Community forest governance: a rapid evidence review

A report by Forest Research on behalf of the Independent Panel on Forestry

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Executive Summary

Background

1. This report was commissioned as 'a review of existing literature and research evidence on the range of existing community engagement, governance and ownership arrangements for managing forests in England, and more widely'. The focus here is on models where a community group has a role in making (not simply implementing) management decisions. It may or may not own the woodland.

2. There are about 700 community woodland groups in the UK, of which about 300 are in England. Scotland has about 250 community woodlands and Wales about 150. Over the last 20 years, changing political and social priorities, and commitment from the forestry profession and policy, in England, Scotland and Wales, have created the circumstances for some of the most rapid change in social involvement in forestry anywhere in the world, leading to a wide range of approaches. Although England has more community woodlands, the greater achievement has been urban community forestry. Fewer such woodlands are owned or managed directly by community groups, and the infrastructure to support community woodlands is better developed in Scotland and Wales.

3. A multi-level method was developed to: search for evidence; develop an analytical framework based on a typology of ownership and engagement; select and describe 13 case studies; analyse these in the context of national overviews of community woodlands and other evidence. The case studies were selected to cover the widest possible range of models, from USA, Canada, Belgium, Germany and Sweden, as well as from England, Scotland and Wales. These illustrate a range of models operating in different institutional and community contexts including those based on leasehold, cooperatives, social enterprise, trusts, public ownership, and companies limited by guarantee. They are presented in detail in the appendices.

4. The typology combines types of ownership (including private individual, commercial, joint, public - local, public - national) with types of engagement (consultative, collaborative, empowering). The framework organises the variables or dimensions of community forest governance models, under four headings: institutional context, internal organisation, external linkages, and resources.

5. There are limitations to the evidence, particularly in making comparisons between different models; and in rigorous impact evaluation. Further research is needed to support the adaptation of ownership and management models, to community groups' objectives and circumstances.

Findings

6. The findings show a wide range of options for ownership and rights; community organisation and business models; participation in decision-making; and evolving through learning, monitoring and sharing.

7. This variety is a valuable resource in itself. England presents a great variety of contexts, both social and ecological, and what fits one context will be inappropriate in another. It will be more valuable to develop a basket of options, to help communities, landowners, local government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) develop arrangements that fit local conditions, and work because they have been developed by the participants.

8. Ownership is at the heart of making decisions about land use, and is symbolically and economically important in many of the models. Land acquisition is challenging and most communities wishing to buy forest land need financial support. The evidence suggests that ownership is not always the preferred option.

9. Innovative arrangements to support community ownership, which have not been widely tested in the UK but have encouraging precedents elsewhere, include the distribution or purchase of shares; landowner cooperatives and joint management groups; and /or the purchase of development rights through conservation easements. These models could be promoted within the UK with appropriate support.

10. In the case of community involvement in publicly owned forest, the most innovative models are located in the UK. They include experiments with leaseholds, community management agreements, partnership agreements, and community right-to-buy. These models could be further encouraged, supported and publicised.

11. More consultative modes of engagement include statutory community consultation on forest design plans, or management plans, and examples are found in many countries. The experiences of citizen advisory committees in Canada provide examples of more committed and representative engagement, which compensates members for their time, and could be considered in the UK.

12. Local government ownership is a significant option in other countries, providing opportunities for community involvement in decision-making without the expense of woodland purchase. Such options and their benefits are relatively neglected in the UK where local authority woodlands are not usually subject to power-sharing arrangements.

13. It can be important to define the community (or eligibility to join a community group) using objective criteria to facilitate social equity. There is scope to foreground and incentivise this issue.

14. Empowerment is supported by models where the community controls the finances, and / or holds the casting vote in decisions. It is undermined by experiences of 'bureaucracy': paperwork and time related to grant applications, health and safety, and institutional culture.

15. Opportunities for productive community woodlands are often overlooked in England, which is almost unique in this regard. Instead, objectives of community woodland groups in England usually focus on conservation, place improvement, protection from planning threats, education and recreation.

16. Community woodland groups in Great Britain are increasingly developing social enterprises (where profit is reinvested in the community rather than distributed for private benefit). In other countries, where the woodland in question provides a marketable resource (timber or firewood) communities or landowner groups operate a profitable business which may or may not be a social enterprise. There is scope to offer support and incentives to encourage sustainable multi-purpose forest management by communities.

17. In England, awareness of sources of technical advice is low and community groups identify this as one of their greatest needs. Strong demand is also expressed for capacity building in financial and project management, community governance processes, fundraising and dealing with bureaucracy. The community woodland associations in Scotland and (recently) Wales fulfil an invaluable role in this regard and this model might be considered for England, although it is not necessarily directly transferable. Investment is also needed in advisory services, and development of the role of Woodland Officers.

18. Community governance (whether of forests or anything else) is dynamic, and evolves. Participation cannot be designed as a blueprint; instead participants co-evolve with a participatory process. This evolution is stronger, and the results more adaptive and sustainable, when it is combined with learning processes such as participatory monitoring and evaluation, networking and sharing experiences.

19. A range of recommendations for actions that would assist community forest governance in England is proposed. Such changes would however take place within the context of wider policy shifts and all conclusions should be considered in the light of developments in local government structure, land tenure reform, energy and land use policy.

Summary of recommendations

1.	Develop a basket of options, to help communities, landowners, local government and NGOs develop arrangements that fit local conditions and work because they have been developed by the participants. Support the development and evolution of groups, recognising the diversity of objectives and contexts. Begin with the objectives of all stakeholders, when designing approaches to community woodland management.
2.	Retain and support the variety of potential ownership arrangements; consider further support to local authority ownership. On privately-owned land support testing of innovative tenure arrangements including share purchase, landowner cooperatives and associations, joint management groups, and conservation easements to facilitate purchase.
3.	Provide incentives for private owners, and advisory support for communities, to encourage community-landowner agreements.
4.	In public forest develop ways to reduce the perceived bureaucracy related to partnership. Strengthen the role of community consultation by introducing payments to citizen representatives, and strengthening the contribution to decisions.
5.	Maintain links with Scotland and Wales to monitor outcome of leasehold options, NFLS, challenge funds and 'Woodlands and You'; and make arrangements to support development of leasehold options.
6.	Disseminate working models for group governance. Develop guidance in accessible format. Invest in advisory and support services to reduce paperwork and timeframes. Where representation is a concern, consider applying postcode definitions of community.
7.	Invest in support services and empower / build capacity of Woodland Officers to work with community woodland groups. Improve links between sectors in providing access to advice, support and capacity building for community groups.
8.	Support development of more business / production based approaches, such as sustainable woodfuel production.
9.	Explore the demand for a community woodland association in England, and options for supporting its development. Encourage learning by community groups, through participatory monitoring and evaluation, networking and sharing.
10.	Consider where funding options are available to support change in ownership. Link funding options to exploration of business options and productive woodland management.
11.	Continue to recognise and support the peri-urban Community Forest model.
12.	Invest in research to address evidence gaps including group learning and evolution; productive community woodland management; and impacts and outcomes of the different models and experiences.

1 The purpose of this report

1.1 Objective

This report is written to help the Independent Panel on Forestry (IPF) in England assess the options for community engagement in forest and woodland governance. It is one of three reports commissioned as part of an evidence review on social aspects.

The IPF commissioned 'a review of existing literature and research evidence on the range of existing community engagement, governance and ownership arrangements for managing forests in England, and more widely in the UK.'

Further clarification with the IPF secretariat confirmed that they were interested in:
- the *range* of options, including those from abroad;
- community involvement in decision-making;
- different forms of ownership.

Involvement in woodland management activities (for example through volunteering) where the community has no controlling role, was not included. The focus was therefore on governance rather than on wider forms of participation.

This report therefore aims to:
- present a framework for making sense of the huge range of models that have arisen over the last 20 or so years;
- select and describe as completely as possible, examples of each type in the framework;
- provide an overview of the literature on developments in community forest governance in developed countries;
- summarise available evidence on impacts of such models.

With the aim described in this way, and with the limited time and evidence available, it was agreed that it was not appropriate nor feasible to conduct a conventional evidence review which would test the rigour of datasets against particular questions. Instead the aim was to increase awareness of possibilities in a balanced way based on reliable evidence.

1.2 Definitions

The words **engagement** and **participation** are often used interchangeably in contexts that link with policy making in the UK. The difference is rarely defined, but an analysis of work that uses the word 'engagement' suggests it refers to involvement of the public in managing public or commercial resources. The word 'participation' has a much longer and wider application, and tends to be used in ways that include more proactive involvement by members of the public or a community, who may take the lead or own the resource in question. We include both in this review.

Public and **community** form a similar pair of 'similar-but-different' uses. Whilst 'public' is usually taken to refer to those citizens who are not associated with particular bodies of stakeholders (such as government or NGOs), 'community' is usually considered to refer to a specific place. Of course, 'community' can refer to communities of place, interest, culture or experience. Communities who own a particular woodland or forest are usually place specific, but this is not always the case. It is safer to assume (as we do here) that communities are subsets of 'the public', and that 'community engagement' or 'community governance' can include options where the wider public has the opportunity to engage in decision-making.

Governance is, like 'engagement', more often used than defined. We discuss some aspects of the concept in more detail below. However it is useful to start with a basic definition. The following is modified from the EU definition of environmental governance:
> 'the institutions, organisations, instruments and processes involved in making and implementing policy'.

