



Introduction to Woodlands Community Groups

At Forest Direct we are passionate about creating diverse new woodlands, both large and small. Our experienced team of woodland managers understand that designing and establishing new woodlands can be daunting to those who are new to creating new forests and managing them. This page introduces community groups and the third sector, who have become owners or guardians of their local woodland, to some of the elements and processes of woodland creation and management.

Management Plan

A management plan enables you to formalise your thinking about managing your woodland and is an important document in ensuring the woodland is well looked after over the long term. A management plan details how you plan to manage your site and might include anything from tree planting, tree removal, path creation to habitat management, shelter building and educational services. In addition, any of the available grant schemes require you to have a management plan in place before applying for funding.

Your management plan should cover the following areas:

Existing woodland

The first step is to get to know your existing woodland.

- What tree types, age, habitats and wildlife already exist?
- What is the health of the trees?
- How has the woodland been managed in the past?
- How would you like to manage it going forward?

New woodland creation

If you are interested in planting more trees then you should identify the area you think has woodland creation potential. Next, you need to understand your soil, topography, climate, access and ecology.

You may have expertise in these areas or you may need some assistance from an expert – we would be delighted to help.

Once you have this base information you can identify your objectives and start thinking about what kind of woodland you want to create. This may be anything from woodland to support specific flora or fauna, woodland for flood mitigation, carbon sequestration or timber production.





Having a clear vision for your woodland can help identify what financial options are best for your group. Possible routes to consider are:

- **Forestry Grant Scheme** - Scottish Forestry have many grant options available through the Forestry Grant Scheme (FGS). Depending on the new woodland creation scheme, this can involve a fairly extensive application process involving surveys, maps, issues log, operational plan and pre-consultation with the community and local council. If successful, applicants will receive:
 - An initial planting payment and capital grant for ground preparation and tree protection
 - Annual maintenance payments for up to 5-years

Applications are made to Scottish Forestry, where a Woodland Officer will assess your eligibility.

For a more detailed look at the Forestry Grant Scheme, visit the [News](#) section of the Forest Direct website where we have articles explaining how it works.

- **Woodland Carbon Code** - The Woodland Carbon Code (WCC) is a voluntary Government-backed certification scheme. Its purpose is to generate the planting of additional, well designed, and well-managed woodland, which would not be financially viable without carbon income streams. Development of new woodland creation schemes in line with the WCC can provide steady income streams for community groups which can be channelled back into the management of the woodland.
- **Free Trees** - Woodland creation will play an important role in mitigating the worst impacts of climate change and the Scottish Government has ambitious targets to increase woodland cover across Scotland over the next 10-years. Many charities, including Trees for Life, The Conservation Volunteers and Woodland Trust continue to offer free trees to community groups to help meet tree planting targets while supporting wildlife and communities to flourish. Keep an eye on their websites for applications.



Woodlands for People

Community woodlands can offer an incredibly diverse range of benefits defined by local visions, community ambitions, woodland type and scale. Woodlands are now widely recognised as important environments for people and can deliver a wide variety of public benefits, including:

- Recreation and fitness
- Outdoor education
- Practical conservation and sustainable building opportunities
- Local economic development
- Social inclusion and community building
- Supporting good mental health

There are grants available to support the development of such services, particularly Woodlands In and Around Towns.

How can we help you?

Forest Direct has extensive experience in recreation and community development across South and Central Scotland with team member involvement in local community woodland local community woodlands, Borders Forest Trust and Native Woodlands Discussion Group. Forest Direct can provide support in the form of:

- Creating Management Plans
- Identifying funding streams and developing funding applications
- Undertaking tree surveys for managing health and safety requirements
- Advising on woodland creation and restructuring of existing woodlands
- Providing expert advice on the Woodland Carbon Code (WCC) and developing new woodland creation schemes which meet the WCC guidelines
- Developing and delivering a timber removal plan which works for your community and may provide income which can be recycled into your woodland

If you are interested in exploring the woodland potential of your landholding and how we can help, please contact Jeremy Thompson at 07967111805 or email Jeremy@forestdirectltd.co.uk





Forest Direct Ltd

– Forestry Consultants –

About Us

Forest Direct Ltd is a team of experienced and innovative foresters, with a shared vision to create and manage well-designed, high-quality, sustainable woodlands that contribute to climate change mitigation and deliver financially for our clients.

Led by Jeremy Thompson, Forest Direct provides forest management services in the South of Scotland and North of England where our team have a vast knowledge of working with landowners, farmers, land managers, community groups and forestry industry regulators to help deliver their forestry objectives.

We can become involved in your woodland management at any stage, from advising on new opportunities, assessing existing forestry through surveys and digital mapping or designing sympathetic woodland creation schemes. We can maintain existing forestry assets, supply production forecasts and manage timber sales, as well as dealing with regulators on your behalf.

We appreciate that every project is unique and special to you so we treat it with the respect it is due. We are a small and agile team so we can work flexibly to meet your needs.

Get In Touch!

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