



Forestry Commission Scotland

National Forestry Forum -15th November 2004

Purpose of the day

The third annual public meeting was designed to allow delegates to:

- share views and influence policy via parallel workshops, feedback and subsequent voting to identify priority issues for increasing the contribution of forestry to rural development
- hear and talk to key decision makers and forestry sector leaders
- pick up the latest information and new ideas
- find out more about the developing role of forestry in Scotland
- meet people involved and interested in all aspects of forestry in Scotland

At the end of the day, delegates were invited to firstly tell us their key take-home message and secondly give their views on the event itself. Both aspects are summarised below, followed by the delegates' individual and anonymous comments.

Feedback from Delegates

What thoughts / ideas will you take away with you?

Summary

The dominant take-home message was the need for integrated thinking and delivery (by individuals and organisations) taking in different aspects of forestry and also different sectors.

There were four secondary groupings:

- there is a positive outlook in the sector and the general direction is correct
- delegates support the current emphasis on greater community involvement and progress so far has been well received
- recent policy shifts to widen objectives and participation have created a high level of complexity for both policy makers and implementers
- there is a certain impatience over a perceived lack of action and delivery.

The following comments fell into two minor groupings:

- the event identified a role and topics for the Regional Forestry Forums
- delegates support the present commitment to the economic viability of the sector though one delegate commented that there was insufficient emphasis on ensuring the economic benefits.

Funding was mentioned – greater funding in general was sought while in two cases delegates thought that funding should be for public benefit.

Individual comments

- Importance of networking
- Generally positive. We're going in the right direction. We need to focus on outputs make it happen and cut out impediments etc.

- Sense of complexity. Need to get on and do it. Communities at the centre of strategy
- Forestry becomes ever complex, resources should follow public benefit
- Great potential, joined up thinking, joined up planning, joined up doing
- The head is in turmoil with the bombardment of facts and opinions, which will settle by tomorrow. Impressions enthusiasm, knowledge, some first class ideas. But what of action?
- Participants at today's event were self selected therefore the voting could be subject to bias therefore actions flowing from them need to be tempered with this in mind
- Yes very positive. Change of right direction especially on focus on empowering communities through meetings relevant to us all
- The need to work in partnership "speak with one big voice"
- No accountability! Communities who enter into forest schemes will be at the mercy of unscrupulous forest management companies. The forest industry must act against malpractice not shoot the whistleblower
- More funding required to deliver aspirations & objectives
- Efficient time management required for integration and participation
- Optimism
- Still lots of potential for the forest estate to deliver. To maximise return on social and economic levels locally and nationally
- The importance of community involvement
- Need to improve local community enjoyment & environment
- Wealth of issues facing us and the ongoing degree of change within FCS
- I must honestly confess I am no less confused - in fact more confused about rural development than before. I do not have a clear idea about what I should be doing in my own business.
- Farm/ forestry integration
- Role for regional forestry forum in implementing policy
- Too many angles to cover, must prioritise or get results on key points
- Might stop me from selling up and finding another industry. Live in a little more hope
- Good that community FM power MFMD came top
- Commonality of issues
- Greater synergy / linkage with other public bodies / committees. "Theory without practice is futile, practice without theory sterile." Karl Marx
- The complexity of modern society will make some rural development difficult. With demographic change which is taking place we need to act quickly and boldly to make the changes required
- That there remains a very strong emphasis in forestry on social issues—nothing wrong with that but economic industry is being overshadowed - no industry no multi benefits
- Manifesto says most of what was covered today. Does the public / private partnership really work (when it was not interested once), and what about it? Couldn't FCS have given it acknowledgement?
- Still strong support for productive forestry. Important to engage with the farmers/ foresters in other ground who have implemented new legislation / policy etc. and how we do this differently
- Need for wide networking to bring in ideas and for actions from other stakeholders (than normal culprits)
- Top priorities for RDF
- Forestry must link to broader RD agenda

- Need to be aware of the public—local communities in particular and make sure we take them with us
- Need to engage with landowners as delivers
- I will be mulling it all over – so hopefully will everyone –so we all develop together
- Some pointless for use in RFF. Nothing new
- Emphasis on promotion of community engagement and empowerment
- Integrate land use management. Prioritise action across economy, quality of life and biodiversity. Just do it! Public money = Public benefit
- What will happen / result / will there be the action now? Will it make any real difference?
- Making it happen at a local level—small steps to success!!
- Encouragement that there is real interest in joined up government and community empowerment
- I now realise that my concerns for commercial forestry are being addressed
- Chaos that might stem from lack of priorities or attempt to be all things to all men in short term
- Forestry and rural development is about much more than timber
- We are measured / judged on outputs & outcomes, but quality is as important if not more important than quantity

What did you think of the event?