In this report we refer to both **woodlands** and **forests.** Most literature on community forest governance refers to forests. In the UK 'woods' and 'woodlands' are terms used to refer to smaller areas, with less (or no) emphasis on timber production, compared with 'forest'. This is a matter of usage rather than definition. The only context in which there is a formal difference (in this report) is that of **community forests.** In England, 'the Community Forests' are the original 12 (now 7) peri-urban areas prioritised for landscaping and recreation. For clarity therefore, when referring to English examples, any other form of community forest is referred to as a **community woodland.**

1.3   Assessing engagement

Participation, or public engagement, in natural resource management has been on the increase since the 1980s. Dozens of books, and hundreds of academic papers, have been written on the subject. Yet evaluation of participation is still not considered definitive, for at least four reasons.

1. Participation is a process and cannot function simply according to a recipe; it needs to evolve in each situation, and become part of the experiences of those involved. The skills needed to facilitate participation are transferable, but the experience of participation is not – each participant needs to acquire it.
2. Participation is context-specific: what works in one situation may not work in another, apparently very similar, situation.
3. Participation is very often treated as the outcome. In other words, if people participate, a project is considered to be successful. There may be evaluation of *who* participated, and efforts to ensure that this is more representative. But this is quite separate from an evaluation of the *consequences* of participation.
4. Furthermore, the consequences of participation may be quite different from those intended. One aspect of participation is empowerment, and people can be

empowered through experience as well as through structural changes. For example an experience of being consulted about an issue, or campaigning for an issue, can change a person's perception of the issue and his or her personal role in that.

All of these aspects mean that it is helpful to separate analysis of:
    a. 'participation as the goal' and;
    b. 'participation as a process to help achieve the goal'.

As mentioned above, there is much literature about how to achieve participation, and much less about the impacts of that participation.

In practice most of the available evidence is qualitative and describes ways in which communities engage, rather than the outcomes of such engagement.

2   How we conducted this review

2.1   What is an 'evidence review'?

This work was commissioned as a rapid evidence review, defined as a 'Quick overview of existing research on a (constrained) topic and a synthesis of the evidence provided by these studies to answer the [Rapid Evidence Assessment] question' (Government Social Research 2010). In this case the question is:

> 'What are the options for community engagement in forest governance in England, based on evidence from England and elsewhere?'

Because the IPF is interested to learn about the range of options, it focuses on producing a typology and examples selected to illustrate points in the typology. It is not new research based on collection of new data. Nor is it analysis of expert opinion and responses to the Independent Forestry Panel's call for submissions.

2.2   Methods and background

Further information on the method can be found in appendix 1.

Discussion of the background and main trends in community forest governance can be found in appendix 2. This forms the basis for the typology and framework that were developed to analyse evidence and case studies. These are described in the next two sections.

2.3   Typology developed for this review

Types of community forest governance could be classified according to many different dimensions, but to keep the typology simple it is helpful to choose the two most important. For the purposes of this review, the type of ownership, and type of engagement, were selected as those factors of most interest.

Types of ownership: a brief overview of literature on forest ownership suggests that ownership can most conveniently be typified as:
- o private personal (individual / family)
- o private commercial
- o private NGO
- o private joint (where several individual properties are managed together)
- o private community (managed as an indivisible unit)
- o public local (or public community)
- o public national.

Types of engagement: there are many studies which elaborate a spectrum of types of participation or engagement, usually ranging from the 'top-down' or consultative forms, through those which share decisions and labour, to those which transform power-sharing and benefit-distribution. Some have expressed concerns that the more top-down types are tokenistic, while others have pointed out that different approaches suit different scales and contexts; and that bottom-up (or community-initiated) participation is not always empowering, while top-down (or government-initiated) participation can lead to radical change (Goodwin 1998, Lawrence 2006).

We have therefore chosen to simplify such approaches to three forms: consult, collaborate, and empower, where those in the 'empower' category do not necessarily own the land but have the authority to manage it. To contrast these with non-participatory approaches, we have included two other types: providing for self; and providing for others. Most landowners manage their land for their own needs; others deliberately make provision for others (for example by providing access) but remain in control of management decisions. These approaches are not included in the definition of engagement or participation used here.

If the two scales (ownership and engagement) are combined, they create a typology as depicted in table 1. We can see immediately that some types of ownership are already usually linked to particular types of engagement.

Table 1. A typology of community forest governance arrangements based on engagement and ownership[1]

Ownership	No engagement		Engagement		
	Providing for own	Providing for others	Consultative	Collaborative	Empowering
private / personal	usual		occasional	occasional	
private / commercial	usual		occasional		
private / joint				usual	
private / community	usual	occasional			usual
private / NGO	usual	often			
public / local	usual	usual	occasional		
public / national		often	usual	occasional	occasional

We aimed to describe each example in a structured way, in order to effectively compare examples and understand the potential for transferring experience from one context to another. To do this we developed a framework with standard dimensions that would be described for each case study.

2.4 Framework for describing case studies

2.4.1 Dimensions

We drew on analysis from the wider literature (see appendix 2) to develop a list of the dimensions or variables that describe community forest governance. We also aimed to distinguish between context, delivery mechanisms and internal workings of community woodland groups and projects.

The dimensions are therefore sorted into four broad categories:
- Institutional context: the external rules-of-the-game: ownership structures, laws, regulations etc that affect the options available to a community group.
- Internal organisation: the internal group structures, legal forms and decision-making procedures that affect the scope for members to be represented and to participate.

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[1] Other useful typologies have been produced e.g.
- community reference groups, community working groups, community partnership groups and community management groups (Community woodland association 2010a).
- Guided assistance, Engaged, Active responsible, Capable ownership (Tidey and Pollard 2010).

We use a slightly simpler version to allow room to elaborate the links to ownership.

- External linkages: how this group is linked with others through partnerships and associations.
- Resources: the ecological, financial and knowledge resources available to the group.

The relationship between these can be represented as in figure 1. Such diagrams are often used to depict circles of influence and control. In this case, from the community's perspective, the innermost circle represents factors that can be controlled, the middle circle factors that can be influenced, and the outer circle the context in which it operates. From a government or organisational perspective, the middle circle represents factors that can be controlled, while the inner circle of community response, can only be influenced.

Figure 1. Relationship between factors that shape community forest governance models
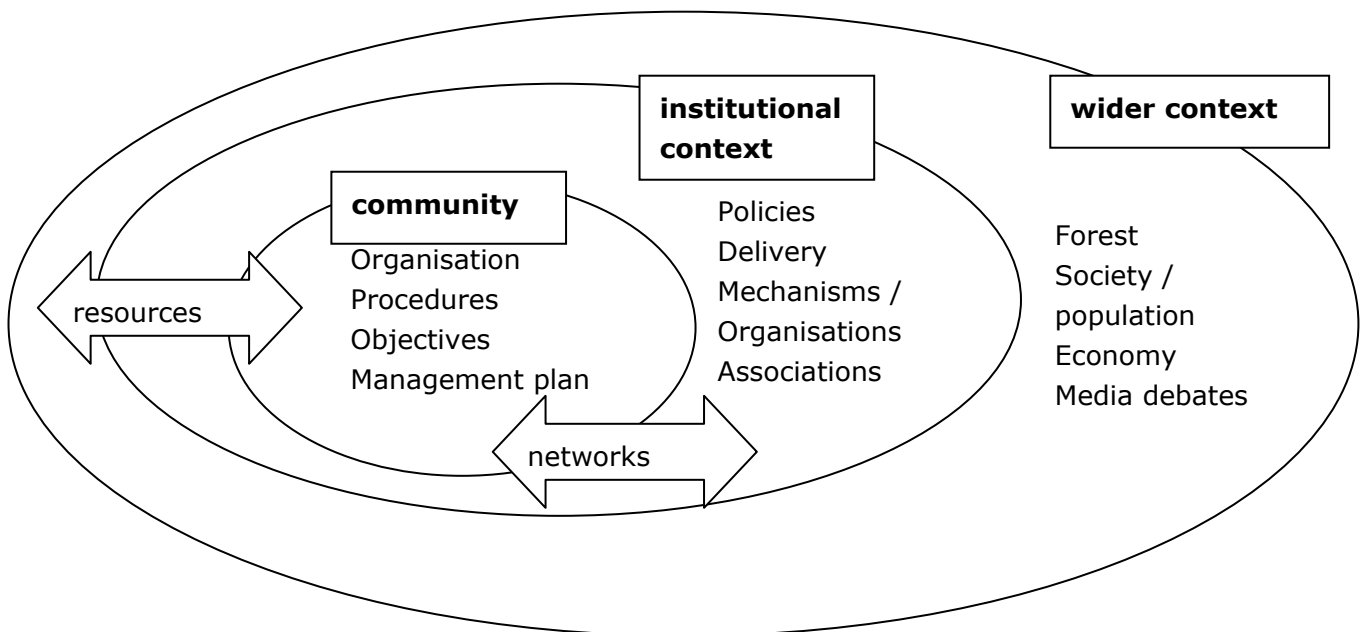
2.4.2 Policy tools

Cutting across these dimensions is the suite of tools available to delivery agencies, to support community forest governance. A simple classification of such tools is the classic 'sticks, carrots and sermons':

- **Regulation:** mandatory requirements – for example, in some countries the requirement that forest must be managed according to the principles of sustainable forest management.

