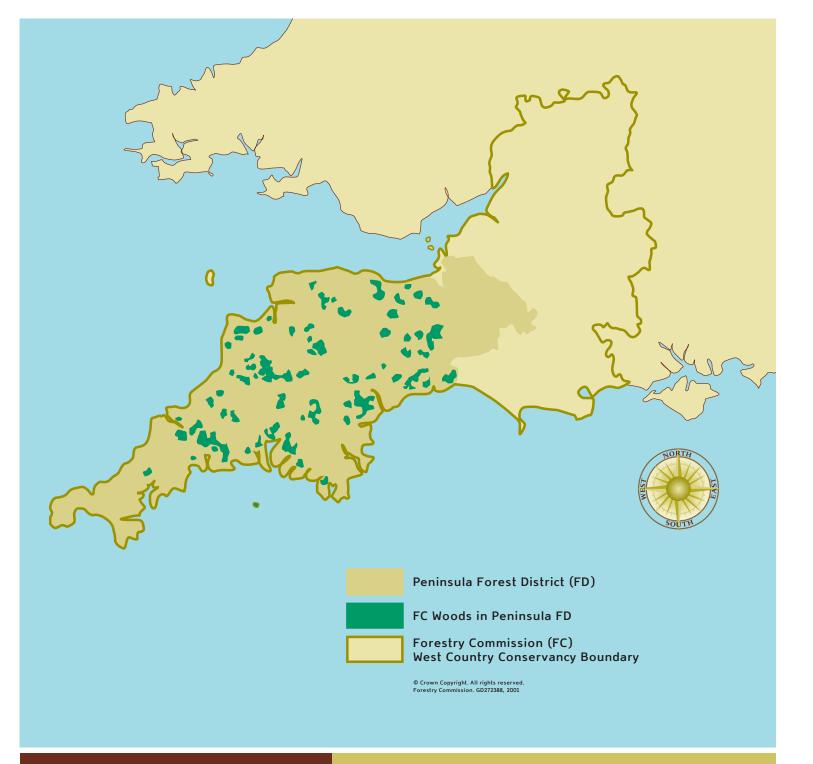


Peninsula Forest District Strategic Plan 2004–2014





EXECUTIVESummary

The plan sets out how Forest Enterprise (FE) will manage Forestry Commission woodlands in Peninsula Forest District (Cornwall, Devon, West Somerset, and the far west of Dorset) for the years 2004–2014. It describes a major change as a result of the demand for wider public benefits from woodland, which FE is keen to deliver. It must work with partners to fund this work in order to offset recent large reductions in funding from timber.

In recognition of regional needs nature conservation, health, recreation, tourism, education and local wood markets all receive far greater emphasis. Sustainability and the need for funding are key themes throughout.

The approach to delivery of the different objectives is based in more consultative and partnership working. The management of woods and trees will also change radically with less clearfelling, longer rotations and more gradual change overall. The list of actions, which will deliver the aims and objectives, includes key partners. A separate detailed internal action plan for staff will guide its implementation.









PENINSULA FOREST DISTRICT Strategic Plan

This plan sets out how Forest Enterprise as the organisation which manages Forestry Commission (FC) woods intends to deliver FC objectives within Peninsula Forest District (FD) in a locally relevant, sustainable and focussed way for the years 2004–2014. It covers the 16000 hectares of FC woods in Cornwall, Devon and west Somerset, which are managed by FE.

Interim reviews of progress are planned for 2007 and 2010.

CONTEXT

The government has had a sustainable forestry policy since 1992 with which FE must comply.

The Forestry Commission is the first state forest service in the world to have all of its woods externally certified as being sustainably managed and externally audited to international standards under the United Kingdom Woodland Assurance Scheme (UKWAS).

Sustainability is a key theme in every forest district activity.

Strategic decisions must be assessed in terms of environmental, economic and social sustainability.

Forestry can bring economic and community benefits as well as environmental well-being. Woods and forests are worth £575 million to the South West's economy.

