

## **Support for social aspects of the Scottish Forestry Strategy 2006 in the Scottish Rural Development Plan.**

### **Purpose.**

This paper provides information and invites feedback on support for social aspects of the Scottish Forestry Strategy 2006<sup>1</sup> proposed in the Scottish Rural Development Plan (SRDP). It does not provide information on how to submit a proposal for funding. Information on this is at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Rural/RDR>.

### **Circulation.**

Social forestry stakeholders.

### **Background.**

Most support in the SRDP is to be supplied via a series of “measures” in integrated Rural Development Contracts. This takes two forms:

- Tier 2: A menu scheme for activities on Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS) registered land.<sup>2</sup> Eligible landowners choose which activities they wish to have supported up to an allowance.
- Tier 3: A competitive scheme with wider eligibility.

Some SRDP support is provided outside Rural Development Contracts.

### **Social aspects of the Scottish Forestry Strategy.**

The social aspects of the Scottish Forestry Strategy most amenable to delivery via the SRDP are as follows (these are “purposes” in the Strategy):

- Support rural diversification and help sustain fragile rural communities.
- Help add value to the Scottish tourism industry and increase the benefits of it to woodland owners and local communities.
- Provide opportunities for acquiring new skills and experience through forestry and improve the skills base of forestry.
- Help to improve the quality of life and well-being of people across Scotland (includes Woods in and Around Towns).
- Enhance forestry’s engagement with communities.
- Develop forestry’s role in education and lifelong learning.
- Make access to woodlands easier for all sectors of society.
- Provide a greater range of ways for people to enjoy woodlands.

Proposed measures of the SRDP that support these purposes are summarised ([Annex 1](#)) organised by most relevant purpose as far as possible. Some of the measures in Annex 1 are for all rural sectors. Others are forestry measures, see <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infid-6wxjmk> for further information on these.

### **Next steps.**

Please note that proposed measures are not yet approved by the European Union and therefore may be subject to change. The Social Policy Team is working with colleagues to help ensure that the guidelines being developed for the measures optimise benefits for all rural sectors including social forestry. Feedback on the proposed measures is welcome.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infid-6aggzw>

<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infid-6wxjmk> for guidance on registering woodland.

## ANNEX 1

### Summary of measures that provide support for social forestry.

#### Contents

<b>Support rural diversification and help sustain fragile rural communities.</b>	<b>3</b>
Processing and Marketing Grants .....	3
Co-Operation .....	3
Support for Renewable Energy .....	3
Support for Renewable Energy (non-land based) .....	3
Support for the Development and Creation of Micro-Enterprises .....	3
<b>Help add value to the Scottish tourism industry and increase the benefits of it to woodland owners and local communities.</b>	<b>4</b>
Provision, Development or Upgrading of Small Scale Tourist Facilities by Land Managers .....	4
Enhancing Enjoyment and Maintaining the Character of Rural Landscapes.	4
<b>Provide opportunities for acquiring new skills and experience through forestry and improve the skills base of forestry.</b>	<b>4</b>
Skills Development .....	4
<b>Help to improve the quality of life and well-being of people across Scotland (includes Woods in and Around Towns).</b>	<b>5</b>
Woodland Creation .....	5
Forest Environment Payments.....	5
Woods In and Around Towns Challenge Fund.....	5
Provision of Leisure, Recreation, Sporting, Catering and Other Rural Community Services and Facilities .....	6
<b>Enhance forestry's engagement with communities.</b>	<b>6</b>
Managing Land for Non-Commercial Community Events .....	6
Forestry for People Challenge Fund. ....	6
<b>Develop forestry's role in education and lifelong learning.</b>	<b>7</b>
Information and Awareness Raising .....	7
Farm and Forest Visits and Talks .....	7
<b>Make access to woodlands easier for all sectors of society.</b>	<b>7</b>
Improving Access.....	7
Area Access Management and Monitoring, and Creation and Upgrading of Paths and Routes .....	7
<b>Cross-cutting.</b>	<b>8</b>
Production of Collaborative Local Development Strategies . ....	8
Implementation of the Leader Approach .....	8

## **Support rural diversification and help sustain fragile rural communities.**

### **Processing and Marketing Grants**

**Activity supported:** Development of facilities and systems to process primary products and develop marketing to add and retain value locally.