- **Incentives:** optional benefits intended to encourage particular behaviours – for example, offering grants to reduce the costs of tree planting.
- **Advice:** knowledge exchange sometimes intended to help individuals make an independent decision, sometimes intended to encourage a particular decision.

Policy tools are not specific to government. Non-government organisations and movements also have policies and use this range of tools to encourage behaviour change. These policy tools cut across the dimensions of community forest governance outlined above because they change the balance of knowledge, resources and power. A change in regulation can affect the business models available to communities; a change in incentives can change the financial resources available; and knowledge exchange can take place at various scales.

2.5   Selection of case studies

To provide a picture of the range of options, we used the typology to select case studies which illustrate how the factors fit together. We selected case studies purposively
   a. to illustrate different points in this typology
   b. where evidence was most available.

The cases are listed in table 2. They are not necessarily the most successful, but rather those for which there was enough evidence to be able to describe most of the dimensions in the framework.

The case studies are described in Appendix 3. For each case study the available evidence is used to describe the dimensions shown in Figure 1.

Table 2. Summary of case studies

Case study	What is it?
North America	
1. Little Hogback Community Forest, Vermont, USA	A non-profit conservation organisation (Vermont Family Forests) sought to establish a community-owned woodland and secured funding to enable local people, of varying incomes, to purchase plots. Through a co-ordinator, the 16 owners were supported to form a cohesive group capable of overseeing the management of the woodland.
2. Randolph Community Forest, New Hampshire, USA	The large forest area surrounding the town of Randolph came up for sale as the timber company's interests moved elsewhere. Active town members saw an opportunity for the town to regain control over its natural surroundings and the money was raised to purchase the forest on behalf of the town. The town owns the land subject to a conservation easement held by the state. This easement sets requirements

	for a certain standard of sustainable management of the forest.
3. Timmins Local Citizens Committee, Ontario, Canada	Canadian public forest management is built on a multi-level stakeholder participation process. At the most local level Local Citizens Committees (or their equivalent in other provinces) give a voice to the views of residents. Participation is voluntary but members are compensated for their time.
4. Participatory Monitoring - Public Lands Partnership, Colorado, USA	Volunteer groups engage community members in monitoring local wildlife areas, contributing to the knowledge base and increasing their ability to influence management decisions by public agencies. In this case, the group gathered data on the ecological impact of salvage timber sales on the local State forest.
Europe	
5. Joint Forest Groups, Belgium	A government funded project to bring private owners of small and fragmented woodland together to form more effective management units. These joint forest groups are co-ordinated by a regional officer, and, in the area of this study, innovative methods were used for involving owners in collective learning processes for evaluation.
6. Forest Cooperatives, North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany	The forest cooperatives in Burbach were formed initially to counter the trend towards fragmented forest ownership prevalent in the 19th Century. In the forest cooperative private owners hold shares in the forest rather than individual plots. This creates larger, more effective management units run by the cooperative assembly. Timber rights are allocated in an annual lottery.
7. Forest Commons, Sweden	Established in the late 19th century, the Swedish forest commons are large areas of privately owned, but state managed forests. The owners receive a dividend on their share and have hunting and fishing rights on the land. Forest management is decided through boards elected by shareholders and supervised by county administration and forestry boards according to county by-laws.
UK	
8. Community Contracting Initiative, Mersey	Part of Mersey Forest, one of the original 12 Community Forests in England, this initiative was a top-down process for generating community woodland groups and supporting them

Forest, England	to take a greater role in woodland management. Local 'friends of…' groups were offered 'seed-corn' funding and supported by a link officer to become stronger community groups capable of managing their local woodland. Thirteen groups were initiated with differing results; ten are still active.
9. Coppicewood College, Wales	A small group of individuals united by an interest in woodland coppice crafts have leased woodland from a private owner. Established as an educational charity the group manages the woodland using traditional techniques including coppicing and hand tools, while also using the site as a training centre. They offer a wide range of woodland management and craft courses. The group is still reliant on grants but is now partly functioning as a social enterprise.
10. Hill Holt Wood, England	The woodland was bought by a couple in 1995 who have turned it into a thriving community-managed social enterprise. Income is generated through training for disadvantaged groups such as excluded young people and mental health service users. In addition the woodland is a valued recreational space for the community.
11. Laggan Community Forest, Scotland	This community aimed to influence or purchase the public forest to ensure greater economic benefit for local people. After a well-documented campaign, in 1998 a groundbreaking management partnership was formed between Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) and the community. Following the Land Reform Act (2003) and a new scheme created by FCS, the community purchased three small areas of the forest in 2006 but continue to co-manage the larger area through a 25-year partnership agreement with FCS.
12. Longwood Community woodland, Wales	A community initiated endeavour, the Longwood Group has a management agreement with Forestry Commission Wales (FCW) to manage the local woodland for the benefit of the local community. With financial support from *Cydcoed*, a large-scale EU and Welsh Government funding program managed by FCW from 2001 – 2008, they have been able to embark on new projects making the woodland a valued resource for the community. The Group has recently been successful in obtaining a Big Lottery Capital Asset Transfer grant of £787.7k to purchase the woodland. As well as covering purchase costs, the grant will enable a wide programme of activities and enterprise ventures, such as the

	establishment of a green burial site, the running of educational programmes through the forest school, outdoor theatre events and an eco-camp site.
13. Neroche Landscape Partnership, England	A large-scale landscape partnership scheme, managed by Forestry Commission England (FCE) with Heritage Lottery funding enabled community involvement in publicly owned woodland. Community members were facilitated to form a stakeholder group, which had a key role in decision making from early on in the scheme. This group has formed the Blackdown Hills Trust to continue managing the landscape area even though the funded project has come to an end.

These case studies fit into our typology as indicated in table 3:

Table 3. Fit between case studies and typology

	Engagement		
Ownership	**Consultative**	**Collaborative**	**Empowering**
private / personal			Coppicewood
private / commercial	Timmins		
private / joint		Flanders	
private / shareholders			Burbach Vermont
private / community	Swedish Forest Commons		Hill Holt Laggan (owned plots)
private / NGO			
public / local		CCI	Randolph
public / national	Colorado	Laggan (partnership) Neroche	Long Wood

Caveat: The gaps in the table do *not necessarily* indicate that there are no such models, simply that well evidenced case studies were not available to us in the time provided for this review.

3 Descriptive overview of community woodlands in the UK

3.1 The evidence

There was a substantial and very helpful response to the call for evidence, with large numbers of individual examples and case studies cited. These are listed in appendix 5. Where the case studies included analysis and generalisation, we have referred to them in later sections of this report; however the scope and resources available did not make it possible to conduct a meta-analysis of such examples. Such a study will constitute valuable research in the future.

As a rapid evidence review, therefore, we have been restricted to analysing those items of evidence that are evaluations, or which compare several examples.

In this section we summarise existing evidence which provides an overview of the development of community woodlands in the UK. As noted above, we have not been able to include individual examples, and we have not included work which is entirely based on interpretation rather than on the structured collection of data.

Evidence which fits the criteria includes the following:

- In 2000 the Caledonia Centre for Social Development documented detailed case studies of social land ownership in the Highland and Islands of Scotland, and has continued to add to this set of case studies (see www.caledonia.org.uk/socialland/case.htm) several of which include community woodland.
- In 2004 Forestry Commission Scotland commissioned a three-year study of the social value of Scotland's woodlands, which included a section on community woodlands (Edwards et al. 2008).
- In 2004 Forestry Commission Scotland commissioned sets of case studies on community partnerships on the national forest estate (Fowler and Stiven 2005) and community involvement in private woodlands (Piper and Villani 2004).
- In 2006, the Community Woodlands Association (Scotland) in partnership with Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) and Highlands and Islands Enterprise commissioned an overview of experience of FCS-community partnership working over the last 10 years and how it is perceived by both communities and FCS District staff (Campbell and Bryan 2006).
- In 2008 Forest Research concluded an evaluation of the *Cydcoed* programme in Wales, which supported the formation of 139 community woodland groups (Owen et al. 2008).
- In 2008 Forest Research organised a seminar as part of the International Association for the Study of the Commons, at which three community forestry policy advisers and

programme managers compared developments in England Scotland and Wales (Lawrence et al. 2009).

- In 2009 Forest Research commissioned a set of three 'baseline studies'. These were intended to complement the policy view expressed at the IASC seminar, by inviting practitioners and non-government stakeholders to document the development of community woodlands in each of Scotland, Wales and England (Calvert 2009, Pollard and Tidey 2009, Wilmot and Harris 2009). This was followed by an update in England the following year, by the Small Woods Association, which focused on community group needs (Tidey and Pollard 2010). These have been summarised in (Lawrence et al. 2011).
- In 2009 Forestry Commission Wales commissioned a survey of community woodlands in Wales, and a set of case studies (Wavehill Consulting 2010).
- In 2010 Forest Research reviewed the evidence for impact of community woodlands and forests in Great Britain (Lawrence and Ambrose-Oji 2011).
- In 2010 the Community Woodlands Association (of Scotland) reviewed the mechanisms to support community engagement with forestry (Community Woodland Association 2010a).
- In 2011 the Mersey Forest, *Llais y Goedwig*, Woodland Trust and Forest Research organised a workshop to share experiences of community woodlands across the three countries, although in the event it was mostly attended by English groups (Forest Research et al. 2011).
- In 2011 and ongoing, members of *Llais y Goedwig* (the Welsh association of community woodland groups) commissioned a set of case studies with strong involvement of the community groups. http://llaisygoedwig.org.uk/what-we-do/case-studies/.

