

Carron Valley Partnership Agreement

The following agreement is between
Forestry Commission Scotland (the 'Commission')
Scottish Water
The site owners

and

North Lanarkshire Council,
Stirling Council
the **Carron Valley Development Group** (*the CVDG*)
the **Clanranald Trust for Scotland** (*the CTS*)
Central Scotland Forest Trust (*the CFST*)
Community representative
A N other (Walking interests)
A N other (Fishing interests)
A N other (Other local authorities interests)
A N other (Horse riding interests)

(**the Partners**)

Collectively 'the Carron Valley Partnership' ('the Partnership)

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Purpose of the agreement

1. The purpose of this agreement is to establish the operating principles and working relationship between the **Commission, Scottish Water** and the **Partners**. The **partners** have an interest in how the **Commission** and **Scottish Water** manage the public assets in the Carron Valley for access and recreation.

Scope of the partnership

2. The **partners** will through the **partnership** decide on the access and recreation developments at Carron Valley, within the boundary detailed on map 1 in annex 2. Decision making on the access and recreation development will be made by the partnership in the ways and within the limits defined in this agreement and the development plan. The **Commission and Scottish Water** retain a final veto of any proposal only where this conflicts with their business or corporate needs or is outside of this agreement. This needs clarification – a lease arrangement cannot work with the constant threat of veto hanging over it. This agreement does not invite or extend to the other duties the **Commission** and **Scottish Water** discharge as part of their business. The partnership can extend to a total of 14 partners, and must include the Commission and Scottish Water.

Comment: In that case, why is there a £50k threshold on development? Also, why is this not in the agreement and why do FCS have unfettered right of veto?

The Partnership Agreement

3. Is between the **Commission, Scottish Water** and the **Partners** forming the **Carron Valley Partnership**. The partnership relies on the **owners** and **partners** working together with a common purpose and set of values. The **Carron Valley Partnership** will be concerned primarily with delivering the **Development Plan**.

Comment: But there is no clearly defined development in the development plan??

Duration and Review

4. This Agreement will subsist for a period of five years from the date of signing by all the partners engaged at that point. It will be reviewed annually with a full review and revision prior to the fifth anniversary with the option to continue or end the agreement at the fifth anniversary.
5. The agreement can be terminated by the withdrawal of the Commission or Scottish Water, subject to one months written notice. Not acceptable for a 5-year agreement. Any of the partners can withdraw from the project or additional partners added with the approval of the partnership up to the maximum of 14 partners. In the event that a Partner other than the Commission withdraws, the remaining Partners may agree to sustain the remaining Partnership.
6. The agreement may be extended or replaced by the Commission and Scottish Water with one or more Partners after its termination or natural expiry. The Partners may also, by majority agreement, extend the Partnership to additional organisations sharing the general objectives of the Partnership.
7. For the avoidance of doubt this Agreement confers no legal rights on the Partners and is not intended to form any part of a contract. The Commission reserves the right to withdraw immediately from this Agreement in the event of changes in Scottish Executive policies on the management of the National Forest Estate by giving as much written notice as is practicable.

Comment: FCS cannot arbitrarily withdraw on one months notice. There has to be a legitimate reason such as a change in government policy or ministerial direction. 3 months notice of the annual review as an absolute minimum

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Limitations

8. This Agreement and the development plan shall not prevent the Commission or Scottish Water from closing off public access to parts of their ownership where it is desirable in the interests of public safety in the connection with their operations. Except in the case of emergency, the Commission and Scottish Water undertakes to consult with Partners in advance of such closures.

The Development Plan

9. This agreement is predicated on the delivery of the Development Plan in annex 1. The development plan has text and maps (annex 2) highlighting the extent of the access and recreation development agreed by partners, Commission and Scottish Water. Delivery of the Development Plan will be concurrent with the duration of this partnership agreement. The development plan will be made up of a series of projects and ongoing activities. Project Plans shall be documents detailing the aims of individual projects and other relevant information including information identifying and designating the lead Partner and responsible person, specifications, location, costs, sources of funding, timescale, resulting obligations and arrangements for maintenance over defined periods. Project plans associated with the Development Plan will be developed once the partners have signed up to this Agreement and the Development Plan.

Comment: FCS hasn't actually agreed to deliver anything

Comment: Why are these not defined then?

Comment: So, FESMB are approving a non plan, a vague vision and they can veto PP at will? I don't think so...

The Vision

10. That Carron Valley Forest is known as a 'big country wilderness experience' in the heart of Scotland and offers a range of high quality access and recreation experiences to an inclusive range of visitors. This is a low-fi vision for a 5 year plan – lacks ambition and any sort of detail. Using the term inclusive is unnecessary.