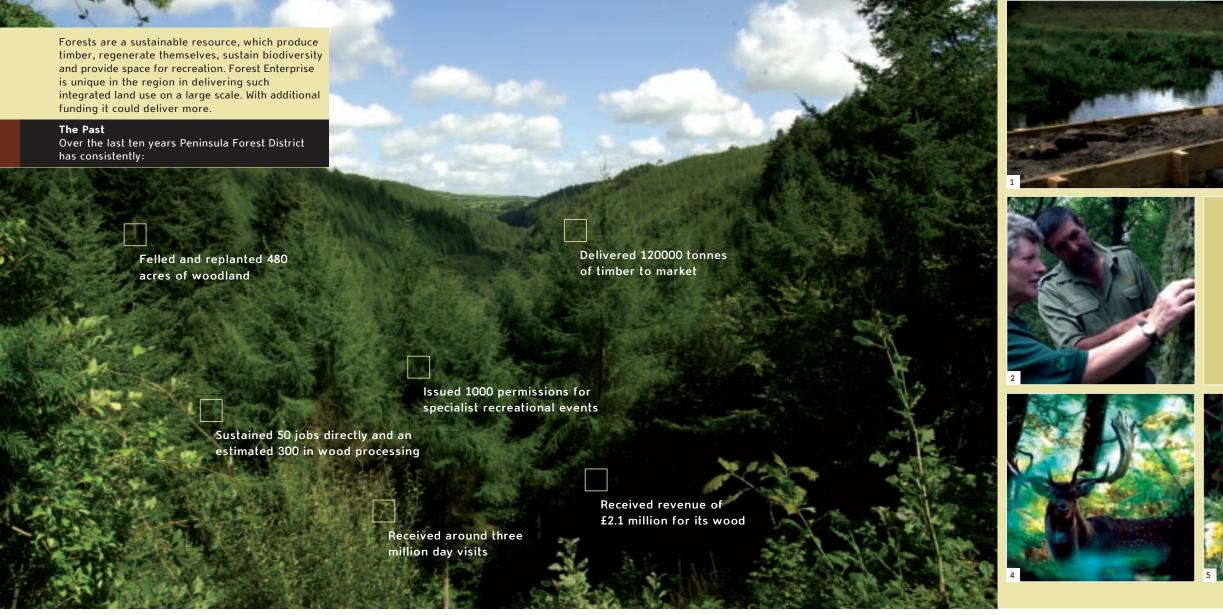
(South West Regional Assembly. Towards a Regional Strategy for The South West Environment - Consultation)

The Commission's national mission is set out in the England Forestry Strategy (EFS). This has four main areas of interest, which are listed in their order of priority for the FD to date: –

- 1. Forestry for Rural Development
- 2. Forestry for Environment And Conservation
- 3. Forestry for Recreation Access And Tourism
- 4. Forestry for Economic Regeneration

Currently funding allocations for these objectives are based on national priorities. They take little account of what people and organisations in the south-west region need and want. To date the main emphasis in Peninsula FD has been on 1 while 4 has not been relevant to FC land.

In future the Regional Woodland and Forestry Framework (RWFF), currently being prepared by the FC, will identify regional priorities for the forest district.



View: Cardinham

the need to change



Careful planning and forest design has enabled FE to use the cycle of felling and replanting to progressively diversify and improve forest landscapes and wildlife habitats. This is now increasingly recognised by a range of organisations.

Extending the area of less productive habitats in our woods reduces their capacity to provide materials for local industry, to sustain and enhance jobs, and to provide income for managing trees, habitats, landscapes and recreation. Until now we have been able to balance this loss of timber production by replanting more productive conifer species elsewhere.

THE PRESENT

Until recently Peninsula FD concentrated on managing timber resources to support rural development in the South West. However, falls in the world timber prices since 1988 have reduced the FD's contribution to the economy by 60 per cent (£1.5 million). It has not proved possible to reduce the districts costs by the same amount.