In short, there is good evidence of the numbers and structure of community woodland groups from Scotland and Wales, with more patchy evidence from England. The reasons for the relative lack of evidence from England are probably:
- England presents a much more diverse context for community woodlands, with a high population density and low forest cover;
- Early community forestry focused on the 12 peri-urban Community Forest areas, which aimed to improve amenity and access;
- Interest in individual community woodlands, and in community governance, is much more recent;
- The growth of a coherent 'community woodland movement' in Scotland and (more recently) Wales is linked with issues of national and local identity, and historical justice, followed by legal and political reforms which are absent in England;
- With less of a sense of a 'movement', nor of change, there is a lack of a complete dataset, such as that available from the Community Woodland Association in Scotland, or from the evaluation of *Cydcoed* in Wales.

Efforts have however been made in recent years to develop an equivalent dataset in England through the baseline reports conducted by the Small Woods Association, for Forest Research (Tidey and Pollard 2010), and this is available as a framework for future comparative research.

Individual projects and programmes in England do have their own reports and evaluations, and some of this evidence was available for this review (Béjot-Seeboth 2003, Land Use Consultants & SQW Ltd 2005) (see 4.5 below).

3.2   Numbers of community woodlands

The term 'community woodland' is defined in various ways. As noted in section 1.1, the focus here is on models where a community group has a role in management decisions. It may or may not own the woodland.

Various sources have estimated the number of community woodland groups in Great Britain, using a similar definition (i.e. excluding groups which are simply carrying out voluntary work, or woodlands which exist as a recreational resource, important though such groups and resources are).

Taking this definition of community woodland, there are about 700 such groups in Great Britain according to the evidence summarised in table 4.

Table 4. Estimated numbers of community woodlands in the three countries of Great Britain

Country	Source	Number of community Woodlands
Scotland	(Community Woodland Association 2010a)	150 community management groups 90-100 community partnership groups
	Edwards et al. 2008	138 community groups 13,500 members
England	Tidey and Pollard 2010	about 300
	Community forests www.communityforest.org.uk/	Originally 12 (currently 7)
Wales	*Cydcoed* projects Owen2008 (Wavehill Consulting 2010)	163 projects 138 active groups

3.3   Size of community woodlands

In Scotland in 2007 it was estimated that 250 community woodlands covered 18,275 ha, or 1.4% of Scotland's forest area (Edwards et al. 2008). This would put the average woodland size at 73 ha. The total area of community woodland has increased since then and is currently being re-measured.

In Wales the majority of community woodland groups (CMGs) are involved in comparatively small areas of woodland: of those surveyed in 2010, the average size of woodland was 12.5 ha, but 66% were involved with land areas of 5 ha or less. It is estimated that CWGs are currently active on a total of about 1,795 hectares, or about 0.6% of all woodland in Wales (Wavehill Consulting 2010).

In England, of those community woodlands sampled (non-randomly) in the 2009 study, sizes ranged from 2 to 84 ha, and averaged 22.4 ha (Pollard and Tidey 2009). No total area or number of groups is available for England, and this average relates to the community woodlands in the SWA study, not a national average.

3.4   Institutional context

3.4.1   Overview

The contexts in which community woodland management has developed are quite different in Scotland, Wales and England. An outline of the historical development of land tenure, community structures and movements for access and ownership is beyond the scope of this evidence review but forms an important part of the context (see Boyd 1998, Callander 2000, Reid 2000, Ritchie and Haggith 2005, Short 2008).

The brief outlines below highlight three key factors supporting a coherent community woodland sector in Scotland and Wales, compared with England:
1. a thriving national association with grassroots origins;
2. particular forest policy and programmes which followed wider government priorities and responded to grassroots demand;
3. an information base that facilitates access to all or many of the community groups.

These are explored in more detail in later sections.

3.4.2   Scotland

In Scotland strong non-government organisations have emerged from the movements of the 1990s including Reforesting Scotland, a 'network of people involved or interested in restoring Scotland's forest cover and culture' founded in 1991 (www.reforestingscotland.org/) and the Community Woodland Association (CWA)

established in 2003 as the 'direct representative body of Scotland's community woodland groups'. The CWA helps 'community woodland groups across the country achieve their aspirations and potential, providing advice, assistance and information, facilitating networking and training, and representing and promoting community woodlands to the wider world.' http://www.communitywoods.org/.

The Land Reform Act, 2003 created the community right to buy, providing rural communities the first refusal to buy estates when put on the market, and has been supported by Forestry Commission Scotland's National Forest Land Scheme since 2006, through which communities can purchase woodland from the national forest estate, even if it is not on the market. The repositioning policy of FCS created further opportunities as rural woodlands were put up for sale to support purchase of public forest in more urban locations.

3.4.3 Wales

In Wales a large EU and Welsh Government capital funding programme (*Cydcoed*) provided financial support to community groups seeking to own or manage woodlands. 163 community groups were supported overall. Phase 1 cost £4 million and ran from 2001 to 2004, grant-funding 40 projects; Phase II cost £12 million and ran from 2003 to 2008, with 123 projects spread across the same geographic areas as Phase 1. Although the programme ended in 2008 a high proportion of these groups continue (Owen et al. 2008). National support has been provided through *Coed Lleol*, a partnership organisation with a steering committee representing non-government and government agencies. More recently *Llais y Goedwig* was established in 2009 as 'a voluntary association of woodland community groups to provide a voice for community woodlands. We want to share our experiences, support each other and enhance local woodlands to benefit the people of Wales.' http://llaisygoedwig.org.uk/

Since 2011, Forestry Commission Wales has developed the 'Woodlands and You' public involvement framework in consultation with CWGs and pilot projects. 'Woodlands and You' promotes and facilitates a wide range of access arrangements from Permissions to Management Agreements, leases and disposal. More detail is given in Box 1 below.

Forest Research

Box 1 Woodlands and You

Some key points summarised from the Forestry Commission Wales website:
www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-8J2GJ9:

'Woodlands and You' is a new programme managed by Forestry Commission Wales to bring together all the options for public and community involvement. These include the following:

Leasing or Buying a Welsh Government Woodland
Your social enterprise may wish to take over full responsibility for management of a woodland to deliver greater long-term benefits for local communities than FCW is able to do. This would require a lease with exclusive occupation rights or outright purchase, and may be considered where such benefits have been demonstrated and evidenced – final decisions are made by the Welsh Government Minister responsible for the Woodland Estate.

Woodlands are leased and sold at market value and you'll need to budget for your group's legal costs. Leases and sales may be considered where:

• The woodland concerned is freehold;
• There is limited existing stakeholder interest in the woodland;
• The woodland is in a either a stand-alone block or on the edge of a larger block with its own access routes;
• It is clear that your plans could only be met by a lease or purchase of the woodland and that a Management Agreement or Permission would be inappropriate.

Use of Timber
Requests to use timber as part of your activity or project (for example, woodland management training, making small items to sell) may be considered. All timber will be disposed of at market value. In some currently unmanaged woodlands, timber may have little or no value. In other productive woodlands, the value will be much higher. Each request will be considered on a case by case basis within the following guidelines:

A basic, prescriptive **management plan** will be agreed with District staff. These must:
• contribute to delivery of the Forest Design Plan and 'Woodlands for Wales' objectives;
• specify the area to be worked;
• provide a precise description of the work to be undertaken;
• provide an estimate of the timber volumes involved.

FCW will **monitor and record** all harvested timber and charge at the agreed rate.

3.4.4 England

In England, community forestry has emerged with a rather different emphasis, focusing on peri-urban regeneration particularly in areas of high deprivation (Lawrence et al. 2009). This approach has been highly successful (see particularly data presented in the accompanying evidence review on access) and the English approach to urban forestry is acclaimed in the international literature (e.g. Johnston 2001).

Community forest governance, in the sense of involvement of community groups in woodland management decisions, has been much less of an issue in England. Compared with Scotland and Wales, population density and loss of natural habitat are higher priorities, and policy has focused on landscape regeneration and access (Nail 2008).

There is no comparable national association in England (Pollard and Tidey 2009). Efforts to form associations or networks in England originate with the non-government sector, not with the community woodland groups themselves. The Woodland Trust and Small Woods Association have led initiatives to set up networks, which include a small subset of all community woodlands. The Community Forests have formed a secretariat which facilitates networking amongst these initiatives (http://www.communityforest.org.uk/index.htm) but these form umbrellas for community governance in their respective areas, and are not community woodlands in themselves.

None of these is a grassroots approach. The lack of such an approach in England is possibly attributable to the great diversity of size, culture, motivations and resources of such groups in England, and the generally low level of interest in productive woodland management (Pollard and Tidey 2009; Tidey and Pollard 2010). There is no research that explicitly explains such a lack, although this is not particularly remarkable for the reasons given in 3.1 above.