Comment: FCS need to define precisely what they mean by inclusive - it's irritating the document is riddled with it

Objectives

11. To develop a wide range of visitor experiences and an inclusive range of access and recreation opportunities whats the wide range of experiences going to be?
12. To promote Carron Valley through appropriate media to encourage people to visit and enjoy their experience once their.

Comment: Yes, again, we need to define precisely what is meant by the words visitor, experience and inclusive.

Organisation of the Carron Valley Forest Partnership

13. The Carron Valley Partnership shall form a Management Group comprising the Commission Scottish Water and a nominated person to represent each Partner at an Annual Review Meeting, and such other meetings as they may convene, for the management and implementation of the Development Plan. CVDG suggest that there is no need for a nominated rep, simply that a rep (or 2 in the case of voluntary organisations) will be present. Any partner can chair a meeting and a minute with action points will be produced. In the absence of an available partner the Commission shall chair meetings and provide a minute. Until such times as people turn up informed and follow up on their actions we need a full minute taken and approved at the start of each meeting.

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14. The Management Group can agree to can establish working groups to implement specific projects.

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15. The Annual Review Meeting, or such subsequent meetings as may be convened by the Partners, will review progress of the development plan.

Comment: Not acceptable - usual vagueness. The implementation of specific PP and the DP itself should be run on a commercial model. Partners should agree deadlines in advance and deadlines need to be met.

16. Approval of any matter connected with this agreement, the development plan or a project plan shall as a principle be on the consensus of all the partners at a meeting. Decision-making will otherwise be made by following the direction of the majority of the partners, with one vote per Commission, Scottish Water and partner. The minimum or quorum for decisions will be the Commission, Scottish Water and representatives of two other partners. No matter will be decided by the partnership when it is unconnected with the development plan or where there is a conflict with the corporate responsibility and business processes of the Commission and Scottish Water. In these instances the Commission and Scottish Water retain the final decision-making.

17. The Commission, Scottish Water and each Partner, individually and severally, will liaise as necessary on an *ad hoc* basis through their nominated representative.

Comment: Yes, in addition to monthly meetings! We need a monthly meeting clause

18. The Commission shall provide Partners responsible for implementing agreed Project Plans with suitable official authorisation such as Permission or Licence to enable them legally to carry out the works in accordance with the Commissions statutory obligations. In general Project Plans will be appended to such authorisation.

Comment: Doesn't say anything about being subject to Board approval or the passing of individual PID's over £50k

Operating Principles

19. The Commission, Scottish Water and the partners will abide by the following operating principles

20. To work with the principle of making decisions by consensus arrived at by compromise

21. To respect the working principles and values of each of the partners, with the Commission acting on behalf of the owners: the Scottish Ministers, the elected representatives of the Scottish People.

22. To support the principles of the access legislation and multi-user access (taking account of Partners' reasonable commercial requirements)

23. To ensure that any activities undertaken by them conform to Scottish Executive policies stated or implicit in the Scottish Forestry Strategy.

24. To encourage an inclusive recreation experience. Why is this repeated?

25. To abide by the terms and spirit of this agreement and aim to resolve issues amongst the partnership.

Comment: And what happens if one partner contravenes the spirit of the partnership - who arbitrates over that?

26. To work through the partnership in delivering the access and recreation activities while minimising the potential impact on the other's interests.

27. To be open with the exchange of relevant and timely information as allowed for under any relevant legislation in respect to commercial or private or business sensitive issues.

Comment: To abide by the spirit of and share information that would ordinarily be available to any member of the public under FOI legislation

28. Promote community participation and explore opportunities for joint action, publicity and communications.

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29. Liaise over opportunities for events, public participation and relevant commercial use of the Forest
30. To support and involve communities, adapting plans and incorporating their requests where possible. What community are we talking about? CV, Kilsyth, Central Scotland?

Comment: That will make a change!!

Promoting the use and enjoyment of Carron Valley

31. The Partnership shall facilitate and support programmes and activities organised and agreed by them, which promote access and recreational use, understanding and enjoyment of Carron Valley and its facilities.
32. The Partnership agree to ensure that any publicity material provided in respect of Carron Valley is accurate, appeals to the Partnership's target audience and promotes the use of Carron Valley.
33. The Partnership agree to encourage the use of the Forest by the general public with a range of recreational interests.
34. The Partnership agrees that their actions and activities in respect to this agreement and delivery of the development plan will not compromise the Commission or Scottish Water in delivery of their or other third parties business rights and interests and the impacts on all users of the Forest.
35. The Partnership agree to ensure that all publicity, public relations or similar events with which they may be involved in respect of the Forest will be consistent with the aims of the Carron Valley Partnership. Is this the same as p.32?
36. The Partnership shall agree an events program well in advance to allow adequate planning and where required a permission to be issued. These can be staged individually or jointly and should aim to promote Carron Valley. Permission for events will be sort from and not unreasonably withheld by the Commission or Scottish Water.