The timber market is expected not to improve significantly in the short or even medium term. Meanwhile, the FD is seeking to increase the total value of social and environmental benefits that it delivers in the region.

Timber production will remain essential to woodland management but will be increasingly subsidiary to other benefits.

REGIONAL NEEDS

The importance of forestry to sustainable development is emphasised in the Regional Sustainable Development Framework for the South West of England.

Provided that resources are made available, FE woods could significantly contribute to key themes in the Regional Sustainable Development Framework. We are keen to respond to the South West's Regional Environment Strategy's objective for our industry:-

The Teignbridge Landscape Assessment (Consultation Draft)

recognises the FE woodlands at Haldon as a positive attribute

'...the present day combination of forestry, woodland and

heathland creates complimentary

'wildscape' scenery types, as an

entity the area is of a strongly

"to help ensure the... forestry industries provide the environmental goods and services which people living in, working in and visiting the region need and expect." (South West Regional Assembly – Towards a Regional Strategy for The South West Environment – Consultation Document).

A thriving forestry industry is needed, which attracts investment and employment into rural communities, regeneration of native woodlands to support biodiversity, and increased access and enjoyment for recreational uses. (A Sustainable Future for the South West.)

Protecting our landscape 1

Ongoing research 2

Increased tourism 3

A home for wildlife 4

All kinds of plants 5

the need to change

Many of the region's important habitats require deliberate management, and so are closely associated with agriculture, forestry and fishing.

A Sustainable Future for the South West

Farming and forestry can provide environmental goods and services as well as supporting other sectors particularly tourism.

South West Regional Assembly Towards a Regional Strategy for The South West Environment – Consultation Document Very little of the money spent by those using woodland and forests benefits woodland owners and managers directly. We need to find better ways of ensuring that owners who manage woods in the public interest can benefit from the income generated from the region in order to protect this important social economic and environmental resource.

South West Regional Assembly Towards a Regional Strategy for The South West Environment – Consultation Document To improve the determinants of health.

Example: Develop and support sporting and recreation infrastructure locally and encourage people to live more active lifestyles. For example, "Walking the Way to Health Initiative" developed by the Countryside Agency and the British Heart Foundation. Highlighting walking and cycling as alternative transport modes.

Objective for Health and Well Being – A Sustainable Future for the South West





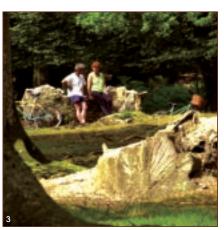
THE ENVIRONMENT AS AN ECONOMIC DRIVER

FE woodlands play significant roles in the environment of the South West. This is recognised in the Regional Economic Strategy as an economic driver. The quality of the environment attracts both tourism income and inward investment from people seeking a good quality of life. It is vital that the farming and forestry industries controlling the bulk of the landscape are economically able to sustain that work if the region's economy is not to suffer.

The coast, which acts as the biggest draw for tourists, contains half of the important biodiversity of the region and is under environmental pressure.

LANDSCAPES AND BIODIVERSITY

FC woods already make a significant contribution to the landscapes and biodiversity of the South West. More could be achieved by increased focus on planning and design to improve forest landscapes. The scale of FC's land ownership offers great scope for enhancing biodiversity at a landscape scale in line with the wishes of conservation organisations. However, significant additional funding is needed from them if the work is to be implemented and management sustained.







ENHANCING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

FE woodlands could make further significant contributions to the way the environment boosts the regional economy through increased tourism uses. Its forests have a great, and frequently under–used, capacity to absorb people whilst retaining their sense of seclusion.

CONTRIBUTING TO HEALTH AND WELL-BEING, LEARNING AND SKILLS

FE managers have shown that they can manage woods as safe places, providing access for leisure and tourist destinations, alongside timber production. Woods can help deliver both preventative health care and lifelong learning. They offer sites where people can exercise their bodies, stimulate their minds and refresh their spirits and reduce stress with beauty, peace and quiet.