Research in 2009 identified demand for 'a (perhaps regionally based) support and networking organisation in England, which could provide networking opportunities, funding advice and joint bids, training exchange between groups, facilitating woodland management advice, sharing experiences, 'avoiding reinvention of wheels' and representation to regional and national bodies.' (Tidey and Pollard 2010). However as noted above this demand has not been expressed and acted on by the community woodland groups themselves, in contrast with the situation in Scotland and Wales, and further research is needed to understand community perceptions of support needs.

3.5   Ownership

Land ownership varies across the three countries of Great Britain.

Most groups in Wales (73%) do not own the land but have some form of agreement with the owner. Of those who do not own the land, the land is owned by:
- Local authorities (67%);
- Private owners (15%);
- Assembly Woodland Estate [i.e. public forest] (10%);

(Wavehill Consulting 2010).

Of the 23 woodlands sampled in the 2009 study of England, 11 were operating on local authority land, 3 on Woodland Trust land, 3 on private land, 1 on Forestry Commission land and 5 owned the land themselves (Pollard and Tidey 2009). Whilst this is not a representative sample, it does reflect a general finding that most community woodland groups in England do not own the woodland.

In Scotland the proportion of community groups owning the land is higher (21 of the 57 listed in Calvert 2009). Again this is not necessarily a representative sample. The Community Woodland Association estimates that there are currently about 150 community woodland management groups of whom 'many' own their woods (Community Woodland Association 2010a). The higher level of land ownership in Scotland can be attributed to the history of proactive grassroots activism throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, leading to community buy-outs; and to the Land Reform (Scotland) Act (2003) which established the (rural) community right-to-buy.

There is no research to date, to explain differences in *attitude* to ownership across the three countries although we can hypothesise the connection with obvious historical factors including sense of justice linked to land tenure and eviction (Lawrence et al. 2009).

3.6   Objectives

The primary objectives of most groups in Wales and England are not productive woodland management. As demonstrated in later parts of this report, this situation contrasts with almost all other countries where community woodlands are seen as a productive resource.

In Wales, the main activities of 101 groups surveyed, were 'environmental improvement' (38%) and 'community regeneration' (30%), followed by education, conservation and recreation. Although 36% of groups were involved in woodland management, only 1% listed firewood or timber production as their main activity (Wavehill Consulting 2010). An earlier study based on more qualitative research does however highlight silvicultural motivations among those identified. For example some indicate a wish to see woodlands

managed differently. Nevertheless a wide range of other aims are also cited include recreation and education (Wilmot and Harris 2009).

A less comprehensive but nevertheless detailed study in England drew similar conclusions. Half of the respondents listed wildlife or conservation as their objective, followed by recreation and 'clearing up' or 'tidying paths':

> Few groups in this sample list woodland produce amongst their objectives, most are neglecting timber, woodfuel and coppice product sales as a contributor to their income and in many cases are actively dismissing economic woodland management as harmful to their main aims of conservation and biodiversity enhancement. (Pollard and Tidey 2009).

A higher level of involvement in silviculture and productive woodland management is reported in Scotland although quantitative evidence is not available (Calvert 2009).

4   Cross-cutting analysis

Having described the basic features of community woodlands in Great Britain, we now draw on wider evidence to analyse the variety of community woodland models, and where possible the outcomes. To make efficient use of evidence, we draw on:

- the case studies (which are presented in detail in Appendix 3);
- the UK evidence described in the previous section;
- selected international evidence;

to compare the various dimensions identified in the framework (section 2.4.1 above).

The structure of this section largely follows the framework used to describe the case studies, but some sections have been combined to avoid repetition.

The numbers used in parenthesis refer to the case studies numbers (i.e. 1 is Vermont Family Forests, 2 is Randolph, etc.). The reader is recommended to refer to these case studies in Appendix 3, which are a significant component of the evidence review.

4.1   Institutional context

4.1.1   What this section is about

This section describes the institutions (rights, rules and regulations) that affect the context in which the community group exists. These can include ownership structures, laws, and regulations that affect the options available to a community group. Context can affect the ownership options available to communities: for example in Scotland rural communities have the 'right-to-buy' land and forest. New laws can create new opportunities, as is the case with devolution in Wales and Scotland. Regulations can also limit the options: for example all forest owners have to comply with the Forestry Act in the UK.

The wider policy context is also important. Forest policy, land tenure and community legal structures are embedded in an array of policy and legislation that is not always self-evidently focused on community woodlands. For example the Land Reform Act in Scotland (2003) has ramifications far beyond community ownership of woodland (Slee and Moxey 2008). This type of policy analysis is both beyond the scope of this review, and not usually considered in the evidence available.

4.1.2   Ownership

A wide range of ownership structures is covered by the case studies:
- private owners managing land as a community (1, 5, 6, 7);
- community owned and managed land (2, 10, 11);
- national public land with community input into management (4, 2, 13);
- public local authority land with community input into management (8);
- private land with community input into management (9);
- crown land leased to private company with mandatory input from public advisory committees (3).

Although purposively selected to cover the range indicated in the typology (section 2.4 above), there are differences between each of them and some represent innovative and experimental approaches to sharing ownership.

Change in ownership can represent a real opportunity for community empowerment. To make this possible for community members without substantial finances, three main approaches can be seen in the case studies:
- shareholding: usually in a collective whole, although sometimes individual plots are owned separately and managed as a whole (1, 6).
- partnerships and management agreements: an area led by the UK, with examples of agreements with private landowners (9), local government (8), or the Forestry Commission (11, 12, 13). The degree of autonomy varies across these (see 'External linkages' section below).
- division of rights: for example through a conservation easement, the purchase of development rights by a government body or NGO, which reduces the remaining purchase price for the community members.

Whilst common property is often seen as a traditional tenure form that has somehow survived from the Middle Ages (see examples in Jeanrenaud 2001), it need not be. Our examples show that the creation of commons within the last 200 years is widespread. For example the forest commons of northern Sweden were created between 1861 and 1916 (Holmgren, Keskitalo, and Lidestav 2010), and those of North Rhine Westphalia, although based on a historical model, were developed following the new law of 1975 (Ewers, Ahlborn, and Büdenbender 2010).

The level of importance attached to ownership varies, and ownership can be a liability as well as an asset. Furthermore, ownership does not necessarily confer management powers: in the Swedish forest commons, direct government management remains dominant, with the major legislation pertaining to forest commons dating back to the 1950s (Holmgren, Keskitalo, and Lidestav 2010).

In the UK, ownership opportunities have not always been taken up by communities, because of the scale of administrative or financial liability. For example Case Study 10 illustrates how when the National Forest Land Scheme provided opportunities to buy the community forest, the Laggan Forest Trust chose to remain in partnership with Forestry Commission Scotland, and buy only three small pieces which provided opportunities for business development (Lawrence 2009). Similarly in Wales, one of the *Llais y Goedwig* case studies illustrates the logic behind such decisions:

> The WT [Woodland Trust] (being the owners of the site) would like us (CyBT) to consider leasing the land, as in their opinion it would give the CyBT *greater autonomy and would clarify management responsibility on the site. The* CyBT *is considering this possibility but at present feel happy with the agreement that is set out in the Memorandum of Understanding. If the* CyBT *were to take on this lease it is most likely that the extra financial cost to the* CyBT *would be for strimming 2-3 times a year, public liability and site insurance, and full insurance for volunteers activities. It would be difficult to derive any revenue from the woodland at such an early stage in its development and revenue funding from grant sources is unlikely to be available.*
> (*Llais y Goedwig* case study 2: *Coed y Bobl*
> http://llaisygoedwig.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/CS2-Coed-y-Bobl.pdf)

There has been considerable interest in whether there exists a body of evidence to indicate demand for change in ownership. The only available relevant evidence is the analysis of the responses to the consultation on the Future of the Public Forest Estate in England. Of 7007 responses, the great majority described themselves as 'members of the public'. Commenting on proposed changes in ownership, 63% of respondents were opposed to a change of ownership, compared with 2% who were supportive of such changes. 51% disagreed, and 31% agreed, with the statement 'Opportunities should be created for community and civil society groups to buy or lease forests that they wish to own or manage' (Lawrence and Jollands 2011).

Outright ownership, whether as a group of individuals, shareholders or members of an indivisible community property, seems to work best when there is a clear economic interest and business prospects (whether for profit or shared social benefit). This is the case with some of the examples included in the *Cydcoed* evaluation (Owen et al. 2008) and is illustrated in our Long Wood case study (11). However ownership is not necessary to fulfil business needs and again the *Llais y Goedwig* case studies provide an example where community groups sought out local landowners to develop management

agreements for provision of woodfuel [http://llaisygoedwig.org.uk/what-we-do/case-studies/].

Ownership is connected to categories in the 'Internal organisation' section of the framework, because of the formal requirement to constitute a legal body. For example in Scotland:

> To purchase properties, local communities form a democratic body with an appropriate legal structure to represent the whole community or make use of an existing one. The most popular form of legal incorporation is a company limited by guarantee. In certain circumstance where the objectives of the company meet the tax authority's test of 'public benefit' it is granted charitable status. This body then owns the property on behalf of the community and manages it for their common good (Wightman, Callander, and Boyd 2004).

A further option, for which evidence is not yet available, is that of community leasing of public forests. New ways to do this are being pioneered in Scotland, and the potential to do this exists in Wales (see box 1 above). This is potentially very significant: a review of constraints and opportunities for woodland based social enterprise in Great Britain concluded that leases of public land to community groups could allow them to borrow money against their asset (the woodland) without the need for them to raise capital to purchase it, and without having to release the woodland from public ownership (Stewart 2011).