Comment: We need to define what the target audience is for gods sake!!

Comment: Does this not remove the need to use the word inclusive everywhere?

Comment: Agreed see my comment on 32

Comment: Sought from

Managing and resourcing the Development Plan

37. The Commission agrees to work with the Partners in the production of a Development Plan in annex 1 and 2.
38. The Commission and Scottish Water will limit their resource commitments to the Development Plan in each of the five years of it running. Focusing on maintaining the existing infrastructure. The Development Plan will indicate which developments the Commission and/or Scottish Water are content for the burden of maintenance to rest with them. Poorly worded and only serves to underline fc's lack of interest in this project.
39. For the existing infrastructure highlighted on map 1 and 3 and new facilities in the development plan where the Commission has indicated it supports the development it will limit Commission resources on an annual basis, with no assumption on carrying resources between financial years running 1st April to 31st March. This will be the total resource for all activities related to the access and recreation maintenance on site and contribution to the Partnership and Development plan. This assumes and includes a limit on staff time. Can we have some clarity on what you are actually saying here?

Comment: Oh no! Agrees to work with the partners to IMLEMENT the Development Plan

Comment: The existing infrastructure comprises a toilet and carpark and 5km of trail - that's it then?

Comment: This needs to be nailed down. FCS and other partners should contribute annually to a pot of cash, the money should be index linked, ring fenced and carried over. The cash should be held by a banker. There should be clearly defined parameters for disbursing the cash to maintain the infrastructure. Any additional revenues such as café, car parking etc should be added to the pot

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40. The cash contribution each year will be on a net cash cost what does net cash cost mean? basis to allow for any access or recreation developments that attract income for the Commission, to be used in the on-going revenue funding on the site.

41. The annual Commission contribution will be:

- FDM and District Forester time sufficient to attend meetings and oversee the development process. This assumes that the total time will not be greater than for comparable management input to other forest blocks. Frankly its insulting that this partnership is being given the same standing as a sitka factory, especially given the time and resources other partners have invested. Estimated at 1 day per month each.
- Forester and other supervision 2-3 days per month total.
- One day of ranger time per week.
- A net cash contribution for all activities of £10, 000. presume this is index linked?

Comment: See 39

42. The commission may contribute one off sums by agreement to clearly defined and identified project plans that come from the Development plan for capital improvements.

43. The Commission may also contribute reasonable support costs for the managers from specialists and administration staff from other parts of the business.

Comment:

44. Partners may contribute such cash, staff or volunteer time they chose and agree towards the Partnership and Development plan. Their contributions may be limited as follows:

45. Scottish Water

46. Stirling Council

47. North Lanarkshire Council

48. CVDG

49. Central Scotland Development Trust

50. AN OTHER contributions

51. To enable further development beyond these commitments any member of the partnership can apply for external funding. Before exploring this potential any partner, the Commission or Scottish Water must have the agreement of the partnership at a Management Group meeting. The final version of the bid documentation will be submitted to all of the partnership to review and agree as per the approval process above before being sent to the funding body. We must have a mechanism to fast-track these past the FCS board because presumably they will want to know about it when we apply for funding.

Comment: At which FCS has power of veto so nothing at all is changing here!

52. The Commission agrees to open up commercial opportunities in the Forest by way of leases, contracts, permissions, licences or other agreements, as appropriate, which will be made available under standard operating terms and conditions. This will include

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private business or partners. This will allow for other developments where The Commission will not support the capital or maintenance costs.

53. It may also require a provision in agreements, leases, licences or permissions for the removal of legacy items the Commission can not allow the public purse to maintain through revenue funding. Whats the thinking behind this clause?

54. It is understood that these opportunities will be subject to the Commission's public accountability obligations, including its commitment to the Scottish Forestry Strategy, and consistent with its statutory powers, policies and mission statements in force from time to time. Account will also be taken of any ministerial directions or government policies at the time. And may be subject to change

Comment: Meaning they can change their mind on a whim

55. The Commission, Scottish Water and the Partners agree at all times to ensure that all necessary legal and statutory obligations, consents and suitable indemnity are in place and are complied with, including as appropriate risk assessments and public liability insurance.