Woodlands can also provide many opportunities for learning a range of subjects in science, humanities and arts and also practical skills in countryside management, forestry and wood use and crafts. Such learning can also be provided as part of the tourism economy.

CONTRIBUTING TO SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS, CONSERVING NATURAL RESOURCES AND REDUCING TRANSPORT NEEDS

Wood is a renewable resource and one of mankind's oldest and most versatile materials. Its national market value has been significantly reduced in recent years by cheap imports.

The sustainability of woodland management in the FD could be enhanced by developing local and regional markets. Houses in the South West utilise materials like brick, concrete and imported wood — all less environmentally friendly than locally sourced timber. Much of the timber from Peninsula FD has been sold out of the region in the past only to return after processing, e.g. as fence panels. More effective marketing could help alleviate atmospheric pollution and reduce reliance on non-renewable sources of energy.

THE POTENTIAL FOR MANAGED WOODS...

FE has already started transforming forests of dark spruce and fir into woods of varied age and species. This work will continue until we manage places, where pools, rocks, plants and ancient structures stand in beautiful open spaces rather than hidden by dense stands of trees. These features could be enclosed by a variety of trees, young and ancient, huge and small, evergreen and deciduous, which provide timber for economic development, and habitats for biodiversity. The FD can develop woods and manage habitats where a wide variety of animals and plants flourish and which will enhance the region's landscapes.

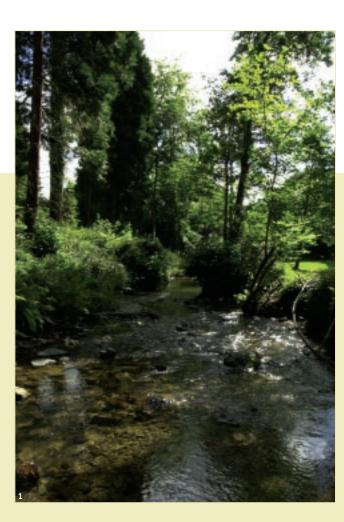
...AND WHAT WE COULD PROVIDE

The FC's forests have a great capacity to absorb people while still enabling a feeling of escape from crowds. We can manage woods to provide access for leisure, sustainable tourism, active recreation such as cycling, environmental education and other outdoor pursuits. A great deal could be achieved without environmental damage but much will depend on the building partnerships to fund the work.

FE-managed woods could also help deliver preventative health care as places where everyone could sustain the health of body, mind and spirit through exercise or education, and through enjoying their natural beauty and peace and quiet.

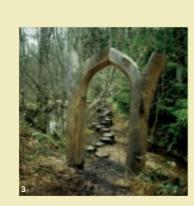
As a renewable resource, timber from these forests could be marketed with a more local focus, reducing the financial and environmental costs of transporting raw and processed materials. It could also provide an alternative to fossil fuels in the form of wood heat.







- Natural features 1
- Outdoor pursuits 2
- Modern walkways 3



Sustainability & Funding

PENINSULA FD IS WILLING AND ABLE TO PURSUE A NEW VISION.

However any decision which extensively reduces the area of productive forest (e.g. with more open habitat) or volume of wood production (e.g. by substituting native woodland cover) will further strain economic sustainability. Timber sales currently generate 75% of the FD's income. Proposed changes must demonstrate economic, environmental, and social sustainability. External funding would nevertheless be required to manage the areas concerned.

FE is internationally recognised as a leader in sustainable woodland management with its sites certified under the United Kingdom Woodland Assurance Scheme (UKWAS). Future plans must also continue to be directed by the test of sustainability. UKWAS standards determine amongst other things how FE treats its staff, involves local communities, controls pesticide use and the location of contractors and buyers. The organisation's dedication to meeting those standards requires intensive management and permeates its vision and all its aims, objectives and actions both in this plan and in the woods. The cost, effort and obligation that this places on the FD and on all its consultees and partners must not be forgotten.

