Cumbria and the Lake District
Trees, Woodlands and Forestry
Strategy
Diverse, productive, beautiful woodlands are a vital asset for Cumbria.
Foreword

Author and text yet to be confirmed...

add date
Woods and forests give people space and contribute to the visitor economy.
Introduction

* This strategy and action plan sets out a long term vision for trees and woodlands in Cumbria. It identifies and quantifies the multiple benefits they provide and outlines a number of conditions which it is believed need to be met in order for the county’s trees, woodlands and forests to thrive. In tandem with this document a refreshed version of the Cumbria Woodland Vision, which since 1998, has guided the establishment and management of the county’s woodlands, is being published.
This document is based on extensive consultation with a wide range of people and businesses. It reflects their wishes for the long term and illustrates the very real opportunities trees, woodlands and forests offer. The focus is on promoting practical actions which people can take to achieve the overall vision. It does not seek to be prescriptive, but instead prepares the ground for people to come forward with ideas, solutions and commitments for action.

Cumbria, including the Lake District, has a woodland cover of 58,500ha, nearly 9% of the county. It also has a very large number of individual trees in fields, parks, streets and gardens including heritage trees of national importance. These trees and woodlands already play a vital role in the economy, the environment and the lives of the people who live and work in, and visit, the county.

Cumbria has a world class timber processing sector which draws on resources from across the North of England and South Scotland. It employs thousands of people and has recently been the subject of £110 million of investment, bringing it up to a standard unsurpassed in Europe.

These woodlands and forests also provide the backdrop for recreation and tourism facilities that attract thousands of people to the county every year, directly and indirectly employing people in visitor centres, cycle hire centres, cafes, hotels and B&Bs and any number of other providers. The mental and physical health of many residents who exercise in these woodlands, or just take pleasure in their existence, is improved and they enable a wide range of educational activities that take place in schools and further afield.

Cumbria’s trees also play a crucial role in improving and maintaining the county’s environment. They absorb carbon dioxide thereby reducing greenhouse gases and mitigating climate change. Vitally they protect against flooding, improve water quality in rivers and lakes and provide varied habitats for wildlife. They are a defining feature and an integral part of the county’s landscape in many places. The stunning native woodlands are both nationally and internationally very significant and as such covered by the highest levels of designation.

Supporting all of these activities are the businesses and individuals who work in forest management - planting, establishing and managing the county’s woodlands. Although much of this forest and woodland is actively managed, a significant proportion is not, so benefits are not optimised. As with forests and woodlands, non-woodland trees present challenges and opportunities for the future. By developing this strategy and action plan, the latent potential of Cumbria’s trees, woodlands and forests can be harnessed to increase the quantity and quality of goods and services they generate for the people of Cumbria and nationally.
Summary
Summary

The vision

The vision is that the trees, woodlands and forests of Cumbria are resilient for the future and that they maximise their potential for the people of the County by providing robust employment and deliver high quality environmental and social benefits.

Aims

Forests for timber, the economy and employment
Forests for environmental quality and the natural environment
Forests for recreation, access and tourism
Resilient forests for the future

Achieving the vision

Woodland owners
Woods
A sustainable supply chain
People

Action plan

The action plan sets out individual short term actions which will be delivered by partners to work towards achieving the vision.
Key Facts
Key Facts 1.
Woodland Cover

Woodland Ownership
- Forestry Commission Conifer
- Forestry Commission Broadleaf
- Other Conifer
- Other Broadleaf

Woodland Cover
- Forestry Commission
- Other

Woodland % Cover Comparisons
- European Union
- Great Britain
- England
- Cumbria

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Key Facts 2. Processors

£1,414,572
(totatl project cost)

Amount invested in small scale harvesting and processing through LEADER

1,500

People employed by the largest 3 processors
Key Facts 3. Opportunity

275 potential jobs
Created by bringing Cumbria’s under-managed woodlands into management

78,000 tonnes
Potential annual yield of timber from currently under-managed woods

Key Facts 4.
Forest Benefits

164,750 tonnes CO₂
Net carbon capture per annum by existing woodlands in the Lake District National Park.