56. The Partners agree to co-operate with the Commission in respect of health and safety and to report all accidents in the Forest promptly to the Commission.

57. The Commission and the Partners agree to promote close co-operation and collaboration in the planning and execution of all agreed projects in accordance with Development Plan. This will be done within the reasonable time scales required by the Commissions, Scottish Water or the partners operating procedures.

Comment: No within clearly defined and agreed timescales

58. The Partners agree, through the Management Group, to participate in the development and execution of the Development Plan, and thereafter to ensure that their programmes and activities are consistent with it. All management and planning processes to be overseen by the Management Group, who will be provided with progress reports on specific projects and appropriate finances as appropriate from the partnerships members.

The Partners agree:

59. To ensure that no action arising from this agreement will override the statutory duties and responsibilities of other organisations or the rights of any third parties including the requirement that the agreement of the Commission shall be required for any work taking place on its land.

60. To provide contact details and keep each other informed of persons responsible for activities and approvals.

61. To communicate this agreement widely throughout their organisations and to other interested parties.

62. To encourage the pooling of resources to further shared objectives and agreed projects.

63. To nominate one person to act as their representative on the Management Group accepting that a Quorum shall be calculated on the basis of one representative per Partner. Suggest that 2 people ar nominated from each org to allow overlap for holidays, or don't nominate anyone specific.

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64. That programmes or projects to be implemented in the Forest by the partners under this Agreement shall be the subject of agreed Project Plans.

65. To hold an Annual Review Meeting and any necessary subsequent meetings to review the progress of the partnership and the Development Plan.

Definitions

Forestry Commission Scotland (the '**Commission**') is the forestry department of the Scottish Government, advising on and implementing forestry policies.

Scottish Water is a publicly owned business formed in 2002, answerable to the Scottish Parliament, that provides water and waste-water services domestic and business customers.

North Lanarkshire Council is the local authority and planning authority responsible for *inter alia*, the promotion of sustainable land use practices, land use planning and control within the boundary of North Lanarkshire.

Stirling Council is the local authority responsible for *inter alia*, the promotion of sustainable land use practices, land use planning and control within the boundary of Stirling, outside the Cowal and Trossachs National Park.

Central Scotland Forest Trust (CSFT) is the lead partner of the Central Scotland Forest, an initiative whose vision is to make the Forest a place that enhances the lives of those living, working and playing there. CSFT will be concerned with the progression of the Forest Strategy in and around the Carron Valley. CSFT is limited by guarantee and has charitable status (SCO93544).

Comment: The SFS seems to mean one thing to CSFT and something entirely different to FCS

Carron Valley Development Group (CVDG) was constituted on 5th July 2003 and has no share capital. The CVDG is recognised by HM Revenue and Customs as a Scottish Charity No: SCO36047. The CVDG aim is to promote sustainable development for recreation in Carron Valley Forest.

Clanranald Trust for Scotland (CTS) was incorporated in April 1996 and not having share capital, with charitable status, to provide Scottish history services to schools and others, and to promote awareness of Scottish history and culture at home and abroad.

Carron Valley, comprising Carron Valley Forest, Carron Valley Reservoir and immediately surrounding areas detailed on map X annexed hereto.

Carron Valley Forest ('the Forest'), extending to 3,135 hectares as outlined in red on the plan annexed as Annex 1 hereto, is in the ownership of the Scottish Ministers who acquired the right to the interest of the Secretary of State for Scotland in this land by (One) The Scotland Act 1998 and (Two) Article 4 of the Transfer of Property Etc (Scottish Ministers) Order 1999 ("The Scottish Minister") who has placed it at the disposal of the Forestry Commission pursuant to section 39 of the Forestry Act 1967.

Carron Valley Reservoir, extending to 394 hectares or thereby as outlined in green on map X annexed hereto, in the ownership of Scottish Water.

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Access and Recreation in this agreement are the activities encompassed by the Access Legislation. They are the none-motorised recreation pursuits typically exercised in the Scottish Countryside. This agreement will also include motorised or other permissible access or recreation activities and events the partners with the agreement of Scottish Water or the Commission wish to include in furthering their objectives.

Comment: non

The **Development Plan** is the approved five-year plan of text and maps that detail the activities, actions and works agreed by the partners Scottish Water and the Commission in fulfilling the vision and objectives of the partnership. It is an integral part of the Agreement and the basins of the partnership working.