Increasing Peninsula FD's income from wood is not a realistic option for the foreseeable future. Its new vision will aim to maximise the value of recreational, environmental and other benefits. The FD will continue its efforts to attract other sources of funding and build partnerships. Its ability to progress will depend not only on the imagination and commitment of its staff and their ability to involve others but also on the willingness of partners to become involved.

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PENINSULA FOREST DISTRICT'S

New Vision is of...

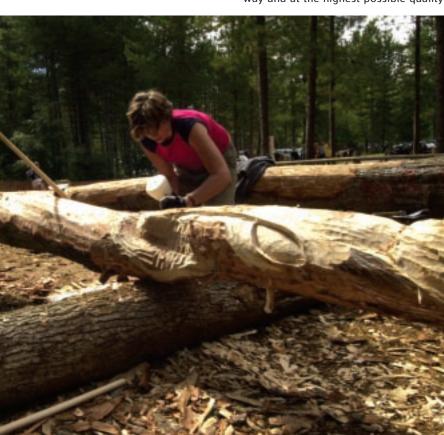
...sustainable woods for people and nature, where people can safely enjoy physical activity, spiritual refreshment, culture and learning, which are managed for, wildlife, people and economic benefits and in which all communities can be involved.

IN ORDER TO REALISE THIS VISION THE FD NEEDS: -

- to restate its local mission;
- to change the emphasis of its work;
- 3 and money.

THE FD'S NEW LOCAL MISSION IS TO: -

Increase the value of its woodlands to the region by meeting the needs of residents, visitors, and biodiversity in a socially, environmentally and economically sustainable way and at the highest possible quality.



1 Carving the new place-sculpture in the forest

FE can satisfy community needs and wants through further developing its skills in involving people in woodland management.

It expects the demands on woodlands to change repeatedly in the future and is confident of its expertise to plan, design and develop woods that can meet the widest range of needs imaginable.

The FD is prepared to commit itself to this but the ability to achieve it will be determined by available funding.







PENINSULA FD'S

New Aims

IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE ITS MISSION, THE FD WILL PURSUE FIVE MAIN AIMS: -

TO INCREASE PUBLIC USE, ENJOYMENT AND AWARENESS OF WOODLANDS FOR TOURISM AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Peninsula FD is seeking funding partnerships to significantly increase public use of the forests. There are opportunities to extend the tourism season and to reduce pressure on coastal and 'honeypot' sites. However this work requires funding for development from national partners such as Sport England, on assistance with promotion from SW Tourism and local authorities, and on building partnerships with local cycling groups and businesses. It also depends on neighbours for its implementation and to sustain the management of the forest environment.

TO INCREASE PUBLIC ACCESSIBILITY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF HEALTH AND WELL-BEING, KNOWLEDGE, LEARNING AND SKILLS OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES INCLUDING THE SOCIALLY EXCLUDED AND LESS ABLE

These benefits to people could be more effectively and extensively delivered across the forest district. Partnerships already exist with a few outdoor pursuit organisations and these could be expanded. Individual projects such as Holsworthy Woods, where a funding partnership has enabled improvements to car parks and trails, demonstrate the potential. However, for such projects to meet the needs of all, including socially disadvantaged people, they frequently need: –

- * Improved access to the woods (transport);
- * Improved access to information;
- * Awareness on the part of health and social service professionals;
- * Improved infrastructure of trails, way marking, etc.;
- * Enhanced landscape design and sustained management. There is significant scope to improve these in partnership with the education, health and social service professionals but funding is needed.

TO INCREASE THE DELIVERY OF LANDSCAPE, HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY BENEFITS

The FD recognises that the landscapes and wildlife of the South West are a major driver for its economy. If future importance of woodland landscapes is to be maintained, views of the forest need to be further improved for visitors.

The scale and location of FE's land holding offers a major opportunity to deliver biodiversity at a landscape scale. However this would have a major effect on timber revenue and alternative sources of funding would be needed to secure the management of these areas.