4.1.3   Access and use rights

Public recreational access to woodland is, in general, correlated with ownership and national law. However community governance models included some changes to public access, for example where funding was contingent on providing increased access (5). Maintaining or improving access was also a significant motivation for some communities to get involved (2).

In several cases, community involvement emphasised the distinction noted above, between formal and perceived access rights. This was particularly the case in the UK where access is a more contested issue than in the other case studies. Community ownership can increase awareness of woodland accessibility, and can motivate the community group to improve both physical access and sense of the 'welcome' provided for the public (9, 13).

Beyond the UK, rights to use the products of community forests are a key feature, particularly shares in timber (1, 2, 3) and firewood (6). This is also the case in some examples from Scotland and Wales (9, 11, 12) but less so in England (Pollard and Tidey 2009) although interesting to note that participants in the Community Contracting Initiative (Mersey Forest) are able to use wood from local authority woodlands (8).

4.1.4   Regulations and statutory responsibilities

Many of the groups in our case studies are required to manage the woodland in accordance with national legislation that provides compliance with international sustainable forest management standards (1, 2, 4, 5, 11, 12, 13). Where a public body owns the land, sustainable forest management standards are applied directly, rather than through regulation and incentive (e.g. 3, 4, 11, 13).

For many this is a normal part of forest management practice, particularly in those countries with a substantial forestry sector (Germany, Sweden, USA, Canada) (1, 2, 3, 6, 7). In Sweden (7) however the forest commons experience stricter regulation than private individual forest owners, to the extent that they are described as community-owned, state managed - a factor that has possibly contributed to the relatively low levels of interest and engagement (Holmgren, Keskitalo, and Lidestav 2010). Each forest common does however have its own set of by-laws, authorised by the County Administration, providing some opportunity for empowerment and self-determination.

Elsewhere in Europe, perceptions of felling regulations on private land are seen as a bureaucratic hurdle, a factor that has been a key motivation in creating the owners groups (e.g. Belgium and Germany, 5 & 6).

In some cases the conditions attached to conservation easements (exemplified in cases 1 and 2) are seen as an element of state control, but in these case studies they have made community ownership possible through reducing the purchase price.

4.2   Internal organisation

4.2.1   What this section is about

The dimensions included in this section include all those that are defined by the community. Some may be subject to opportunities provided by the institutional framework (for example different countries provide different organisational and financial options), but within those, the community members shape their approach to engagement and governance.

4.2.2   Community membership

In most of our case studies the 'community' in question is a geographical community, united by place (albeit in some cases, scattered over a relatively wide area).

In the European cases (5, 6, 7) the 'community' can sometimes be a historical artefact, comprising current owners of forest parcels whose ancestors lived in the area. This can result in absentee ownership, and difficulties with consensual decision-making.

In other cases the 'community' consists of a group of individual landowners or shareholders, and in two cases the community is a group united by interest in woodland crafts and social enterprise. In one such case, attracting local volunteers to the work days has proved challenging and there are no villagers from the closest village engaged with the project.

There is no clear evidence that one approach or another works best. 'Success' is highly dependent on context. If the group is motivated and works well together, the project is likely to be successful. Defining eligibility by postcode makes membership available to all sectors of society and works well in many cases in Scotland (although some have criticised this approach as bureaucratic and arbitrary) (Brown 2008).

On the evidence of 'struggle', two factors seem to undermine success: an outside group attempting to attract local membership (9); and historically out-dated definitions of community which result in many absentee owners. The latter type would not apply to England because of the lack of such historical models.

4.2.3   Structure / legal status

The case studies represent a variety of terms and structures summarised in table 5.

Table 5:Legal structures

Case study	Legal structure
1 Little Hogback	Company limited by guarantee.
2 Randolph	Part of local government.
3 Timmins Local Citizens Committee	Voluntary organisation.
4 Public Lands Partnership (PLP) Colorado	PLP is an informal organisation. A separate organisation was set up to administer funds and grants. This is a tax-exempt, non-profit corporation.
5. Belgium – Joint Forest Management	'Independent association without the pursuit of profit'.
6. Germany	'A corporation under public act' set by law in 1975.
7. Sweden	Part of local government.
8. Community Contracting Initiative– Friends Of Clinkham Mossbank and Carr Hill (CCI – FOCMC)	Unincorporated association.
9. Coppicewood	Registered charity.
10. Hill Holt Wood	Two structures: 1. Company limited by guarantee and 2. A charity.
11. Laggan	Two structures: 1. Company limited by guarantee and 2. A charitable company limited by guarantee.
12. Long Wood	Company limited by guarantee.
13. Neroche	Local Stakeholders group is now a Trust and a limited company.

In the UK, those groups which are interested in trading often set up a dual structure, with one component being a trading company limited by guarantee or a Community Interest Company, and the other a charitable body able to receive grants.

The majority of groups surveyed in Scotland, Wales and England have some formal constitution to enable them to handle funds (Pollard and Tidey 2009) and own land (Wightman, Callander, and Boyd 2004). Not all forms are considered equally helpful. For example, the requirement of the community right to buy legislation in Scotland for groups to form companies limited by guarantee has been described as restrictive since it precludes other legal forms such as companies limited by shares, which enable share capital to be raised (Stewart 2011).[2]

Many start as informal groups, and only with the growth of confidence, interest and success do they formalise (Lawrence et al. 2011). For example, an evaluation of the Wychwood project in the Cotswolds reports that:

> *The Friends of Wychwood, which began as a small support group, has developed into an independent organisation that now plays a significant role in developing local projects and contributing to the management and direction that the Project takes. The Friends of Wychwood also undertake fund raising and are contributing to local projects in their own right. The Friends currently have a membership of approximately 450* (Béjot-Seeboth 2003).

4.2.4   Representation

This dimension reflects the degree to which the 'community' is represented by the main decision-makers. This is not a well documented aspect of the case studies. Issues with representation can focus on concentration of power in few hands, but there can also be issues with representing the diversity of the community.

There is very little data on the ethnic composition of group members, but attracting members of ethnic minorities was mentioned as a challenge in one case study (8). Gender representation can be estimated through an analysis of the names of committee members and typically the majority is male. Committee members tend to be older (5, 6,) though there are positive moves to involve younger people in some cases (4, 8). In two of our cases the surrounding community is comprised of long term residents and seasonal residents though it is the long term residents who tend to be involved in the community groups (2, 11). Only one case study (1) documented an explicit attempt to include people from low incomes.

A survey of community woodland groups in Scotland analysed the make-up of committee membership and found: 66% of Directors/Committee members/Trustees

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[2] Note that the National Forest Land Scheme is not as restrictive as the community right to buy legislation and does allow other legal forms to apply.

were male, 28% were over 60 years of age, and all were from a "white" ethnic background. This compared with a background Scottish population of 23% over 60, and 98% white, although this would be much higher in the rural areas where community woodlands predominate. (Edwards et al. 2009). More widely, representativeness of forest advisory committees has been researched in Canada, where a tendency for nepotism and white male dominance has been observed (Parkins and Davidson 2008, Reed and Varghese 2007). 'Local advisory committees often struggle to maintain a diverse base of local representatives— with frequent gaps in representation from conservation groups, Aboriginal communities, and a lack of involvement by women' (Robson and Parkins 2010).

In Belgium (5), the forest groups project has been successful in increasing the proportion of owners in an area participating in the project. The main reasons for this are the benefits which come to individual owners from collaboration, particularly the lowered management costs through collective felling licenses. However even with this 'successful' project they still have not been able to get more than 50% of owners on board in any one area. Typically it is the larger owners who join first, followed by the smaller owners.

In Sweden (7) only 31% of surveyed shareholders take part in the annual meetings of the general assembly. A lack of interest among forest owners is also cited as an issue in Germany (6), where 'in most cooperatives it is therefore the committee that has a significant influence on the forest management, frequently the chairman alone' (Ewers, Ahlborn, and Büdenbender 2010).

4.2.5   Participation in decision making

Representativeness is closely linked to participation, but this dimension specifically focuses on the ways in which people get involved in decision making. Clearly if they are not represented (as noted in the previous section) they will not be participating – but even if represented, they may take little active part. In this section we therefore summarise the activities and processes used to increase participation.

In the case studies we see a range of such mechanisms:
- consensual decision-making by shareholders (1);
- statutory public hearings attended by the wider community (2);
- providing citizen advisory group with access to higher levels of decision making (3);
- groups responsible for taking decisions regarding woodland (1, 2, 5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13);
- public events/volunteer days to draw in community (1, 2, 4, 8, 9,10, 11, 12, 13);
- Laggan (11) – there was a community consultation process to assess willingness to purchase some of the land from Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS);

- "At the end of each Local Citizen's Committee meeting, participants would assess their satisfaction with the meeting. This evaluation of meetings shows an innovative approach to ensuring member participation" (KBM Forestry Consultants 2008).

The evidence does not explicitly link such mechanisms with increased participation in decision-making, and comparisons are complicated by the need to tailor mechanisms to very specific contexts. However an overview of the case studies indicates that public events/volunteer days were used in several case studies to draw in community. Where the groups had responsibility for taking decisions regarding the woodland then these mechanisms of drawing in the community had a direct lead into participation in decision-making.

