CW experienced infrequent fly-tipping that was expensive to remove and dispose of properly. While not an infrastructure project, this does highlight the importance of emergency funds availability.

Measuring success

While financial goals are the most common success indicator, for businesses with social aims, where the goals are often “profit, people, planet” (Hamm, 2016) non-financial measurements might be the most appropriate (Walker and Brown, 2004). In terms of infrastructure development, determining measures of success for the project, which can be used as a learning tool for the future, and will help build confidence and support for the next development project.

To determine success, the selected goals must be “measurable, pragmatic, and precise” (Hamm, 2016). The measures of success highlighted in the VRG feasibility plan appears to mirror these ideals. In their feasibility plan they detailed measures based on the number of people attending an event, the number of volunteers, improved habitat diversity and community satisfaction among others. However, their infrastructure measures are limited to the completion of certain projects such as “bird hide installation” which would be measured by the number of people using it, instead the delivery of the project (Grant and Tunnicliffe, 2017) in terms of budget, schedule or even scope.

While no specific measures of success could be found for AFT and ACF, one can look towards external measures. AFT has been operating for more than 20 years and is currently still looking for new ways to expand. They have hired several contractors, won multiple awards, run accredited courses recognised by charities and the local council and they are looking for new ways to expand. AFT could also point to high levels of community engagement reflected by raising £2000 in three days to restore a burned down outdoor classroom, as an indicator of success (Dixon, 2020; MacLennan, 2020).

In terms of infrastructure development, success should be measured in terms of its value to the community, the purpose it provides and the cost of the project (Zerjav and Vine, 2018; National Research Council, 1996). The community in Carron Valley desired an all-abilities trail, however, after construction it became apparent it was not fit for purpose as wheelchair access from the car park to the trail was very difficult and required revision to rectify. Therefore, initially, it was unsuccessful in its aim of providing access to all user types, they found that this problem could have been identified in planning had they provided extra consultation and attempted to test it first.

ACF and AFT both developed a forest school to support families living in geographically isolated villages (Forest Policy Group, 2016; MICT, 2017). While the outdoor classrooms might be expensive to build in comparison to other projects undertaken by CW groups, it is fulfilling a need and is actively used by the community. The value the forest school classroom has to the community and the purpose it provides could be demonstrated through number of students engaging as well as survey of how the community feel about the projects. Although, in the absence of such internal measure, the expansion of the service could also be used as an indicator of success, for example ACF have advertised vacancies for two part-time staff members to cope with demand of the forest School and the AFT have expanded their repertoire of courses on offer. However, using the number of staff as a success indicator might be problematic for CWs as some such as AFT are reliant on self-employed contractors (CWA, 2021).

Community engagement

Community engagement is an important part of any infrastructure development project, as it informs on the need for the project and the impact the development may have (Community Places, 2014). It is often conducted through questionnaires, focus groups and workshops (Herefordshire Council, 2015). However, it is particularly challenging for the rural communities that are encouraged to participate in the asset transfer schemes, as undertaking sufficient consultation engagement is difficult to achieve in geographically spread-out communities (Dickert and Sugarman, 2005; Yellow Book Ltd, 2017). Arnstein’s ladder of participation suggests that community consultation is one of the lowest forms of involvement only just above informing a community, considering that by itself it does not require that any grievances or objections heard must be addressed in a meaningful way (The Citizen’s Handbook, n.d.; Arnstein, 1969). Therefore, the importance of reflecting the will of the community in any infrastructure development cannot be understated.

VRG undertook a community survey in 2016 in which half of the community participated. It was found that a strong majority of respondents wanted to purchase the woodland and develop it into a community hub, using the windfarm funds already designated for community use. Additionally, two-thirds wanted the woodland to be used for walks and environmental educations, a majority wanted improved walking paths and approximately 20% wanted no development. In response to the engagement, the VRG improved the paths, developed environmental education activities for local schools & nurseries and plan to host community events such as BBQs and picnics (Grant and Tunnicliffe, 2017).

While it can be assumed that a community group developed from a bottom-up structure is likely to represent the community views, it may not always be the case (Keatts, 2013), therefore evidencing community engagement and support is essential. Early engagement with communities, which has been shown to reduce conflict (Corscadden, Wile and Yiridoe, 2012) and ensuring support for the proposal is a significant stage in the guidance for developing an Asset Transfer Request within CATS (FES and FCS, 2017). In the decision notice of the MICT and EYCDC CATS applications, the level of community consultation was noted, further demonstrating its importance to the process. Where MICT was praised for their community consultation, the failure to undertake further engagement with the community following changes to the proposal was one of the reasons given for the rejection of their CATS application (Wilkie, 2018; Hodge, 2017).

Motivation

In Calvert's (2009) report on Community Forestry in Scotland, motivation was discussed as a key issue for community woodland groups. Calvert notes that the high levels of motivation at the beginning of the process may not translate into day-to-day management and funding sourcing to maintain the woodland. Calvert (2009) then went on to describe the "waxing and waning of enthusiasm" in Laggan and Wooplaw. Infrastructure development should be designed with the potential waxing and waning of community enthusiasm in mind. Planning to build a large structure for a community centre, may seem feasible given the potential level of use and enthusiasm, however during a dip in community enthusiasm, it might be much more difficult to commit funds to its maintenance.