**Potential beneficiaries:** Individuals, groups of primary producers or companies involved in primary production, processing and marketing.

Funding is competitive within Rural Development Contracts for on or near-holding activity, outside Rural Development Contracts for other rural or urban businesses.

**Restrictions:** for forestry, only micro-businesses will be eligible.

### **Co-Operation**

**Activity supported:** Co-operation between primary producers, the processing industry and third parties.

**Potential beneficiaries:** Individuals, groups of primary producers or companies. However where there is significant opportunities for co-operation on a strategic basis, a single body may be responsible for delivering the outcomes. Funding is competitive.

**Restrictions:** Two or more producers, processors and or parties (within or connected to product supply chain) should be involved in the project. The new products, processes and technologies must not displace existing products or businesses within the Scottish land-based sectors.

### **Support for Renewable Energy**

**Activity supported:** Purchase, installation, construction, upgrading or development of infrastructure and/or equipment to enable agricultural or forestry businesses to develop small scale renewable energy capacity.

**Potential beneficiaries:** Land managers.

### **Support for Renewable Energy (non-land based)**

**Activity supported:** Support will be available to enable rural communities and rural businesses to develop small scale renewable energy capacity, that use a range of renewable technologies: biogas, biomass, bio-fuel and micro-renewables.

**Potential beneficiaries:** Producer groups, rural businesses and communities. Funding is competitive.

### **Support for the Development and Creation of Micro-Enterprises**

**Activity supported:** the setting up or expansion of any non-agricultural enterprise where it can be shown that there is a demonstrable market for the proposed product or service and that the potential beneficiary has or can acquire the skills and resources to provide these on a commercial basis.

**Potential beneficiaries:** Entrepreneurs (including non-agricultural land managers) setting up or expanding micro enterprises. Funding is competitive.

**Restrictions:** Micro-business are those with less than 10 workers and less than 2M Euros of turnover.

## **Help add value to the Scottish tourism industry and increase the benefits of it to woodland owners and local communities.**

### **Provision, Development or Upgrading of Small Scale Tourist Facilities by Land Managers**

**Activity supported:** Provision or upgrading of small scale tourist accommodation, whether new build or through the conversion of existing redundant buildings; provision of small scale leisure or recreational infrastructure or visitor facilities; and/or the development and marketing of tourism services related to rural tourism.

**Potential beneficiaries:** Existing land based businesses including farming, forestry and estate management. Funding is competitive.

### **Enhancing Enjoyment and Maintaining the Character of Rural Landscapes**

**Activity supported:** works to enhance enjoyment of rural landscapes by screening unsightly features, restoring walls and dykes (where these are part of the landscape character) and creating viewpoints along public access routes. Creation, management and planned programme of sequential replacement of small scale tree features that contribute to public enjoyment of the countryside and the setting of settlements.

**Potential beneficiaries:** Land managers. Funding is competitive.

**Restrictions:** Prioritisation to Historic Garden and/or Designed Landscapes in published inventories; sites agreed by Historic Scotland to be of inventory standard; sites within National Scenic Areas and National Parks; and features which lie within an area near to and accessible from communities, along roadsides or where public access is encouraged.

## **Provide opportunities for acquiring new skills and experience through forestry and improve the skills base of forestry.**

### **Skills Development**

**Activity supported:** Training that improves business competitiveness, facilitates restructuring and diversification, and enhances land management skills to deliver environmental and other benefits.

**Potential beneficiaries:** Land managers (farmers, crofters, and foresters), groups of land managers, organisations involved in promoting development of land or business management skills (not commercial training providers). Funding is via the menu scheme for landowners and competitive grants for others.