4.2.6   Leadership

Contrasting with concerns about participation and representation, several reviews and case studies indicate that community woodland groups are most likely to emerge where there is strong leadership (Stewart 2011). In Vermont, a member of staff at Vermont Family Forests championed the project, being pivotal in securing funding, finding shareholders and helping them get on their feet. In the UK, both Hill Holt and Coppicewood were also said to benefit from the presence of a few key individuals.

4.2.7   Forest management objectives and planning procedures

Although it is not always explicit in each case study, the management plan is a key locus of involvement for community woodland groups. At one end of the spectrum, the PLP in Colorado (case study 4) hopes to influence public forest planning. A little more involvement is seen in Ontario's Local Citizen's Committee, which provide a structured forum for involving local voices, although it is not clear whether the management plan is substantively changed as a result. The private forest cooperatives in Europe also bring communities (or their representatives) together over the forest planning, and full community groups take on this responsibility or contract it to a forester. However it is not clear how the processes of objective setting, expertise, advice and decision-making play out in this planning context. This would be a valuable area of research on the interface of technical knowledge (both local and professional), social and environmental aspiration, and legislative requirement. In most cases it is a formal requirement that demands precise definition of participatory roles, and a focus on this aspect would help to clarify exactly who is making the decisions.

It is clear from the case studies, where we made efforts to pin down this issue, that 'control' and actually preparation of the management plan are not the same thing.
- In six of our case studies the forest management plan is prepared by a professional forester and approved by community (1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 13). This does not *necessarily* undermine the power of the community but is not stated explicitly.
- In five cases the community group prepares the management plan (2, 8, 9, 11, 12).

- In one case the community is not involved in the management plan but seeks to influence it (4).

4.2.8   Benefit distribution rules

Who gets what from a community woodland project, is highlighted as a key issue in the international literature (Mahanty et al. 2006, Maharjan et al. 2009, McDermott 2009a), partly because forests are so central to rural livelihoods in many developing country contexts, but also because (as in the USA cases described by McDermott) community forestry can be a way of addressing wider inequities in society.

Although the cases described here highlighted some inequities in decision-making, equity of benefit distribution was less of a concern, and in fact the cases provide some valuable examples of approaches to share benefits at community level. These include:
- Income retained in community group for woodland projects (six cases).
- Income and produce (including firewood) divided among community members (five cases).
- No communal income (three cases, all on public land).

4.3   External linkages

4.3.1   What this section is about

Social capital is often described as 'bonding capital' and 'bridging capital' (Plummer and FitzGibbon 2006). The previous section covers those aspects that can be described as bonding capital – community groups working together. This section might be considered as describing the 'bridging capital'. A number of studies highlight the significance of linkages for resilience and sustainability. For example, one study finds that 'the degree of connectivity (measured as 'repeated interactions') between the actors in a municipal governance system helps explain why some systems are more effective than others' (Andersson 2004).

4.3.2   Partnerships and agreements

Cross-scale partnerships are very evident in the success of community forestry, and these take a wide range of forms in the evidence reviewed here: with a ministry, with local government, with an NGO, with a state forestry department. Some partnerships are specific to the project, while others are more general supporting arrangements, or looser expressions of goodwill and mutual interest. Clearly partnership is a very widespread approach but the details depend on the model in question and generalisations are not necessarily helpful.

Of specific interest are those where a management agreement is formed between two bodies, one being the community group, and the other providing support in the management of the woodland. The functioning of these partnerships depends on mutual

perceptions and openness to change; at least two of our cases (11, 12) (both in the UK, both with the Forestry Commission) have had to work through differences of organisational culture and objectives. Their experiences have however led to new programmes in both Scotland and Wales (including the National Forest Land Scheme, the Woods in and Around Towns programme in Scotland; and the Woodlands and You programme in Wales, described above).

A very different partnership model is a form of public participation, where community members are included in wider decision-making committees such as the citizens advisory committees in Canada (3, and elsewhere in Canada) and the public forest planning committees in the USA (4).

It is clear from the case studies and evidence reviewed that there is a further category of delivery mechanisms that underpin community forest governance. Whilst these include stronger partnerships between communities, agencies and NGOs, there is also a need for strong horizontal interactions – between government agencies; between NGOs; between community woodland groups.

4.3.3   Associations and networks

By 'associations' we are referring to horizontal linkages, through networks or formally constituted organisations. Internationally such associations and opportunities for networking are cited as central to success (Blinn, Jakes, and Sakai 2007, Colchester et al. 2003, FAO 2002, Wollenberg et al. 2006) but amongst our case studies only five were formally members of associations (all in the UK). In overseas cases networking is not mentioned, except in Canada where the lack of networking between LCCs is cited as an issue to be resolved (1). This is likely to be an artefact of the available evidence rather than an indication that associations are *not* valuable. In other words, the role of associations has not been researched in these cases; we cannot say they are not therefore important.

Although the role of the Scottish and Welsh community woodland associations (CWA and *Llais y Goedwig*) is not specifically addressed in the evidence reviewed here, experience of interactions among members at workshops, AGMs, and through newsletters and websites indicate that it is clearly an absolutely key one to its members. In Scotland, most community woodland groups are members. In Wales where *Llais y Goedwig* was only established in 2009, those not yet members noted the difficulties with lack of networks (Wavehill Consulting 2010).

Significantly the case studies where they are cited as important in this study, are in areas where community forestry is a relatively new concept, and we might conclude that networking is particularly important where community groups are breaking new ground.

4.3.4   Overarching programmes

Another type of network takes place amongst groups that are part of, or supported by, a wider programme. This is most obvious in the case of the Community Forests (or wider group of Community Forestry Initiatives) in England (and see case study 8). The Wychwood Forest, in the Cotswolds is another example.

Such programmes act as a focus for large-scale funding, advice and staffing. Both case study 8 and the Wychwood Forest evaluation highlight the value of a funded project officer to facilitate connections between groups and provide advice (see section 5.5) (Béjot-Seeboth 2003).

4.4   Resources

4.4.1   What this section is about

This section includes the natural, financial and knowledge resources to which community woodland groups have access. It also considers 'power', which is an implicit dimension of any analysis of governance, and affects all aspects of institutional and stakeholder interactions.

4.4.2   Forest

There is a widespread view across many countries that when governments hand over forest ownership or management to communities, they tend to relinquish control of only the poorest quality woodland (Lawrence 2007). This general view is not supported by the evidence here, although of course it covers a very wide range of contexts. The size of community woodlands in the case studies ranges from 6.8 ha (Coppicewood College) to over 4000 ha (Randolph town forest), and embraces a wide range of native and planted vegetation types. The only case where poor quality was specifically mentioned is that of Randolph where storm damage and salvage cutting reduced the value of the forest, and motivated residents to conserve it by buying it. On the contrary, many of the cases (particularly non-British ones, but including some in Scotland) have substantial value and form a part of the household livelihoods budget (financial or energy).

4.4.3   Finances and business models

Financial aspects of community woodlands include both fundraising (to purchase land and other capital, or to support educational and community development projects), and income generation through sale of products and services.

The availability of funds to purchase land is a constraint to ownership. The community groups who have bought land in Wales obtained grants from the *Cydcoed* Programme (maximum grant size usually £250 000 although a few cases obtained higher funding) (Owen et al. 2008), and more recently from Big Lottery Community Asset Transfer (CAT) grants (B. Anglezarke, personal communication). Community groups who purchase land

in Scotland have raised funds through a variety of mechanisms (including public fundraising campaigns). The Scottish Land Fund was launched in 2001 by the New Opportunities Fund, a National Lottery distributor, and administered by Highlands and Islands Enterprise, with the aim of contributing to sustainable development in rural Scotland by assisting communities to acquire, develop and manage local land or land assets. It was succeeded by the Big Lottery Fund programme **-** Growing Community Assets **-** managed by the Community Land Unit (established by Highlands and Islands Enterprise).[3] Communities also access a range of private trusts, and use local fundraising methods (Lawrence, 2009).

The Community Woodland Association conducted a review of 'alternative ways of funding land acquisition' and highlighted current constraints and potential for community share issues in the UK context. In particular it highlighted the potential of 'community benefit society' as a model for community woodland share issues (Community Woodland Association 2010b).

In terms of productive management of woodland, the evidence across all countries suggests two broad categories of community woodland. Firstly are those managed for timber and firewood (where income is often used to pay a professional forester to manage the forest) and which follow traditional models which do not require initial investment. Secondly, are those where the primary objective is social, community regeneration, recreation and / or education, and which involve a change from previous objectives. The latter (which predominate in Great Britain) are more reliant on external funding. Amongst the case studies:

- Start up grants were received by 10;
- Reliance on on-going grants was reported by 7;
- Donations from individuals within the community were reported by 3;
- Income was generated and reinvested in the project by 7.

The most specific data available on this is from the Wales survey (Wavehill Consulting 2010), which found:

- Just under half (48%) of community woodland groups (CWGs) had received grant funding in the past 12 months.
- 31% had generated money through fundraising, via a wide range of activities. The median figure for CWG money raised through fundraising in the past year was £580.
- 17% of CWGs had generated income through trading in the past 12 months. The median figure for CWG money raised through trading in the past year was £2,400.