In Carron Valley community woodland, the woodland group received high levels of interest from the community for an orchard. Concerned that the community would lack motivation to volunteer to maintain the potential orchard, the woodland group decided against planting an orchard in the woodland. Instead, they provided fruit trees to community members who wanted a mini orchard in their own gardens and hosted an event to teach them how to look after and harvest the fruit trees. The eventual aim is to have an annual event where those who participated in the event, share the harvest of those trees with the community (VRG, n.d.b.).

Skills gap

The skills gap that exists generally in community-led projects is well documented, with the Woodland Trust report on Community Woodland Creation and Management (2011) noting it to be a key challenge and highlights that in Scotland there is a particular need for "financial and technical support" in the asset transfer process. The skills required to plan and develop the infrastructure is different to operational and maintenance skills, as are the skills needed for forestry management. This should be reflected in the staff, the membership, or the leadership (CWA, 2012), as not having the appropriate skills can lead to scope creep and associated problems (van Leeuwen, 2019).

There are different methods of closing this gap. Calvert (2009) advise that having a minimum of one paid management role would be ideal although recognises that doing so may be difficult due to financial limitations. MICT developed a director board consisting of 19 people of which 3 are co-directors specifically chosen to fill any skills gaps after an audit (MICT, 2017).

CWs often rely heavily or entirely on voluntary work however in the development of infrastructure this method may be implausible as it may require specialist skills and equipment (Confor, CWA and Highland and Islands Enterprise, 2016), therefore having a clear understanding of what can be achieved in house and which work will require contractors is a significant aspect. As MICT had been operating for quite some time before applying for a woodland asset transfer, they already had considerable experience in design, management, implementation of infrastructure projects, meaning they already had the in-house skills to develop these future projects (MICT, 2017).

CONCLUSION

Through analysing the experiences of three Scottish community woodlands, several barriers and facilitators have been identified in the development of infrastructure and the acquisition of public woodlands through CATS.

To successfully undertake infrastructure development, CW groups will benefit from having an excellent project scope statement, which includes a clear idea of what the aims of the woodland group are and how the proposed infrastructure will aid in achieving that aim. This is demonstrated by MICT aiming to use woodlands to raise funds for the trust and increase amenity value for the community. To that end, they proposed restoring and building paths that will connect to a larger network of paths significantly increasing tourism expenditure. To determine a project to be a success there must be agreed upon indicators for success. For socially-oriented organisations, these indicators will likely be non-financial, as demonstrated by VRG, who use the number of volunteers & guests and satisfaction rates as measurable success indicators. Community-led groups can then use these achieved measures to build confidence in their abilities and support for future projects, which might be key for securing funds.

Community engagement and enthusiasm is a significant aspect to be considered in infrastructure development and must be reflected in the plans. Where engagement will highlight the needs of the communities as well as any protestation which need to be accounted for, enthusiasm will determine how the project will be developed, as demonstrated by the development of an orchard in the Carron Valley Community Woodland. The skills present in CW groups is a well-established issue and can impact the success of an infrastructure project. Having the right skills will help avoid scope creep and all the associated issues such as, cost inflation or an end product that is unfinished or not fit for purpose. Furthermore, communities' groups should be flexible in changing leadership based on the skills required for different stages.

Two of the CWs examined in this report acquired their woodlands through CATS. These were compared to the EYCDC proposal who were unsuccessful in their bid to acquire a woodland. Through this analysis, there are some important aspects to their success or failure that will be beneficial for community groups who are also going through the CATS process. These include having a clear vision for the acquisition, demonstrating previous success, committing own funds to the project, and evidencing substantial community engagement.

There are limitations to this report based on the selection of the woodlands. Both MICT and VRG while providing valuable insight into the CATS process, both recently acquired their respective woodlands which in combination with the Covid-19 pandemic, has restricted their ability to develop infrastructure and hold community events, thereby limiting the analysis of their infrastructure development. Furthermore, as a result of lack of contact with MICT and AFT, the quality of the data collected, and the analysis thereafter was impacted. Future research should have a more in-depth and structured examination, through the use of interviews, into the barriers to infrastructure development in community woodland groups in Scotland and across the United Kingdom to develop a more detailed best practice guideline as well as guidance for how these barriers can be removed or reduced.

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Social Return on Investment (SROI) for Taymount and Five Mile Woods

Analysis of potential social value of bringing the woods into community ownership



Summary

In this SROI study, WSWG have demonstrated there is real potential for significant social returns from a well managed woodland resource that places nature - our life support system - at the forefront of decision making. Our Living Forest economic nature-based initiatives will not only deliver meaningful social and financial benefits to local communities, but will also deliver wider outcomes to the Scottish economy.

The following summarised SROI forecast outlined below, although not comprehensive, or calculated in the true sense of an SROI analysis, still gives an indicative potential value of impact for the various factors highlighted within the report.