12,591,000 tonnes CO₂
Carbon stored in woodlands in the Lake District National Park

Timber
Fuel wood
Fresh water
Species diversity
Climate regulation
Erosion control
Flood regulation
Soil quality regulation
Noise regulation
Recreation & Tourism
Aesthetic values
Cultural heritage
Education
Employment
Sense of place
Air & water quality regulation

Woodland Cover
EA water bodies reaching good ecological status
Woodland SACs
AONBs
National Parks
Woodland cover
Red Squirrels Reserves

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Key Facts 5. Recreation

Woodland Based Recreation and Tourism in Cumbria

- **Center Parcs**
  - Visits: 500,000
  - Estimated visitor spend: £140m
  - Jobs: 400

- **Grizedale**
  - Visits: 195,000
  - Estimated visitor spend: £12.1m
  - Jobs: 42

- **Whinlatter**
  - Visits: 220,000
  - Estimated visitor spend: £10.7m
  - Jobs: 32

Source: Visitor number and jobs provided by Center Parcs and Forestry Commission. Visitor spend based on proportion of day/overnight visitors to Cumbria multiplied by average daily spend, data supplied by Cumbria Tourism.

£2.2bn
The value of tourism in Cumbria’s economy
The trees, woodlands and forests of Cumbria will be resilient for the future and maximise their potential for the people of the County by providing robust employment and delivering high quality environmental and social benefits.
Forests and woodlands improve water quality, reduce sedimentation and alleviate flooding.
Aims

The trees, woodlands and forests of Cumbria exist and are managed for a variety of reasons. In most cases woodlands are managed with multiple purposes in mind. A commercially managed forest can also provide important biodiversity and recreation benefits just as a woodland managed primarily for conservation can at the same time provide timber and create jobs in the local community. Thus whilst we set out four distinct aims below, in reality most trees, woodlands and forests can, managed appropriately, achieve a number of these.

* Forests for the economy and employment
The forests of Cumbria support a vibrant forestry and forest processing industry ranging from large scale board and sawmills to small woodfuel and quality hardwood furniture businesses. We want to see this expand to provide markets for the full range of products from our woodlands and to fulfil its potential for the economy of the county.

* Forests for environmental quality and natural environment
The biodiversity held within woodlands in Cumbria has international significance. We believe this can be enhanced. Woodlands provide very significant environmental goods and services. This can be enhanced through increased, appropriate management and woodland expansion. Water quality and regulation of flows can be markedly improved through well considered woodland establishment and management.

* Forests for Recreation, Access and Tourism
Forests and woodlands contribute significantly to tourism and recreation by hosting large numbers of people and activities generating employment and income. By increasing the range and diversity of provision we can provide greater opportunities for residents and visitors alike along with the associated economic and social benefits.

* Resilient forests for the future
Woods and forests diverse in species, age class and structure will be more robust and resilient in the future. This can be achieved by increased and improved management combined with more and better connected woodlands.
The flora and fauna of Cumbria’s woodlands is internationally important and stunningly beautiful.
A wide variety of people and organisations are involved with, or depend on, the trees, woodlands and forests of Cumbria. Public and private, commercial and not for profit, individuals and companies - all have a role to play in achieving the vision set out in this document.

The Action Plan will detail what each of these will contribute in the coming years, but in the following section a number of themes and objectives are set out to guide these actions over that time. Together, we believe that they will create the ‘conditions for growth’ necessary to achieve the vision.

**Woodland Owners**
- Who are empowered to manage their woodlands
- • Engaged
- • Informed
- • Market Access

**Woods and trees**
- Which are resilient and productive
- • Protected
- • Improved
- • Expanding

**A sustainable supply chain**
- Which is able to compete and provide world class services
- • Skilled
- • Resourced
- • Enterprising

**People**
- Who enjoy, understand and support the role woodlands can play in improving their environment and communities
- • Enjoy
- • Understand
- • Supportive
Achieving the Vision:
Woodland owners

Woodland owners

Who are empowered
to manage their
woodlands

Engaged
Informed
With Market Access

Engaged
Informed
Market access

• Reaching the unengaged
• Maintaining engagement

• Access to informed advisers
• With appropriate information available

• A working market place
• Improved connection with supply chain
• Vibrant markets in place
Woodland owners

Ensuring that woodland owners are engaged and informed is the key first element if the County’s woodlands are to be unlocked to fulfill their full potential.

**Key actions in delivering this are:**

- Reaching the unengaged to highlight the opportunities, rewards and support for woodland owners to encourage the management of the county’s woodlands.

- Maintaining engagement and connection with woodland owners to ensure that they remain in management and continue to provide a range of goods and services.

- Ensuring that owners have access to informed advisors and advisory services is a vital step in bringing woods into management and making certain that those currently in management are resilient into the future.

- Encourage the wide dissemination of information provided by partners to enable the uptake of best practice by all owners.

- Improve the connection between owners and the supply chain to ensure that markets operate efficiently for all.