TO MAKE WOOD MARKETING MORE LOCAL AND SUSTAINABLE AND INCREASE THE FD'S CONTRIBUTION TO EMPLOYMENT AND BUSINESS INNOVATION IN THE REGIONAL ECONOMY

Developing and sustaining local markets for panel materials, sustainable buildings, and wood heat, will increase economic activity, employment and skills in the region at the same time as reducing traffic pollution and consumption of minerals and oil.

Peninsula FD is contributing to the forestry industry partnership exploring this further. It will require partnerships with funding regional agencies and with local authorities and business to develop sites and ensure that local infrastructure is in place. Peninsula FD may have the potential to offer sites for development.

5 TO INCREASE REVENUE FUNDING

In the long term Peninsula FD will only be able to provide as much of the above benefits as funding allows. The value of its timber harvest alone is not enough and it will need to work with partners, to further reduce costs and to find new sources of income.



In order to achieve its new aims, the FD needs to concentrate its efforts on specific actions and objectives. There are partners and consultation involved in most of them.

new objectives

Objective	Action	Comment	Key partners	
1 Involve local communities in all major forest and recreation plans.	Advance consultation on new forest plans involving all aspects of management to provide access to information on our work and services.	This will focus our resources on public needs and wants, will raise awareness and will increase enjoyment. It can also be a vehicle for building partnerships.	LA's, FC, EN ENPA, DNPA	AONB Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty AT Angel Tomney BSD (FC) Business Services Division DNPA Dartmoor National Park Authority EH English Heritage EN English Nature ENPA Exmoor National Park Authority LA Local Authority PCT Primary Care Trusts RDA Regional Development Agency RSPB Royal Society For The Protection Of Birds SW South West WP Wood Purchasers
2 Making the dissemination of information a central part of all we do.	Develop an annual public forum, issue more press releases and update our web site.	This will assist the building of partnerships, increase transparency and provide the public with information about our woods.	FC, AT, BSD	
3 Protect and enhance the region's landscapes.	Integrate the design of our woodlands with EN's Natural Area profiles, and Countryside Agency Landscape Character areas.	This will help protect both an important economic driver and the regional heritage to a public standard.	LA s, FC, EN, ENPA, DNPA, AONBs	
4 Strive for the highest possible standards of woodland design.	Focus forest planning on combined landscape, habitat, heritage and timber resource management wherever possible and make timber a subsidiary but essential priority.	This will contribute to the region's landscapes, enhance biodiversity, increase public enjoyment and develop woods that serve the widest possible range of needs.	WP, EN	

Objective	Action	Comment	Key partners
5 Make our woods a cultural, social, educational and tourist resource.	Make landscape and habitat improvements an essential part of all physical operations. Work with partners to: - · interpret historic sites and · develop an arts project in each of the 3 counties	This will increase public enjoyment and contribute to the improved emotional health of visitors from across the region and encourage repeat tourist visits.	WP EH SW Arts Calvert Trust
6 Extend our work to enhance biodiversity through transparent delivery of agreed site management and biodiversity targets.	Implement and revise all our SSSI and SAM plans in partnership with English Nature and English Heritage working always towards favourable condition. Publish and implement Strategies for restoration and management of Ancient woodland and heathland. Publish annual progress reports on our contribution to biodiversity action plans for: –	This will contribute to national, regional and government objectives for biodiversity and Ancient Monuments. This will contribute to enhanced biodiversity at a landscape scale. This will contribute to enhanced and transparent delivery of biodiversity targets.	EH EN WTs RSPB ENPA DNPA RSPB
	 Ancient woodland Heath land Nightjar Otter Greater horseshoe bat Butterflies Continue to relocate our landholding to fit our new mission and explore opportunities for land swap as a vehicle for rebuilding	This could contribute to enhanced biodiversity at a landscape scale in the most sensitive landscapes. ABBREVIATIONS	





biodiversity at a landscape scale.