SROI forecast value viewed over a 10 year period:

- Health and wellbeing impact savings to the NHS and Scottish economy: £4,345,682 – £26,974,102
- Community food growing: £25,000
- Pollinator value: £100,000
- Air quality improvements: £125,000
- Biodiversity and Forest existence: £3,239,690 over 10 years: £13,533,286 perpetuity value.
- Job creation: £207,413
- Voluntary sector: £195,310 - £1,953,104

Total potential social value of impact = £8,238,095- £32,624,309 over 10 years.

Diagram below showing WSWG SROI over 10 years

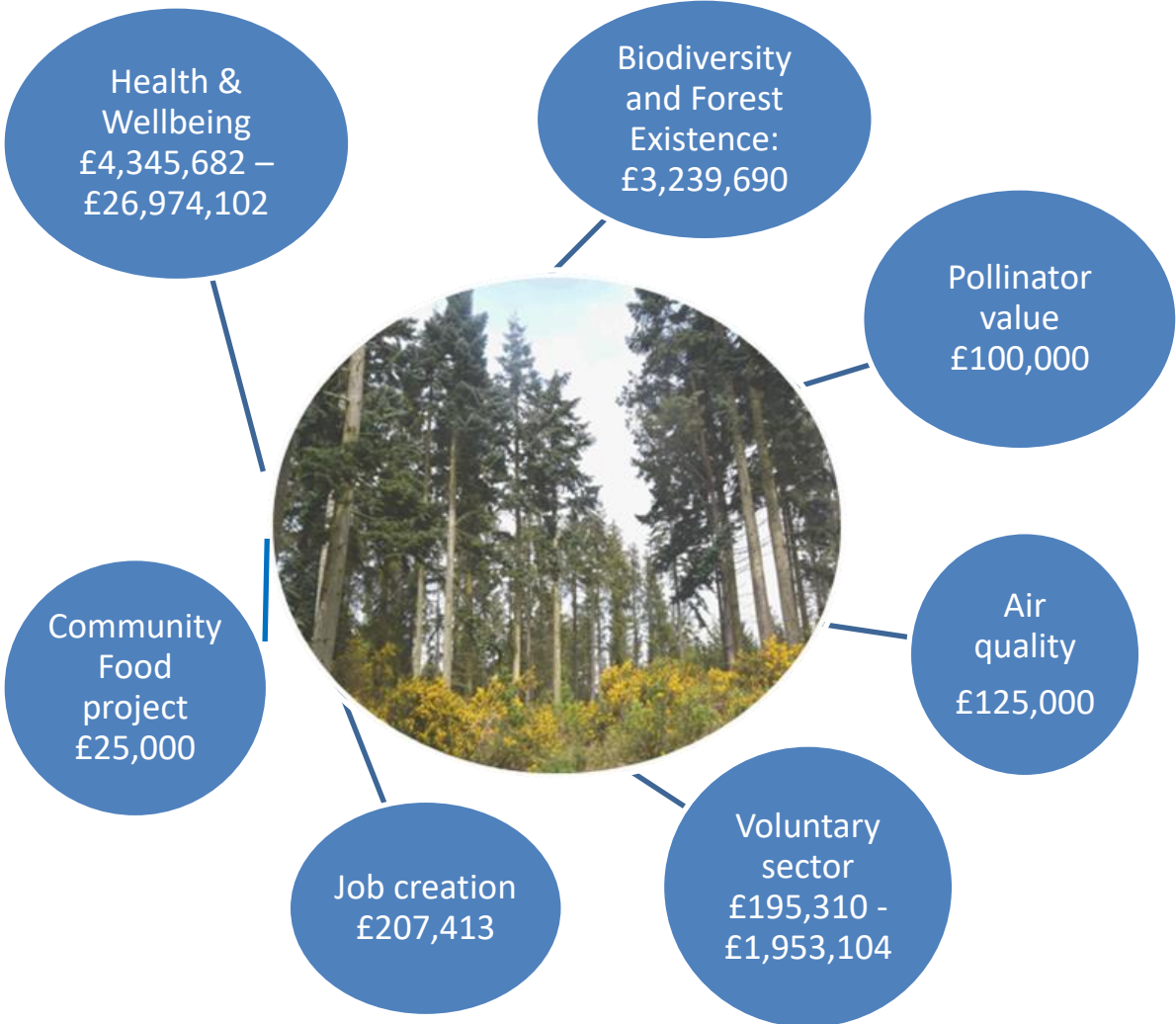


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1. Introduction

The Scottish Government has signed up to the Wellbeing Economy Governments partnership (WEGo). This collaboration of national and regional governments is aimed at advancing expertise and understanding to build wellbeing economies. WSWG has, from its formation, held this ethos as a driver for its approach to community woodland ownership. We also aim to use these woodlands to catalyse a landscape scale approach to supporting a wellbeing economy through our West Stormont Connect initiative. We have drawn inspiration from Bhutan, with its Gross National Happiness (GNH) approach to governance over GDP. Their four pillars of GNH include:

- Sustainable & Equitable socio-economic development
- Good governance
- Preservation of environmental diversity (ecological diversity and resilience)
- Preservation of cultural values & diversity (wellbeing and community vitality)

“The end result of any development activities should be the attainment of GNH”
(Constitution of Bhutan, 2008)

Their understanding that “genuine happiness” arises from amongst other things – a sense of harmony with the natural world, together with the ecosystem services it provides, has prompted them to enshrine in law a minimum conservation of 60% forest cover across the country in perpetuity.