Summary

Almost half of those who commented said that the day was useful and worth attending. The main reasons were firstly that delegate participation was an integral part of the event and voting led to an obvious output on the day and secondly that there was a wide range of interests represented by the delegates - this offered useful networking opportunities and interesting perspectives. Many delegates commented on the good organisation in particular as well as the venue and facilities; on the other hand three found that the main meeting room was too hot and two thought the location was inconvenient.

Individual comments

- Participative, inclusive and well worth attending
- Useful
- Very good day with a lot of good input from all, well worth coming to
- Event very good - best of three annual SFF's I've been to. Wider group of folk, good to workshop & talk. Would have been good to have a more provocative animator to increase some lively debate.
- 60 -115 delegates (at least) paid by public purse, too involved in the industry in Scotland, something wrong there! Good meeting facilities poor (inconvenient) location
- Excellent venue
- Best forum event yet!
- Good to meet a wide variety of people with entirely different interests in forestry.
- Notice of workshop topics would have been useful. Well organised / good venue
- Much better than last year. Our ideas captured better.
- Good event, good venue, quite intensive perhaps a bit more time for networking
- Useful good cross-section of Scottish Forestry. More time for substantive group discussions would have been good
- To be effective this meeting will be judged on what action comes from it
- The venue was not very convenient by car and not at all by public transport. Publish list of delegates in advance to participate in car sharing
- Generally good useful, encouraging initial presentations, constructive workshop format, although difficult to choose which topic. Would have been good to input to two. Disappointing not attracting a wider range of interests to the event
- Good value
- Useful, hopefully this will be translated into action as Bill Dalrymple suggests. Particularly the priorities voted on by the attendees. Good lunch
- Far more useful than I expected. Excellent diversity in terms of delegates views expressed during the workshop
- Very worthwhile to see such a range of people. Ideal location and interesting speakers
- A great opportunity to exchange ideas and network
- Excellent lunch. Stuffy room
- Good networking
- Well organised, good effective participation
- Conference superbly organised. Perhaps over ambitious e. g. maybe three topics than five & more small group chat time
- Well run, well structured, run to time
- The event was neatly organised but too wide ranging, consequently not enough time to do anything justice. Too many NGO, LGO etc.
- Needed a longer Q&A session with the minister in a structured way

- Well organised, workshop sessions very good. It would be good in future to give a bit more information on workshops in advance so can provide a more considered input
- Well organised, well attended, well interesting
- Very useful with broad range of views / angles expressed
- Workshops given enough time to discuss - pity we babble a lot!
- Great venue, good group, hot room, hot air, didn't really spark into life. Lack of focus in workshop complexity got more complex not simpler
- Very good networking opportunity, very well organised, good location. Would have been good to have taken part in more than one workshop
- No open question session
- Slightly stage managed
- Very worthwhile and brought a lot of threads together that are being discussed in the industry and importantly in the communities
- Good event, good to see strong support for social issues from FCS
- A good event for a range of reasons. The right people attended and contributed. The minister did not inspire me
- We needed to have discussed the strategy review further next November we'll be presented with it!
- Interesting & enjoyable
- Interesting and productive session
- Workshop pretty dense in terms of content
- Good to hear so many FCS people to talk to but it would have been good to have more lay persons perhaps they signed up and didn't show
- Ok, but cramped facilities and paucity of information (despite briefings in pack)
- Excellent, very participative
- Well organised, worthwhile event
- Good event, stimulating & thought provoking. Workshops inevitably too short but worked in the end
- There was a lot of talk after last years meeting about how to bring more people into this Public Meeting. Could this be done? The meeting was generally well organised, useful and achieved something worthwhile in the short time. The venue was too hot and the staff a little unhelpful
- Good to get a view from a broad group of interests