Comment: basis. Partnership working is defined by the agreement - not by the DP

Project Plans will be developed as the partners and Commission or Scottish Water require to set out the basic details of the project, its objective, lead partner and involvement and funding by other partners. More detail required

Signatories

Concluded by:

Signed:, Date:
on behalf of the Forestry Commission Scotland

Name and Designation: B Meakin, Forest District Manager

Signed:, Date:
on behalf of North Lanarkshire Council

Name and Designation:

Signed:, Date:
on behalf of Stirling Council

Name and Designation:

Signed:, Date:
on behalf of Scottish Water

Name and Designation:

Signed:, Date:
on behalf of the CSFT

Name and Designation:

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Signed:, Date:
on behalf of the CVDG

Name and Designation:

Signed:, Date:
on behalf of the Clanranald

Name and Designation:

Signed:, Date:
on behalf of AN OTHER

Name and Designation:

Signed:, Date:
on behalf of the AN OTHER

Name and Designation:

Signed:, Date:
on behalf of the AN OTHER

Name and Designation:

Agreement Ends

Purpose of the Development Plan

This plan describes the aspirational recreation development the Carron Valley Partnership has an interest in progressing in the Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) Managed forests and Scottish Water managed reservoir of Carron Valley. It does not confer any burden or assumptions on any of the partners that any particular project will take place or that they will be involved in it.

Comment: Surely we can use the word proposed in place of aspirational?

Scope, duration and review

The Development plan is dependent on the partnership Agreement in defining how the partnership will operate and does not stand alone from that agreement. The development plan highlights the access and recreation developments at Carron Valley, within the boundary detailed on map 1 in annex 2. This Development plan does indicate the intentions of the partners to become involved in projects. All development will be subject to the terms in the Agreement and dependant on available resources. The development Plan will have the same duration and period of review as the Agreement.

Comment: It's only highlighting nebulous what if scenarios

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The Vision

That Carron Valley Forest is known as a 'big country wilderness experience' in the heart of Scotland and offers a range of high quality access and recreation experiences to an inclusive range of visitors. See previous comments. No need for duplication?

Comment: Again ,needs to be defined

Carron Valley Partnership Objectives

To develop a wide range of visitor experiences and an inclusive range of access and recreation opportunities.

To promote Carron Valley through appropriate media to encourage people to visit and enjoy their experience once their?

Comment: Surely the objective is to deliver the development plan?

Remove duplication and beef up the vision

The Context for Development

Next to the Kilsyth Hills and Campsie Fells Map 2 shows Carron Valley Forest and reservoir in context within the Carron Valley a location that evokes the atmosphere of a Highland glen does it? We are not trying to be like the highlands – we are in the lowlands and that should be celebrated. It has a small community of local residents in the valley and along the minor roads leading to the forest. Four Local Authorities have boundaries within, or adjacent to, Carron Valley forest. North Lanarkshire and Stirling Councils have already contributed to access improvements within the forest, and Falkirk Council has funded a crossing of the ford on the Tak Ma Doon road, and West Dumbarton is the fourth authority. It is important that any developments and infrastructure are in keeping with the current sense of place and the vision. Please clarify this because it sounds like you are putting dampers on an already weak vision. There is the opportunity for landscape improvements both through the continued work on the forest design plan and smaller scale next to trails and the car parks. There is potential for better promotion of the site in with other visitor provision in the area and through events.

Comment: Thi isn't a context for development - this is a geography lesson that FESMB don't need?

Access is by car with Lennoxtown, Kilsyth, Denny and Stirling approximately twenty minutes away along rural county roads. However, Carron Valley is less than 10 minutes from a major motorway junction with the M876. The roads while adding to the country appeal are not suited to substantial increases in traffic volumes, and the development

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needs to be mindful of this there we go limiting the vision again. Why can't we be looking to engage with the community an LA's to improve the roads network?. There are currently no public transport links to the area. Why can't the partnership seek to change this as per of this document? Much of the population of the central belt are within one hours drive (lets be precise here – the 2005 TRC report states the figures is 2,827,942 people or 55% of the entire Scottish population) and the development aims to appeal to a more diverse visitor profile? More diverse than what?, with toilet provision, better promotion, way marked routes and interpretation.

Comment: What is the current visitor profile then?

For many years vandalism, joyriding and dumping of cars was an issue in the Carron Valley forest. A non issue and completely unnecessary in a "development plan" FCS now has a Ranger living in a house in the valley and this coupled with tighter management of access points, has stopped this problem. The increase of bona fide users as the development takes effect will also discourage abuse. The current facilities attract at least 20000 visitors and map 1 shows the current recreation provision. There are no way marked trails yes there are – the MTB trails are way marked and little that caters for less able visitors and the development plan aims to address this.