Towards achieving the aims of wellbeing economic objectives, Social Return on Investment (SROI) has become a method for measuring a monetary value that incorporates social, environmental and economic impacts. It is a way of assessing the value created by our activities and the factors which facilitate that activity. It is also one way of recording the history and story line of a particular journey.

There are two recognised forms of SROI - **Evaluative**, which is conducted retrospectively and based on actual outcomes that have already taken place and **Forecast** which predicts how much social value will be created if the activities meet their intended outcomes.

This evaluation examines the Forecast of SROI from future WSWG owned community woodlands and associated community benefits arising from our proposed management of them. In particular, our SROI analysis draws upon an assessment of existing studies and published reports to give an indicative potential social value, together with our anticipated outcomes and vision for the woodlands.

The Theory of Change

The theory of change which we are basing our analysis on is that through innovative, meaningful and consistent community engagement via woodland activity programmes, a positive benefit within the community is promoted.

Our anticipated outcomes will be generated under the themes of increased mental and physical health and wellbeing through a positive engagement with nature. The recognised natural health service these woodlands can provide under WSWG management will be as a preventative intervention that can mitigate the need for higher social and health related costs.

Additional outcomes will include reduced economic impact from health-related days off work, increased employment opportunities and associated economic benefits to society, ecosystem services and enhanced community cohesion and resilience.

2. Health and wellbeing outcomes from woodland engagement

For many years scientific research has proven a direct measurable health benefit to people who engage with nature. For example in one study those who used the natural environment for physical activity at least once per week were reported to have around half the risk of poor mental health compared with those who did not do so (Mitchell, 2013) *Is physical activity in natural environments better for mental health than physical activity in other environments? Social Science and Medicine, 91, 130–134*

Research carried out by Forest Research in 2021 estimated savings in mental health costs alone to be around £185 million a year from woodland walks. When we factor in targeted woodland activities this number rises markedly. To understand the importance of these findings we must stand back and look at the bigger picture.

Mental health problems cost the UK economy at least £117.9 billion annually according to a recent report by the Mental Health Foundation and the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), of which a staggering £8.8 billion was to the Scottish economy. Approximately 1 in 4 people in the UK will experience a mental health problem each year, with up to 20.6% of people having suicidal thoughts over their lifetime. (Mind 2017)

Climate Crisis Anxiety is increasing across the world and growing exponentially amongst the younger generation. In fact during 2019, younger people in Britain reported significantly more anxiety about the inaction on the climate crisis than they did subsequently on covid 19. Recent studies on the impact of increasing global warming

found that the rate of suicide rose between 0.7% and 2.1 % when the average temperature rose by 1C. Rates of conflict and crime were also reported to rise. The US has already predicted an additional 40,000 suicides by 2050 based upon predicted temperature increases.

The physical health related costs to the NHS and economy are also substantial and potentially unsustainable. However, as mentioned above, nature-based activities have the potential to significantly mitigate these costs, while at the same time promoting a happier, healthier society. Scientific research from Japan over the past 20 years has shown woodland walking to be a natural immunity booster. For example in one study in 2007 people who participated in short periods of forest walking exhibited a 50% increase in levels of natural killer cells—the body's disease fighting agents – including increased anti-cancer proteins which remained elevated up to 30 days afterwards. This was due to the exposure to natural airborne compounds known as phytoncides produced by the trees.

The studies also showed the forest walkers had significantly reduced stress hormones, blood pressure and cholesterol. The health benefits from the Japanese studies were also supported in the journal Environmental Research (Volume 166, October 2018,)

2.1 SROI evaluations from health benefits of woodland engagement

One relevant report is that of a Natural Health Service study with the Community Forest Trust, an environmental charity supporting community forestry in England, “*Measuring the social return from investment in the Natural Health Services*”.

The study concluded that the Social Value, viewed over a 5-year period, of the total impact from 6,000 participants engaging in woodland-based activities for limited periods was **£13,037,051**. Total investment figure in the same period to generate this value was **£1,931,500**.

This equates to a social return of **£6.75 for every £1 invested**.

The 5-year “Net Present Value” (NPV) calculation results are shown in the table below:

Year	0	1	2	3	4	5	Total
(Social) Value £	5,844,947	5,650,447	1,412,612	353,153	88,288	22,070	£13,371,519
NPV £	5,844,947	5,495,369	1,318,688	318,534	76,938	18,584	£13,037,051

It is important to note that in the SROI calculations for the above figures, the authors carefully took account of reduced value of money over time (discounted at 3.5% as advised in the UK Government Green Book for grant-aided investments). However, WSWG intends to have a continuation of regular events and activities under our Year-Round Activities and other such initiatives and, as such, we envisage a reduced level of drop-off of benefits relating to participants, as well as a continued uplift of participants. Thus ensuring a continuity of social return for investment across the subsequent years, therefore partly mitigating drop-off or reduction in social return benefits.