**Restrictions:** Not for normal education at secondary or higher level, not for training required for certification for basic work activities.

## **Help to improve the quality of life and well-being of people across Scotland (includes Woods in and Around Towns).**

### **Woodland Creation**

**Activity supported:** Creation of a range of woodland types appropriate in their design and location to deliver the Scottish Forestry Strategy 2006.

**Potential beneficiaries:** Owners and occupiers of agricultural land and/or non-agricultural land (be they “farmers or associations thereof” or “of any other private law person”).

Support for small woodland creation of 0.1 – 1.0ha is via the menu scheme and larger scale woodland creation via competitive grants.

There are set per hectare rates depending on the type of woodland creation. Supplementary rates are available for woodland creation of at least 1ha in and around populated areas such as the Woods in and Around Towns area.

### **Forest Environment Payments**

**Activity supported:** The management of forested land of high environmental value, in accordance with the principles of sustainable forest management. Specifically, native woodlands, **areas subject to a high level of access and recreational use**<sup>3</sup> and areas managed using low-impact silvicultural systems.

**Potential beneficiaries:** Owners or occupiers of forested land (or associations thereof) with 1ha or more forest holdings. A “sustainable woodland management option provides competitive funding at standards rates of £28ha<sup>-1</sup>year<sup>-1</sup> rising to £56 ha<sup>-1</sup>year<sup>-1</sup> where areas of high level of public access overlap with native woodland or areas managed by low impact silvicultural systems; a Forest plan is required. A “management of small woodlands” option provide funding at standard rates for areas under 30ha via the menu scheme.

**Restrictions:** Support for areas subject to high public pressure requires evidence of additional costs associated with environmental management.

### **Woods In and Around Towns Challenge Fund.**

**Activity supported:** woodland operations associated with woodland planning, silvicultural management, and enhancing recreational value of woodlands in and around significant settlements.

**Potential beneficiaries:** Private landowners or their associations and municipalities and their associations. Funding is competitive outside Land Management Contracts.

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<sup>3</sup> My highlighting.

## **Provision of Leisure, Recreation, Sporting, Catering and Other Rural Community Services and Facilities**

**Activity supported:** Provision of or improvements to service and infrastructure provision to address particular local needs and circumstances that would otherwise fall outside mainstream delivery. Support is available for setting up rural community facilities, including for example towards initial capital costs for rural community structures. Illustrative examples are: community facility renovation/ new build; internet café facilities; sports equipment / facilities; catering accommodation / upgrade, feasibility studies, and/or project management.

**Potential beneficiaries:** Constituted rural community groups. Funding is competitive.

**Restrictions:** Dependent upon demonstration of community need and demand for the service or facility.

## **Enhance forestry's engagement with communities.**

### **Managing Land for Non-Commercial Community Events**

**Activity supported:** Release of land on a temporary basis for community use and non commercial events particularly if it is linked to activities such as managing land adjacent to settlements for community access, improvements to access and farm and woodland visits.

**Potential beneficiaries:** Landowners. Funding is competitive.

**Restrictions:** Only available to managers in rural areas within 5 km from settlement with a population over 3,000 and areas within 1 km of settlements of a population under 3,000, or in specific locations (such as hill tops), specified by organiser of event.

### **Forestry for People Challenge Fund.**

**Activity supported:** Realise the potential of woodlands to provide health, learning, and community cohesion benefits to people who live close to those woodlands including feasibility studies and development of strategies and project plans; schemes that promote physical activity; developing materials that promote the education, health and well-being benefits of using woodlands; facilitation of volunteering; schemes that encourage the health and education sectors to use of woodlands; training of volunteers; supporting Forest School ; providing resources to involve communities in the decision making process of managing their local woodland; development of non-profit distributing organisations that use local woodland products and services ; community events in the forest.