- Support the maintenance and development of existing markets so the vibrant processor base creates further demand for the County’s wood products.
Achieving the Vision: 
Woods & Trees

Woods and trees → Which are resilient and productive → Protected Improved Expanding

Protected
- From known and emerging plant health and past threats
- Woodlands containing a diversity of species and age ranges
- Threats to woodland values and productive capacity are reduced

Improved
- Improved for increased biodiversity
- Producing timber and tourism
- Providing multiple markets and non-market social benefits

Expanding
- New trees woodlands and forests
- In line with Cumbria Woodland Vision
- Maintained during establishment
Woods & Trees

Cumbria’s trees, woods and forests are a significant, vast resource providing a huge range of services and products. To help ensure their resilience to the threats, challenges and opportunities brought about by Climate Change and the increasing demands of society the following changes are put forward

Key actions in delivering this are:

Diversity of species and age within our woods and forests offers increased resilience to threats and challenges both known and unknown. Increasing the percentage of woodlands in management and through information actions by partners will lead to more diverse and resilient woods.

Nurturing the Red Squirrel population through the adoption of supportive management actions.

Reducing the threat to productive capacity by existing damaging influences such as grey squirrels and deer.

The increased provision of non market social goods is encouraged through the adoption of management, uptake of support available and provision of information. We will increase and maximise the range and quality of non-market goods, for example, the improvement of water quality and the regulation of flows.

Working with the private forestry sector we will increase the harvesting of timber.

Enhance the value of forests and woodlands for tourism, recognising their ability to absorb people and activities which would be out of place in other environments.

Working with support from partners we will establish and maintain new woodlands within the County. These will chime with opportunities highlighted within the refreshed Cumbria woodland visions.
Achieving the Vision:
A sustainable supply chain

Supply chain → Which is able to compete and provide world class services → Skilled Resourced Enterprising

Skilled

• Investment in skills for existing employees
• New entrants attracted to the sector

Resourced

• Access to finance for investment
• Abilities and equipment appropriate to the varied resources in Cumbria

Enterprising

• Adept at identifying new opportunities
• Engage with other sectors and their local communities
A sustainable supply chain

Cumbria has one of the strongest and largest forestry supply chains in Britain with a processing sector which is the envy of many regions. We are committed to growing and strengthening this with co-ordinated action.

Key actions in delivering this are:

Support and access for training and skills needs.

Raise awareness of the benefits and opportunities provided apprenticeships.

Develop appropriate training delivery and employment models.

Promote the potential employment opportunities within the sector.

Provide examples of equipment and best practice relevant to the wide variety of situations found in Cumbria.

Make available and signpost sources of private and public sector finance for investment to support growth in the sector.

Support development of existing and new businesses to help them flourish and grow through the provision of advice and business support.

Encourage innovation in business practices and engagement with related sectors.
Achieving the Vision:
People

Who enjoy, understand and support the role trees and woodlands can play in improving their environment and communities

- Volunteering available across Cumbria
- Information about woodlands with open access is freely available to the public

- Information is available online, in the press and on-site when woodland is being managed or created
- Schools and local groups know who to contact to invite expert speakers regarding the creation and management of woodland in their communities
- Information about plant health and biosecurity is available on site and in appropriate situation

- Grown in Britain and Wood for Good are promoted across Cumbria
- Local retailers are encouraged to stock and promote Cumbrian woodland produce
- Online directory of retailers selling local woodland products is made available
- Confidence in local product
People

Cumbria’s trees and woodlands are a vital component of the County. We will strive to ensure the woodlands are used and appreciated and that their management and creation is better understood.

Key actions in delivering this are:

Develop volunteering in forests, enabling volunteers to get involved in the management of woodland and the provision of visitor facilities and services.

Information about woodlands with open access is freely available to the public.

Information about plant health and biosecurity is available on site and in appropriate locations.

Grown in Britain and Wood for Good are promoted across Cumbria.

Local retailers are encouraged to stock and promote Cumbrian woodland produce.

Online directory of retailers selling local woodland products is made available.

Customers have confidence in local woodland products and services and know how to access them.
Action Plan

This strategy sets out a vision for the trees, woodlands and forests of Cumbria, identifies a number of aims and describes what needs to be achieved if these are to become a reality. To enable this, partners and supporters of the strategy have contributed a number of actions which link to the four themes outlined in the Achieving the Vision section (Woodland owners; Woods and trees; A sustainable supply chain; People).

In order to ensure these actions remain relevant to the changing wider environment within which trees, woodlands and forests exist, the action plan will be published separately and can thus be constantly monitored and reviewed by the partners.

It will be updated annually and published at www.cumbriawoodlands.co.uk.
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