Relevance of this study to WSWG:

The study examined the outcomes of participants engaging in targeted activities. These included:

Forest school
Health walks
Horticulture Therapy and Green Gyms
Mindful contact with nature

WSWG intends implementing all of these activities and more as part of a comprehensive suite of themes in its "Window on the Woods" Vision. For example, in 2019 before covid lockdowns were imposed, we carried out a programme of events between May and September with funding from PKC, under the theme of "Feeling Good in the Woods". The events were:

1. Three events for the elderly and less mobile:
 - Minibus picnics (2)
 - Cycling without Age
 - Seated mindfulness
2. Four Health and Wellbeing events:
 - Woodland Walks for Peace of Mind (4)
 - Forest Sustenance - Herbal Day
 - Forest Sustenance - Sustainable Foraging Walk
 - Woodland Art - Generations Hand in Hand (2 sessions)
3. Two Forest School events (4 sessions)
4. One Bush Craft event for Brownies and Rainbows (4 sessions)

The events programme also rounded off with 10 "Woodland in a Backpack" sessions run by the brilliant Biscuit of Wee Adventures in 7 local primary schools:

Stanley Primary	Auchtergaven Primary and Nursery
Murthly Primary	Glendelvine Primary
Luncarty Primary	Logiealmond Primary
Royal School of Dunkeld Primary and Nursery	

The sessions were a really fun way of learning about responsible and caring use of woodlands and a great introduction for the children to the WSWG project.

From these 20 events we had the following outcomes:

Age group	Number benefiting	(Target number)
>65 yrs (to 96yrs)	35	(40-60)
16-65 yrs	73	(30-40)
10-16 yrs	40	(10-20)
<10yrs (from 4 months)	270	(70-80)
TOTAL	418	(150-200)

If we can benefit over 400 people simply from the limited number of events mentioned above, it is not unreasonable to envisage our year-round structured, staffed, community-led events and programmes, etc, benefiting a significantly higher number of people per year across both woodlands, similar to the above-mentioned study and, achieving similar to or greater social returns from investment. Particularly so when we factor in the research findings from Japan on immunity boost from forest engagement in a time of pandemic, as well as the savings to the Scottish economy from reduced down-time related to mental and physical illness.

Going forward, taking the above example, **it would be reasonable for WSWG to estimate a Social Value of between £2,172,841 based on 1,000 participants in WSWG events over a five year period or potentially as much as £13,037,051 should participation rise to 6,000 people.**

This indicates a potential social value of between £4,345,682 – £26,974,102 over a 10-year period.

Over 10-25 years this is a significant saving to the Scottish NHS and other related systems and the Scottish economy as a whole.

In addition to the above, our increased car parking facilities and access improvements will result in a significant increase in general users of the woods. This will in turn increase the associated savings in health costs from improved health and wellbeing.

3. Community food project

A priority of WSWG is that of educating people to become more aware and self confident, building community cohesiveness and resilience with food growing in a world where food security is being increasingly threatened by global warming, loss of biodiversity and war. Our objective includes community food forest, commercial food forest, edible forage trails and hazel orchards.

Research carried out by the Countryside and Community Research Institute (CCRI) in 2014 on the SROI of local food programmes which covered three separate community food growing initiatives, revealed that for every £1 invested in Local Food (including not only the grants but also the value of volunteer time and other in-kind contributions) generated just under £7 for society. This represents a 700% return on investment for Local Food.

Based on the above example, the SROI related to our forest food projects are similar to the SROI of health benefits of ongoing community engagement in the woodlands. **Our Community/Mini Food Forest project on its own should therefore give around £26,000 in social value return for the £3,800 set-up investment.** There will be a continual community benefit through subsequent years as this community-led project evolves.

4. Ecosystem services

The Taymount and Five Mile Woods provide a wide range of ecosystem services including air quality regulation, carbon sequestration, water filtration, soil formation, nature-based tourism and recreation, noise buffer, natural health service and pollinator resource for both community and commercial food growing.

4.1 Pollinator value

The woodlands are host to many pollinating species including social and solitary bees, hoverflies and other insects. Our aim is to substantially increase the essential habitat of these species throughout the woodlands, resulting in a significant increase to their numbers and diversity.

We envisage this will have meaningful benefits to society including:

- Increased pollination rates to food producing gardeners and landowners.
- Increased pollinator populations across the wider landscape as the woodland carrying capacity is exceeded, leading to increased dispersal of pollinators into the wider landscape.

- The woodlands will be resilient refugia for pollinators in times of landscape-scale biodiversity collapse, for example under increasing global warming influences.
- Educational resource where people from local or further afield locations can come and learn how to manage pollinator species and their habitats.

Pollinators contribute to around £400 million to the UK economy annually, not including the millions of pounds saved by householders growing their own food and health care cost savings to the NHS from those eating home grown healthy foods. Therefore our nature recovery strategy that will benefit pollinators and their value to the wider communities must be valued in economic terms.