Comment: How does FCS wasting money linking up dead end fire roads miles from the entrances address this problem?

The partners have developed a brand for the site and it will be important to ensure the visitor also receives co-ordinated message from the different partners, and the plan aims to do more promotion and interpretation. Clanranald Trust for Scotland, as a business venture, is keen to maintain its identity in signage and literature, and as they develop their site this will also add to the visitor appeal and business development potential. The quality of experience at the site is important and the standards that recreation facilities are expected to meet continue to rise. Facilities have and will continue to be regularly inspected and maintained, and the site has and will benefit from on going improvements, highlighted on the maps. On FCS and Scottish Water managed land there are both industry and internal best practice requirements for design, construction, and materials. There is an assumption is that all timber is FSC certified and that any trails are built to best practice guidelines.

Comment: Not really - promotion and interpretation are not defined in the DP

There are currently no visitor service buildings on site and the development plan does not propose any limiting the vision again. There are also limits to the partners desire to be involved in different aspects of the development opportunities. This is being addressed by exploring the potential for business opportunities for some services such as mobile catering or through providing on site services such as servicing the toilets. There is also the potential for volunteering activity on site and involvement in skills and training schemes that help people back in to the work place.

Comment: I didn't realise we were exploring the potential for mobile catering I thought that was a stated objective?

Why are the partners involved?

Each of the partners brings a particular set of skills to the partnership. The partners have different ambitions for the site meaning that they may or may not be directly involved in the different aspects of the future development. Everything we develop has a resource requirement to maintain and improve it. The following highlights the drivers for each of the partners:

Forestry Commission Scotland

FCS has 14 districts in Scotland managing the national forest estate. Carron valley is in Scottish Lowlands forest district (SLFD). The district manages over 60 woodlands in central Scotland with 19 local authorities and over 60% of the Scottish people in its area. The district has a focus on the benefits of woodlands for people particularly the Woods in and Around Towns program. This seeks to have accessible, well-managed woodlands close to people's homes typically within a kilometre or fifteen minutes walk. Our recreation

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facilities are usually low key and not way marked, welcoming access to the general population. There is a particular focus on those living in deprived areas. Where SLFD delivers other recreation such as at Carron Valley the facilities should be multi-use trails, with least restrictive access principles that attracts a diverse visitor profile can you please clarify what you mean by diverse?. Tourism is not a driver at Carron valley CVDG take exception to this, I know Cathie Craigie MSP for Cumbernauld and Kilsyth takes exception to this and I'm sure NLC / Stirling will take exception to this. There are also opportunities for private business within the forest based on the revenue potential from day visitors.

Comment: It doesn't state this in the SFS

- FCS has the responsibilities as manager of the forest and open areas on map 1. We need to ensure the development plan meets our business, corporate, health and safety and other industry standards. We aim to maintain the current facilities alongside our forest operations.
- We want to work with the community living next to the forest what about the wider community? CV serves 55% of the Scottish population so we cannot limit this to those living within a few hundred yards of the site. The communities of Fintry and Kilsyth should be represented at a minimum to make sure the facility meets their needs, our aim is to speak with them and try to accommodate improvements they would like.
- We want to provide recreation facilities that are inclusive, our aim is to attract families and those less likely to be seen at our forest recreation sites what kind of visitors are you referring to? through leaflets, school visits, events, and other promotions. We aim to make improvements to the toilets.
- The paths we will support will aim to be multi-use, to apply least restrictive access principles, and be in keeping with the setting what is the "setting" and how will the paths be in keeping with it?, the aim would be to have more all ability paths and facilities at the main car park.
- We want to enable access rights to be exercised, support core paths and rights of way and for the more adventurous visitors help them to get a wilderness experience, we aim to contribute to some informal path networks that connect existing natural features using the forest road network where is the evidence that these will actually be used?. We aim to contribute to the circular loch side trail
- We want to improve the landscape of the forest, our aim is to deliver the current forest design plan and to make continuous improvements to the internal landscape next to recreation facilities, and to protect and enhance habitats and species.
- We want to create new business opportunities, our aim would be to work with others to develop business potential where this exists.
- The forest is a resource for developing new skills and we aim to facilitate others to use this for volunteering, back to work schemes and acquiring new skills

Comment: Why are there none mentioned in the DP then?

Comment: Vague non committal verbage - "contribute" could mean virtually nothing.

Scottish Water

North Lanarkshire Council

Stirling Council

CVDG

Clanranald Trust for Scotland

Central Scotland Forest Trust

Others

Funding

The partners will make different levels of contribution decided on a project by project basis. The Commissions and other partners contributions annually are defined in the Agreement. These funds are to ensure the on going maintenance of the existing facilities. There is also a need to source capital expenditure from external funds, as well as the potential for partners making contributions.