**Potential beneficiaries:** Priority given to community and voluntary groups, development trusts, social enterprises, schools parent teacher associations, community councils, life long learning groups, and other non-profit distributing organisations with objectives of local community benefit. Private individuals and businesses and municipalities are potentially eligible but require clear demonstration of strong local community benefits.

## **Develop forestry's role in education and lifelong learning.**

### **Information and Awareness Raising**

**Activity supported:** Installation and upgrading of small scale infrastructure for recreation and interpretation, and the development and marketing of services in relation to access to the countryside. For example, arrangements for public visits such as risk assessments; publications and other media; interpretation panels, trails, or signage; training in delivery of information on visits or for planning access and events; hygiene facilities or protective equipment for visitors; accessibility improvements; and coach parking and turning areas.

**Potential beneficiaries:** Land based businesses. Funding is competitive.

### **Farm and Forest Visits and Talks**

**Activity supported:** hosting by land managers of visits to their farm or forest or giving of talks to groups not associated with land management such as schools, youth groups, community groups and international visitors.

**Potential beneficiaries:** Land owners. Funding via the menu scheme for registered landowners.

## **Make access to woodlands easier for all sectors of society.**

### **Improving Access.**

**Activity supported:** Maintaining and marking paths / routes which meet the criteria of linking to local networks, giving access to points of attraction, or meeting a local need, including core paths.

**Potential beneficiaries:** All rural land managers. Funding via menu scheme. Annual payment of £2.75 per metre of route maintained plus one-off contribution to boardwalks, bridges, and culverts up to £150 per item.

**Restrictions:** Tarmac/bitumen surfaced motor-vehicle tracks are excluded.

### **Area Access Management and Monitoring, and Creation and Upgrading of Paths and Routes**

**Activity supported:** Path construction and associated works; vegetation management to facilitate access; provision of car parking areas, seats, picnic tables, hard-standings; provision of dog exercise areas close to arrival points; facilitation of safe access to viewpoints, water margins and well-used areas; management of fields/areas near to communities to integrate informal recreational use and productive use; facilitate responsible access in relation to sensitive areas; operation of people-counters, surveys and similar means to monitor levels and characteristics of public use; signage; and associated provision of visitor information leaflets.

**Potential beneficiaries:** Land managers. Funding is competitive. There are standard costs for most items.

**Restrictions:** Tarmac/bitumen surfaced motor vehicle tracks are ineligible for path-upgrading.

## **Cross-cutting.**

### **Production of Collaborative Local Development Strategies Encompassing Axis 3<sup>4</sup> Measures.**

**Activity supported:** Acquisition of skills and provision of activities to facilitate the local preparation and implementation of local development strategies. Activities supported include: studies of the area concerned; the provision of information about the area and the local development strategy once developed; the training of staff involved in the preparation and implementation of the local development strategy; promotional events; training of leaders; and implementation of the local development strategy by public private partnerships<sup>5</sup>.

**Potential beneficiaries:** Partnerships (including a minimum of 33% non public sector representatives) and the individual partners involved in the development an implementation of a local development strategy.

### **Implementation of the Leader Approach**

LEADER is a bottom up approach to directing some of the resources in the SRDP. The main priority is to increase the capacity of local community and business networks to build human capital, innovate and co-operate in order to tackle local development objectives. In this way, LEADER will be used to complement and integrate rural strategies and priorities delivered across the rural development programme. It must not duplicate other funding streams or replace statutory obligations.

Local development strategies prepared by Local Action Groups will specify the precise actions to be taken forward through the LEADER approach. A wide range of rural partnerships will be engaged in the formulation, funding and implementation of LEADER strategies. LEADER is about innovative governance and projects driven by the community decided locally and having a wide community benefit. It is also about innovative and collaborative approaches to remove barriers blocking or hindering rural development.

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[Back to background paper.](#)

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<sup>4</sup> There are four axes in the SRDP broadly focussed on different outcomes. Axis 3 measures are those directed mainly at rural development benefiting rural communities and access to public services for people in rural areas.

<sup>5</sup> But not Leader Local Action Groups.