In the absence of raw data for appropriate calculations, we have attributed a nominal ecosystem value for both woods combined at £50 per woodland hectare at 200 hectares = £10,000 per year.

This gives a value of £100,000 over 10 years / £250,000 over 25 years.

Our estimated social return value is likely to be a substantial under-estimate when considering the following context:

- The average economic benefit for apple orchards from bee pollination was estimated to be up to £14,000 per hectare. *Garratt et al. (2014)*.
- Flying insect biomass is declining at 2.5% a year and with an astonishing 80% loss of biomass in the past 30 years.
- The woodlands have become biodiversity “mainland islands” which are surrounded by an ecologically impoverished landscape, both in agricultural terms and urban environment. WSWG has already received recent concerns from alarmed locals that ancient hedgerows have been torn out even recently, that once fostered pollinators. The woodland’s pollinator resource will only become more important as communities struggle with food resilience in coming years.

4.2 Air purification

Five Mile Wood is directly west of Stanley and is likely to absorb and purify substantial amounts of air pollution from the A9 as well as agricultural spray drift. Our woodland management plan ensures that the retention of the mature woodland sections under proforestation will continue to afford this service. However as we do not have established raw data for appropriate social value calculations, we have attributed a nominal air pollution amelioration value over 60 ha at £100/ha / year, resulting in £6,000 per year or £60,000 over 10 years.

To put this value in perspective, the 2017 Woodland Trust report (Economic Benefit of Woodland) the authors state “a well-located hectare of urban woodland can improve health to a value of nearly £150,000 a year” based upon early death prevention and reduction of hospital visits due to air pollution.

Taymount wood is more rural in location and, as such we have attributed a reduced nominal value at £50/ha over 130 ha / year resulting in £6,500 per year or £65,000 over 10 years.

This is a combined value of £125,000 over the first 10 years and rising thereafter as the Rewilding and Nature Recovery zones mature.

4.3 Climate change mitigation

The Woodland Trust report 2017 (The Economic Benefit of Woodland) states that climate change mitigation has an average annual value of £16,000 per hectare. At a combined 289 hectares for both woodlands this equates to around £4,624,000 per annum. Clearly this value cannot be attributed to WSWG as the woodlands already exist and would still be contributing under other ownership. However, the way in which a woodland is managed has a direct impact on the potential climate change mitigation potential.

For example, our objective of retaining a substantial area of maturing mixed woodland as biological reserves is in keeping with the principle outlined in the process of “proforestation” – a term used to describe allowing trees to reach their biological potential, thus maximising their carbon sequestration potential. Put simply - large dimension trees store many times the carbon above and below ground than many smaller trees. In addition, when trees are cleared there is a net carbon emission from the exposed soils and early growing phases which can last up to 20 years or more. This is exacerbated when fungi communities are destroyed in the harvesting process.

Proforestation therefore provides the most practical and effective solution to the dual climate and biodiversity emergency in the context of woodland management.

Although WSWG’s management objectives are designed to result in substantial climate mitigation, under climate mitigation, we have yet to calculate the socio-economic value of this pending further analysis of the complex but incomplete data we have to hand for Taymount and Five Mile Woods. However we would stress that this potential value should be considered in the overall assessment.

5. Biodiversity and Forest Existence

Although the current forest valuation system used by the forestry industry and government economists usually focus on the market value of forest products – such as timber and land, it is clear this thinking has significantly restricted other values, such as the non-timber use benefits and specifically the existence values. However, awareness that forest existence values are real and growing in society, with many people showing their willingness to pay to conserve the forests and their associated wildlife. Our objective of proforestation, nature recovery and naturalisation of substantial areas of both woodlands ensures this value is increasingly realised, more so than the usual system of rotational felling and restocking across a biologically impoverished woodland.

The Woodland Trust report 2017 (The Economic Benefits of Woodlands) estimated the Value of Existence and Bequest - safeguarding woods and their associated biodiversity for future generations - at £1,848 per hectare/year for new broadleaved woodland. Both Taymount and Five Mile are ancient/centuries old woodlands with predominantly mature Scots pine/broadleaved mixed with exceptional biodiversity, that far exceeds most new broadleaved plantings.

WSWG have produced a woodland management plan that will ensure the ecological and aesthetic values of these woodlands are protected for future generations, thus maintaining this value. The same cannot be said if a private buyer were to acquire the woodlands and exploit them for short term timber profits, while at the same time restocking with exotic conifer plantation monoculture, resulting in a catastrophic loss of biodiversity, woodland aesthetic and amenity values.

While it is impossible to put an accurate value to the comparisons of impact from different future management objectives, we have used the Woodland Trust estimate of £726/hectare/year for lowland conifer woodland as deadweight (ie. - what would happen without WSWG intervention). Deducting this deadweight figure from £1,848/ha above gives a reduced Existence and Bequest value of £1,122 per hectare /per year or £324,258 per year for the combined woodlands.

According to the same Woodland Trust report total perpetuity value at 3% discount rate was £77,770 per hectare as at 2013. Deducting a deadweight perpetuity value of £30,550 per hectare for lowland conifers gives £47,174 per hectare. At a combined 289 hectares for both woodlands, this gives a perpetuity value of £13,633,286.