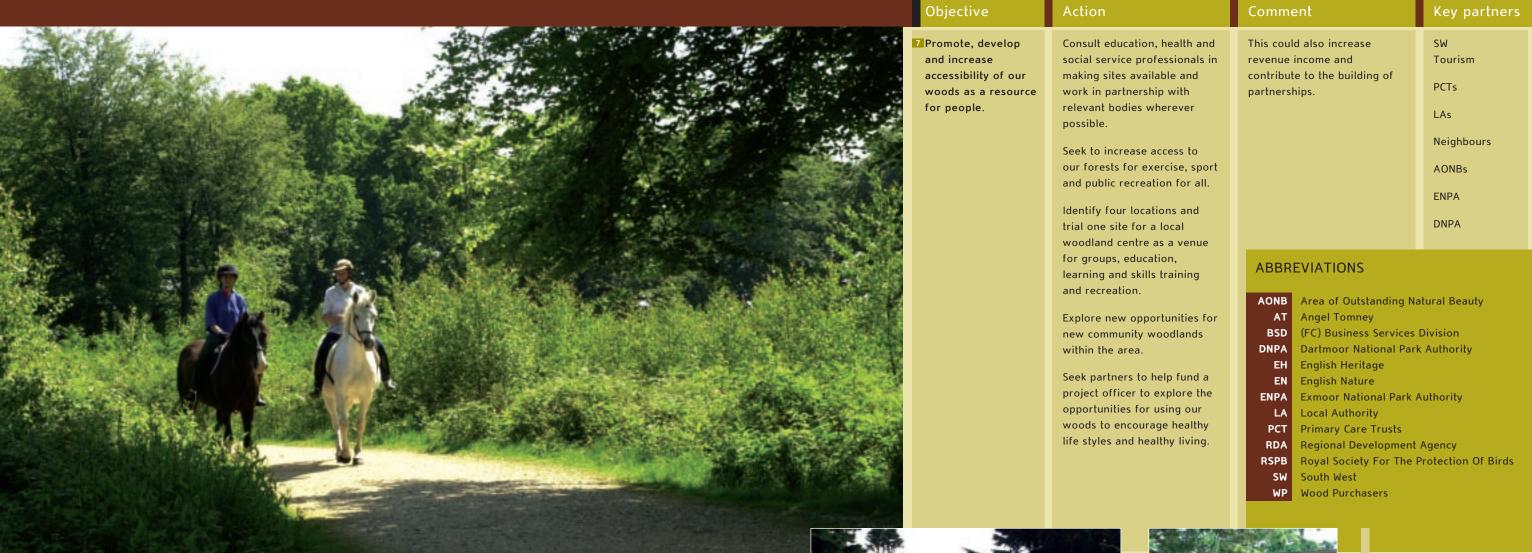
BSD	(FC) Business Services Division
DNPA	Dartmoor National Park Authority
EH	English Heritage
EN	English Nature
ENPA	Exmoor National Park Authority
LA	Local Authority
PCT	Primary Care Trusts
RDA	Regional Development Agency
RSPB	Royal Society For The Protection Of Birds
SW	South West
WP	Wood Purchasers

AONB Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
AT Angel Tomney



Make our woods a cultural, social, educational and tourist resource.

Extend our work to enhance biodiversity through transparent delivery of agreed site management and biodiversity targets.



