

Executive Summary

The Central Scotland Forest Trust (CSFT) is charged with leading and securing the delivery of the Central Scotland Forest Initiative. Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS), on behalf of Scottish Ministers, makes grants available to CSFT to support implementation of the Initiative through the delivery of a series of desired outcomes. This plan describes what will be done during the plan period in detail and is a key requirement of the 'Framework Document for FCS Direct Funding to the CSFT'. This plan covers the period April 2009 to March 2012; an updated three year plan will be produced annually.

The plan describes the current challenging operating environment and demonstrates the linkages between proposed actions and the Scottish Government's 'National Outcomes' and to the wider climate change agenda. Every aspect of the plan contributes to the delivery of the Central Scotland Forest Strategy and through the increased targets around woodland creation our actions contribute directly to the ambition in the Scottish Forestry Strategy for increased woodland coverage. In making these linkages and carrying out these actions it is recognised that CSFT cannot deliver everything in both documents but that activities must be aligned to core elements of both these documents.

The strategic intent for the three year period of the plan, 2009 to 2012, is set out as follows:

- A desire for an increase in direct woodland creation activities
- A continuation of our work in and around communities
- A recognition of the need for a proactive and positive stance to partnership/role evolution
- An appreciation of the benefits of collaborative working – 'vertically' (with FCS) and 'horizontally' (with other publicly sponsored, third sector bodies)
- The ongoing need for sound financial management within a tightly defined set of parameters

The desired outcomes from this expression of intent are:

- Increased levels of woodland creation in the CSF. CSFT will create new woodlands directly and will encourage others to plant woodlands in the Forest.
- Engaged communities benefiting from our activities.
- The definition of the role and geography of the new Central Scotland Green Network and the development of a clear, central role for CSFT in the ongoing delivery of this initiative.
- A new clarity of roles between CSFT and FCS/SLFD which ensures the most effective use of our collective resources in delivering the Forest and FCS's mission.
- A new way of working with and relating to other third sector publicly sponsored bodies. This will lead to the increased efficiency and effectiveness of these bodies.
- A financial position for CSFT that maximises delivery whilst ensuring sustainability

The plan sets out three delivery themes – 'Championing', 'Delivery' and 'Facilitation' – which are supported by a fourth theme 'Managing the Trust'. The plan sets out 20 qualitative targets and 10 quantitative targets for CSFT which will allow tracking and monitoring of performance over the plan period. To enable the delivery of these targets CSFT must be financially sustainable. This element is covered in some detail in the plan and in Appendix 2. What the plan does show is that during the plan period we will have to generate some £370K of 'exceptional income' if we are to maintain our net worth at a minimum value of £800K. Doing this will enable CSFT to maximise the 'value for money' aspect of our relationship with FCS.

Everything that CSFT achieves is delivered through, and by, its staff and we will continue to support the development of staff within the organisation during the plan period. The staff structure required to deliver the plan is set out in detail.

The plan considers priority work not currently funded (which we have aspirations to deliver) which may come into play should funding opportunities arise. In Section 11 and Appendix 5, the plan considers risks both in CSFT's operating environment but also risks that arise as a result of the chosen course of direction and outlines mitigating actions to be taken to offset these risks. The plan ends with a section considering future monitoring arrangements and past performance.