Biodiversity and Forest Existence social value for the combined woodlands is therefore estimated at:

£324,258 per year

£3,242,580 over 10 years

£13,633,286 for total perpetuity

6. Job creation

The WSWG project will result in several full time and part time jobs as follows:

Year 1: 3 Full time + 1 day/week = 3.2 jobs

Year 3: addition 1 full time job = 1 job

Year 6: addition 1 Full time job + 1.5 with the hub café/shop staff = 2.5 jobs

We have based our forecast of social benefits and value analysis on the following report- *Street Elite, Social Return on Investment Analysis Report 2019, Bean Research, Berkeley Foundation and the Change Foundation.*

From the above study, we estimate the social value and impacts of job creation per person are assumed over a 3-year period for full time jobs only and are identified and valued as:

1) Avoiding social security benefits payments and increased tax payments on earnings from working = £2,127.37

2) The economic contribution made by each person moving into employment = £3,407.61.

3) Reduced health costs & increased well-being and associated benefits = £8,939.29

This gives us a total social value of £14,474 per job created taken over a 3-year period. When this is extrapolated over the five core, full time WSWG job creation projections of several years we anticipate a social return value as follows:

Job creation over 10 years as follows:

Yr 1 = 3 full time

Yr 3 = 1 full time

Yr 6 = 1 full time

Calculation below as follows:

Yr 1 = 3 full time x £14,474 = £43,422 for 3yrs or £144,595 over 10yrs

Yr 3 = 1full time = £38,646 in 8yrs

Yr 6 = 1full time = £24,172 in 5 yrs

Total for first 10 years of WSWG Project = £207,413

10-20 yrs = £240,992

plus 5 yrs = £120,496

total 25yrs = £568,901

Total social value return for 5 full time posts is approximately £207,413 over 10 years, or £568,901 over 25 years, not including the additional part time jobs from years one and six.

7. Voluntary sector and volunteering

The involvement of volunteers will play a crucial role in our comprehensive themes under the “Window on the Woods” vision. Volunteers will be involved in activities such as events planning and roll out, conservation work, survey and monitoring and soon.

We have based our forecast valuation partly on the SROI Analysis of the Greenlink, a partnership project managed by the Central Scotland Forest Trust (CSFT) Green space 2009. The report found that from 185 volunteers participating over one year, the Net Present Value was £976,552 over a five year period.

It would not be unreasonable to assume WSWG volunteering social value across a 5 year period to be somewhere between:

- £97,655 based upon 18.5 volunteers (10% of the above 185 volunteer example)
- £325,517 based upon 61 volunteers (1/3 of the above 185 volunteer example)
- £976,552 based upon 185 volunteers (100% of the above 185 volunteer example)

If we extrapolate this across a 10 year period this gives a potential social value return of between:

- £195,310 based upon 18.5 volunteers
- £651,034 based upon 61 volunteers
- £1,953,104 based upon 185 volunteers

Over a 25 year period we have a potential social value impact of between £488,275 and £4,882,760 depending on volunteer rates.

8. SROI outputs and impact predictions

Activity	Output	Outcome	Impact
“Window on the Woods”- themed Year-Round Activities Programmes: Many various woodland structured related activities	Group activities, individual activities, social interaction.	As a result, people were fitter, healthier, happier. Self-confidence improved, able to function better in workplace and personal life. New abilities and awareness gained. Greater environmental awareness.	Less reliance on NHS. Fewer days off work. Reduced costs to economy and NHS. Family units more cohesive and happy. Happier and self confident individuals. More cohesive society. Individuals, groups and wider community taking action to mitigate climate emergency and raise further awareness. Increased personal and community resilience.
Volunteers learning environmental skills via activities and training sessions	Group activities, individual activities, social interaction, skills learning, confidence building, employability and communication skills.	As a result they were able to find work, try new volunteering activities, moved into higher education and continued learning. Skills and ideas utilised and shared far and wide as people move around.	Increased wellbeing from employment, contributed to economy, reduction in NHS costs, reduction in alcohol and drug addiction leading to savings to society and happier family life. People inspired to start new initiatives, pilot projects in other areas.
Activities for older, less mobile or socially isolated people	Group activities, social interaction	As a result, people felt less isolated, happier, fitter & healthier. Renewed vigour for life.	Less reliance on NHS and social care. Happier individuals and more cohesive society.
Activities for people with learning disabilities	Group activities, individual activities, social interaction.	As a result people felt less isolated, better self confidence, sense of achievement, doing activities	Increased self worth leading to greater social interaction and employability. Happier people and less stress in family unit.