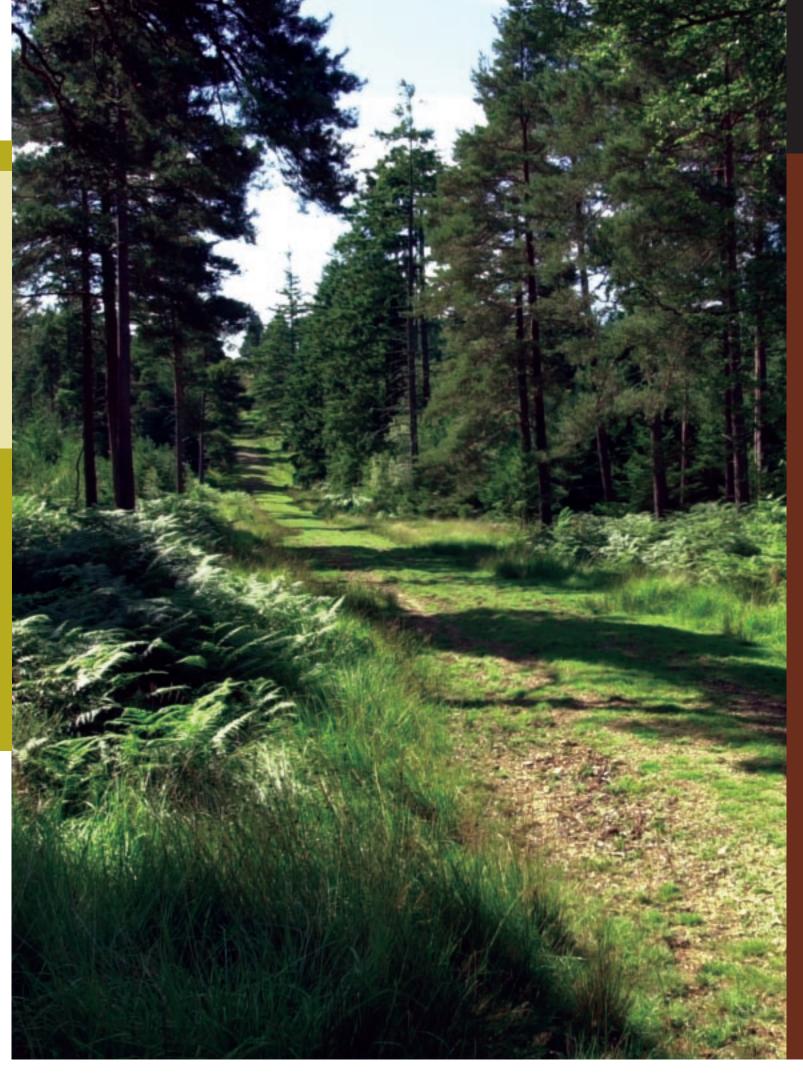
Promote, develop and increase accessibility of our woods as a resource for people.

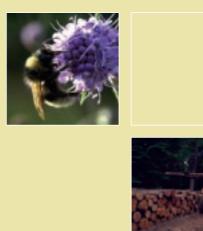


Objective	Action	Comment	Key partners	
8 Maintain and develop employment and business opportunities in our woods and through our timber.	Market sustainably produced and certified timber in accordance with our forest plans. Help develop local branding and 'chain of custody' proof of certification for local wood, fuel wood, traditional and local niche markets. Help business grow innovatively through work in our woods and by encouraging businesses in forest-based recreation and tourism.	This will also secure revenue income and contribute to the building of partnerships. This could also increase revenue income and contribute to the building of partnerships and provide opportunities for the management of ancient woodland and learning of skills. This too is needed to increase revenue income in order to contribute to woodland management.	WPs WPs RDA SW Tourism LAs, Neighbours AONBs ENPA DNPA	
9 Increase revenue funding	Reduce our medium term spending on replanting by increasing use of natural regeneration and reducing clear felling. Increase income from thinning by exploring more value based thinning regimes. Working more with partners.	AT Angel Tomney BSD (FC) Business Services Di DNPA Dartmoor National Park A EH English Heritage EN English Nature ENPA Exmoor National Park Au LA Local Authority PCT Primary Care Trusts RDA Regional Development A	AT Angel Tomney (FC) Business Services Division DAT Dartmoor National Park Authority EH English Heritage EN English Nature IPA Exmoor National Park Authority LA Local Authority PCT Primary Care Trusts DA Regional Development Agency Royal Society For The Protection Of Birds	

Maintain and develop employment and business opportunities in our woods and through our timber.

Increase revenue funding.













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