Development Activities

The following section highlights the development activities based on the following text and a series of maps in annex 2. Any new development should be taken forward as a project covered by a project plan, agreed by the partners. Project management will be led by one partner, this could be the Commission or Scottish Water but should include them when the project is on ground they manage. We don't want FC project management involved in future trail construction projects. In each section entitled Proposed Activities lists the proposed developments. After each is the initial of the partners who are or wish to be involved in that development.

Map 1

Current Facilities

This shows the boundary of the Carron valley partnership area. It shows the basic detail of the forest area, the forest roads, open hills and rides, the reservoir and associated structures and labels of the natural features. It also highlights current recreation features. People enjoy being in a place where there is wildlife even if they never see them the knowledge that they share the forest with animals and birds adds value to the visitor experience I'll take your word for it. Carron Valley Forest is home to many species and habitats more commonly associated with the Highlands we aren't in the highlands though, we are in the lowlands! Lets develop a theme of our own instead of piggy-backing on the highlands. The site already hosts school visits and volunteering and has the potential for more. There is scope for more on and off site promotion and potential for interpretation projects. The site is important to the local community and the project should improve dialogue with them and seek to include their aspirations and concerns in the development.

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The reservoir has fishing permits and there is local bike hire. The Clanranald Trust has been developing a fort visitor facility on site and this will continue. There are counters in the car park and on the trails and monitoring visitor numbers and opinions is important.

Comment: Why have the 500 feedback forms that CVDG got been ignored then? Why is there not a single mention of numbers and feedback in the DP?

Recreation features on site currently:

- Toilet block that has male female and disabled facilities.
- A main carpark, and the overflow adjacent carpark at the east and a smaller car park at the west of the forest.
- Over 10km of purpose-built red grade mountain bike trails, built in a series of interconnecting loops. These are a popular draw for Outdoor Education Departments of several Local Authorities, and instructors bring the young people and their bikes by minibus during term time. They include ethnic minority and/or single sex groups, and those with challenging behaviour. Its also a draw for mountain bikers too. Almost 20,000 of them in 2 years.
- The route of a multi use trail currently under construction to appeal to the family market.
- Scottish Water support responsible access under the Access legislation, and have a local fishing business.
- There are a network of paths and trails regularly used but with out way marking.

Comment: So how much more inclusive do we need to be??

Proposed Activities

Don't seek to do it, do it!

- Promotion of the site – Make use of joint leaflets to highlight the activities present on site. [FCS, , ,]
- Maintain the existing infrastructure in a safe condition with regular inspections and maintenance. [FCS, , ,]
- On site interpretation boards and site related leaflets – Develop projects that help visitors engage with the existing wildlife, heritage and natural features. develop materials that help visitors engage with the site. [FCS, , ,] this should be in a category on its own as a specific objective as its really important for visitors.
- Off site interpretation – make use of web and other media. [FCS, , ,]
- work with and include a wider user group in the development of Carron valley. [FCS, , ,]
- Work with the local residents to seek their views and aim to help them deliver any specific projects and improvements they might suggest. [FCS, , ,]
- develop volunteering activities related to the site and the activities in the Development plan. [FCS, , ,]
- Seek funding for further development. [FCS, , ,]
- Make use of the site to host events. [FCS, , ,]
- Complete the current multi use loch side trail already under way. [FCS, , ,]
- Monitoring of visitor numbers and surveys of customers will be important. [FCS, , ,]

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Map 2

Context

This highlights where Carron Valley sits north of the Campsie Fells. It shows the proximity of local towns and the network of 'A' roads around the site. It highlights the other FCS owned woodlands adjacent to Carron valley and next to communities that also offer visitor potential. It highlights some of the other sites people visit near by.

Proposed Activities

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- Promotion of the site – Make use of joint leaflets and promotions that set Carron valley in context with the wider opportunities in the area. [, , ,]
- Develop a wider partnership that includes adjacent local authorities and keep other interested bodies involved. [FCS, , ,]

Map 3

Development potential at main car park

This map shows a more detailed view of the main car park as it exists and some of the proposed developments. There are local landscape improvements to be made including dealing with a dynamic forest with wind blown trees and new clear felling sites. There is a need for more accessible trails to be developed to encourage visits by older people and those with disabilities. The island development would help to develop the potential for picnics and a family day out. There potential for on site catering will be let as a business opportunity through a lease with FCS.