Activity	Output	Outcome	Impact
Activities for young people	Group activities, social interaction	As a result new skills learned, confidence building, self awareness and value. Appreciation of mixed generations.	Happier individuals, fewer drug, alcohol and crime incidents leading to reduced costs on social and HNS services. Greater employment potential.
Activities for children	Outdoor learning, social interaction, physical activity	Healthier children, imagination stimulated, physically fitter, greater self-confidence, increased communication skills	Children reconnected with nature leading to greater awareness of the importance of the natural environment. Happier and more motivated children leading to healthier, more resilient young people
Access Improvements, new foot paths and increased parking facilities	As a result people are able to better explore the woodlands and find connectivity across the wider landscape	People are fitter, healthier and more active. Increased Active travel.	Reduced impact upon NHS, happier people and reduced stress leading to more cohesive family units
Flagship FMW: Woodland Observatory Project with focus on education	Environmental education, confidence building, reduced isolation of vulnerable individuals	As a result people are happier, healthier. Increased skills learning, self awareness and employability. Greater knowledge about local environment.	More likely to enter volunteering, higher education, continue CPD. Interaction between WSWG and research bodies may facilitate new learning and/or employment opportunities for people.
Flagship TW: Taymount Hub - community facility - community enterprises	Community meeting place. Facilitator of community-led projects and events.	As a result, jobs created, volunteer base expanded, exchange of ideas and experience.	Increased community cohesion and resilience. Job and volunteer creation leading to reduced reliance on social services. Catalyst for wider aims and ambitions with moving towards a wellbeing,

			regenerative & sustainable economy.
Woodland: - Forest Food Project - Nature recovery	Education of groups and individuals on food security. Food supply Actions on nature recovery, with groups and individuals	As a result people are better able to grow food. Skills and awareness needed for self reliance. Nature activities, leading to reduced anxiety about the declines of nature. Greater sense of doing something positive in a crisis.	People and communities more food resilient in forthcoming times of crisis. Ideas and outcomes taken up by other sites across country, promoting greater resilience and social cohesion. Individuals less despondent about ecological emergency and related stresses on life.

9. Assessment of impacts on community from acquisition success or failure

Subject	WSWG are successful in acquisition	WSWG are unsuccessful in acquisition because: 1) FLS deny the community transfer of one or both woods. 2) Discount is too low 3) SLF contribution too low 4) WSWG are unable to raise the balance of funding
Social value created from WSWG management of woodlands	Social value to society estimated at £8,229,370 - £32,590,584 over the first 10 years	Scottish NHS and economy burdened with potential additional costs of between £4,595,710 - £27,224,102 over a 10-year period, with costs rising over the 25 year projection.
Access improvements	More cohesive access networks, all abilities access provision, welcoming woodland environment	Minimum access provision (core paths) and lack of provision for all-abilities.

Isolated and vulnerable people	Reduced isolation for vulnerable people. New opportunities for individuals and groups to engage with others & with nature	Isolated and vulnerable individuals and groups denied opportunities to engage with others & with nature. Perpetuates the isolation and vulnerability of disadvantaged groups and individuals in our local community
Climate anxiety and mental health related impacts	People, especially the young given opportunity to personally contribute to the emergency and reduce helplessness, increased social cohesion, like-minded groups & individuals linked, learning & CPD opportunity, visualising and working towards a positive future. Improved mental and physical health, especially of young people. Savings to NHS and economy. Unique resource and one-off opportunity to improve health and wellbeing within locality. Reduction in severity and frequency of mental health impacts on individuals and society	Reduced opportunity to tackle climate crisis. Increased severity and occurrence of mental health in individuals and society, especially young people. Increased rates of physical health issues. Increased financial burden on NHS and economy, increasing with each year as climate crisis worsens and impacts society and individuals.
	Catalyst for social cohesion, interaction on promoting circular wellbeing economy at local, regional and national level via outputs from woodland working groups. Facilitator for West Stormont Connect wider aspirations on nature recovery and regenerative, nature based, wellbeing economy.	Depriving the local communities of a woodland-based Hub with positive outcomes of working and educational groups. Severely limiting the potential of the communities to develop green initiatives both economic and personal.
Employment	Several full time and part time jobs created, with good potential for indirect employment related to structured events, woodland activities and ecotourism.	Community deprived of employment opportunities.

Local economy	Local outlets, businesses benefiting from woodland related activities and visitor spending.	Local outlets, businesses deprived of regular income from woodland related revenue and visitor spending.
Biodiversity	<p>Preservation of ancient woodland ecosystem.</p> <p>Partnership working to promote Nature recovery on a landscape scale, with potential networking at regional level.</p> <p>Conservation of many species rare or unique to Tayside and some that are rare in Scotland, some of which are Nationally Notable.</p>	<p>Perpetuation of catastrophic loss of vulnerable species at local, regional and national level.</p> <p>Depriving future generations of the opportunity of an intimate engagement with nature within the local area.</p>

10. Conclusion

We conclude that the true value of these woodlands is the intrinsic nature of the woodlands themselves. They are also a biodiversity refuge unlike anything in the region. This is made more important when put into the context of accessibility to local communities due to the near proximity and planned access improvements by WSWG.

However to fully take advantage of their true value to the local communities requires innovative thinking and proactive actions.

In this SROI study WSWG have demonstrated there is real potential for significant social returns from a well managed woodland resource that places nature - our life support system - at the forefront of decision making. In this UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration we must adopt a paradigm change in land management thinking. WSWG aims to help catalyse this change through its many themed activities.