Proposed Activities

- Continue to make improvements to the car park and landscaping – Develop a plan of improvements, and seek funding to implement. [FCS, , ,]
- Continue to maintain and make improvements to the toilet facilities. [FCS, , ,]
- ~~develop an all ability trail from the main car park. [FCS, , ,]~~
- ~~replace the existing bridge and develop the island. [FCS, , ,]~~
- ~~install interpretation and other visitor information that will enhance the visitor experience. [FCS, , ,]~~

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Map 4

New recreation and access opportunities

The “zone of opportunity” is through some of the worst ground in the forest and would require significant work to make it sustainable.

Carron valley forest has an existing network of forest roads that will expand with the development design plan and the need to access harvesting coupes. There is the potential for an improved circuit of the reservoir. This route will appeal to family cyclists, runners, keep fit and sports training. Family cyclists will struggle to use the forest road network as the surfaces and gradients are unsuitable for use by small children. This can be low input due to use of existing roads infrastructure but also leads its self for the development of new multi-user route reducing the road length where appropriate. There is an on going need for improvements to internal landscaping and the installation of new signage. There is the potential for leaflets, on and off site interpretation, education materials and events that will encourage people to visit.

Proposed Activities

- Develop a plan to carrying out minor path improvements to Meikle Bin and return via the south shore of the reservoir. Consider the benefits and if suitable install way marking of the route. [FCS, , ,] if you carry out minor improvements and sign the route Meikle bin will become seriously eroded. It will have to be built properly using upland path techniques to ensure its sustainable.
- Continue to develop the current forest road with landscaping and add way marking to develop a multi-user route around the reservoir. [FCS, , ,]

Comment: Could become?

Comment: This means nothing

CARRON VALLEY FOREST PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT and Development plan V1

- develop new sections of multi-user trail along this reservoir route that take people off the forest road. [FCS, , ,]
- Explore the potential for highlighting and working on longer routes suited to horse riding, and installing feature that encourage horses to be boxed in. [FCS, , ,]
- develop the red routes on the map that link the existing forest road network to provide more opportunities for multi-user access under the access legislation. [FCS, , ,]
- Enhance forest thresholds by landscaping works and installing new signage. [FCS, , ,]
- Develop an events schedule for each year. [, ,]
- Explore the potential for leaflets and interpretation of new access and recreation opportunities that make the most of the nature features and biodiversity. [, ,]
- Develop and implement an access project to make the existing heritage and natural features more accessible. [FCS, , ,]

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Deleted: Aim to

Map 5

Water related development

The reservoir is currently used as a public water supply so this limits development opportunities. There is an existing business on the reservoir managing fishing permits. There is potential to develop the business further through the use of the water for non-motorised recreation.

Proposed Activities

- Commission a plan that highlights the potential and ways in which more water related access and recreation activity can be developed. [, , ,]

Map 6a and 6b

Forest design plan felling and restocking

The approved Forest Design Plan (FDP) develops this Highland atmosphere as part of the overall future management of the forest. The FDP is already being actioned, and clear felling and replanting will continue. Although the FDP envisions the forest felling and replanting over many years, it is reviewed every five years to incorporate developing best practice and new information. Smaller scale improvements, such as clearing viewpoints, and trailside management are also needed. Opportunities will be taken to action small scale work as part of any larger operation nearby.

Proposed Activities

- Continue to restructure the forest – continue to work the design plan felling and restocking proposals with associated forest operations. [FCS, , ,]
- Small scale landscape – Develop a program of internal landscaping along the recreation routes, view points and features of interest. [FCS, , ,]
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Map 7

New mountain bike opportunities

With an existing network of trails mountain bikers already visit Carron valley and would currently be the largest visitor segment. The existing routes are graded red shown on map 7. There are opportunities for developing both entry level routes and more routes suitable for the better riders. FCS and volunteer activity from CVDG maintain current trails.

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Forestry Commission Scotland does not intend to put capital revenue funding, or staff time in to any additional mountain bike trails in Carron Valley. Further development would therefore need to be by other partners or others as a business opportunity under a lease. This might also include the existing trail infrastructure. The area highlighted in yellow on the map 7 shows the area where development activity would be focused. Such an arrangement would need to resolve the legal, health and safety, and liability issues as a first step before being offered as a lease. It would require a suitable source of revenue funding and a business case.

Proposed Activities

- Develop the potential for a suitable business/lease arrangement for the development of new mountain bike trails. [FCS, , ,]
- Develop a wider range and additional length of mountain bike routes of routes. [, , ,]
- We have a major problem with this as it was not what was agreed at the ministerial meeting in April 2008

Development plan text ends