One of the key challenges identified during the Case Study visits in respect of funding was that the short-term nature of funding cycles did not allow CWGs sufficient time to develop their woodlands to produce a viable income source that would ensure

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[3] http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/prog_growing_community_assets?regioncode=-sco

sustainability. A member of the Rupera Conservation Trust noted that: "The main gap in the support available is the short term availability of the grants, this woodland is not going to be producing decent timber for 25 years and the grants are all short term" (Wavehill Consulting 2011).

On the other hand, some expressed concerns about grant reliance, and a wish to achieve financial sustainability. Clearly there is potential for income generation from sale of woodfuel, timber and non-timber products, as well as for the use of the woodland as a venue. Those groups which have aimed to do this in Great Britain have often developed social enterprises. Stewart (2011) examines 17 case studies and concludes that there is a need for more joined-up thinking and government support if social enterprise is to flourish, including training provision, and assessment of tenders for procurement taking social and environmental benefits explicitly into account.

Furthermore, social enterprises require a product if they are to have income. Some of the most successful rely on service provision, attracting grants from local government and agencies. For example, among our case studies in the UK only Hill Holt Wood has developed an income generating social enterprise which meets the economic needs of the project. Hill Holt turned over £1.19 million in the year ending 2011 and made a surplus of around £31,500 per hectare (Stewart 2011). A large part of the income comes from training contracts with statutory agencies, income which is not likely to be available to many such groups.

Whilst this support is important, such resources are not going to be available to all community woodlands, and the potential for income generation through productive woodland management appears to be neglected particularly in the English cases. The overview of English community woodlands concluded:

> There is a demonstrable need amongst CWGs for advice on how best to use their woodlands as a potential source of income to ensure sustainability (Tidey and Pollard 2010).

In examples from other countries, enterprise is not necessarily social. Some of the cooperatives, shareholdings and joint forest management schemes featured from Germany, USA, Sweden and Belgium are more conventional business models, where profit is used for individual benefit. Notable in the international literature is the growth of forest owners' cooperatives – illustrated in some detail in our case study 5, which focused on the learning processes. A more conventional focus is provided by a study of the increase of such cooperatives in the USA which concluded (Blinn, Jakes, and Sakai 2007):

- Family forest owners are showing an increasing interest in forest landowner cooperatives as a mechanism for providing a variety of services related to sustainable forest management and product processing.

- Because these cooperatives are locally owned, user-controlled, small-scale participatory entities, they can more easily adopt to member needs than some other landowner assistance programs.
- Key issues related to improving cooperative effectiveness include (1) expanding membership to enhance leadership and volunteer assistance, (2) improving marketing efforts, and (3) developing better networks within the local community, with other forestry cooperatives, and with organisations that offer assistance to cooperatives.

4.4.4   Knowledge and advice

The case studies can be roughly divided into:
(1)   those for whom a community or joint forest is a resource or asset, for which they might want to set objectives but are content to subcontract the forest management to a professional (2, 5, 6, 7); and
(2)   those for whom the community woodland represents an opportunity to apply their own knowledge, and for empowerment (the rest). Two projects explicitly draw on local knowledge to improve forest management (4, 13). Others focus on building the technical knowledge of group participants (including 1, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13).

On the whole, however, the role of technical, silvicultural knowledge has a relatively low profile in the case studies. It has not been explicitly studied or evaluated, in many cases. However this may be an artefact of what has been documented, rather than reflect the realities of rural communities. We found this to be the case across the range of case studies, both international and within Great Britain, and so it is not easily explained simply by the lack of interest in forest management that we see in the GB cases.

An important characteristic of some of the groups is that their members hold a wide range of expertise, and often draw directly on that. This is seen as important in some of the evidence reviews:

> *For groups to act as genuine partners with the landowner and to have credibility they need members with a good degree of knowledge about woodland management* (Pollard and Tidey 2009).

In other cases it is clear that rural communities are already struggling to manage all the demands on their time and skills, and that they would prefer to draw on professional forest management knowledge (Lawrence 2009). Focus groups in one study in England reported however that they often have little idea of where to obtain such advice and that access to expertise is a serious constraint (Tidey and Pollard 2010). Even in the case of *Cydcoed* (Wales) where project staff were employed to help community groups fill in application forms, the evaluation found evidence that people were overwhelmed with the requirements (Owen et al. 2008). Technical knowledge is not the only constraint, and in

communities where forest management is not a core objective, the community groups may not see it as a problem. More consistently, groups feel the need for skills development in business and project management (Lawrence 2009, Tidey and Pollard 2010).

In the Wales survey, 78% of CWGs had received non-financial support in the past 12 months, and 73% rated the non-financial support available to them as 'good' or 'very good'. Nevertheless a range of gaps in support were identified, including help with developing applications for funding, help with legal issues and Forestry Commission policies and procedures, support in engaging volunteers and specific support for school CWGs (Wavehill Consulting 2010).

Similarly in Scotland many groups report slow progress with 'unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles to be negotiated'. Whilst at the policy level there is clear support for community engagement and empowerment, it appears that the various delivery mechanisms are not always effective, aligned or indeed fit for purpose (Community Woodland Association 2010a).

4.4.5   Power and capacity

Implicit in all of the case studies (and in the concept of governance) is the question of power, empowerment and self-empowerment. An analysis of the meaning and evaluation of power is beyond the scope of the present report but we can include the following reflections on the evidence available.

Empowerment may be represented by change of ownership (either through proactive lobbying and fund-raising, or more recently through the Land Reform Act and the National Forest Land Scheme), by funding mechanisms (as in *Cydcoed*), or by decision-sharing (as in the partnerships developed in the English Community Forests).

In Scotland and Wales real change has been brought about through grassroots initiative. There has been radical change in policy in the last 10 years, but in Scotland the early community buy-outs paved the way (Boyd 1998, Ritchie and Haggith 2005). Local forest governance has been conceptualised as co-evolving with national / state policies (Kouplevatskaya-Buttoud 2009) and we can see that process here, through addressing the land base of power. Other examples where communities have empowered themselves include that of Colorado, where ecological monitoring provided the knowledge base and scientific credibility that underpinned local people's campaign to reconsider public forest management (4). A third example is that of *Cydcoed*, the EU and Welsh Government funded programme that provided full (rather than match) funding to community groups. As one group member commented 'Now that we have the money, the County Council has to listen to us!' (quoted in Lawrence et al. 2009).

This last is an example where community groups felt empowered but the opportunity was provided through a national initiative with international funding. This is one reason that 'initiative' and 'power' are difficult to locate and require a more subtle and profound analysis. Other groups that made astute and innovative use of existing mechanisms include two in the USA (1 and 2) who turn financial instruments to their advantage and made it possible for local government, or a group of unwealthy families, to own forest.

Other government initiatives grow out of conflict, or seek to address conflict, and can be attributed to the efforts of earlier community, grassroots or individual campaigners (see e.g. Inglis and Guy 1998).

So community governance can result from, or represent, a power shift; but once set up, it may in itself require rearrangements of power, in the sense of community representation and capacity to make or implement decisions. The need for support to community capacity is highlighted particularly in the Scottish and Welsh cases and wider evidence.

The key requirements are summarised in the Scottish Government's 'Community Empowerment Action Plan' which states:

> The formation, existence and development of democratic, inclusive and competent community groups is key to community empowerment … The process of community empowerment relies on these organisations being in place. Support for the development of these organisations should be a key focus for investing in community capacity building.

A qualitative study of the experiences of two rural communities which own and / or manage forest in partnership, noted that the experience itself had helped to build capacity through gaining experience, training courses and enhanced networks with external (government and non-government) organisations. However it found that opportunities for networking and learning were not always taken up, and that rural communities often experience what might be called 'committee fatigue' with a number of organisational duties falling on a limited group of volunteers (Lawrence 2009).

Linked to this sense of 'overload' perhaps, is the common finding that community initiatives depend on the commitment and vision of key individuals. This was a feature of several of our case studies (4, 8, 10, 13), most consistently linked to the projects where forestry is not an existing part of the local economy.

The situation is different in many English communities, which are less reliant on their own resources to cover a wide range of community governance, and can more easily draw on the time and energy of volunteers. The experience of the Wychwood Project illustrates some very positive aspects of empowerment through financial responsibility. Once formally constituted, the Friends of Wychwood took over financial management, introduced membership fees and processed donations. They found that

the rigour associated with preparing accounts has been significant in establishing the Friends as an important local institution. As further evidence … the Friends have recently been asked … to offer support in local planning matters(Béjot-Seeboth 2003).

4.5   Impact

4.5.1   Evidence for impact

Rigorous assessment of the governance outcomes of community forestry is either scarce, or very context specific. A systematic review of the international 'evidence base for community forest management as a mechanism for supplying global environmental benefits and improving local welfare' (Bowler et al. 2010) found only 42 papers that met the criteria for inclusion in such a review (out of 3384 that had a relevant title), and of those only 13 looked at social aspects. It concludes 'there is insufficient evidence to conclude what effect CFM [community forest management] has on local livelihoods, which is in part due to the absence of consensual indicators of CFM success in improving livelihoods.'[4]

A review of the impacts of community forestry and woodlands in Great Britain, which includes 'grey literature', indicates the limitations of evidence. Most community woodland groups do not conduct any kind of monitoring or evaluation. Projects with external funding report against targets defined in the projects, and those reports are sometimes publicly available. Data collection is expensive and therefore only conducted in response to demand. Like much monitoring and evaluation, it focuses on outputs (the immediate products of a project or programme), rather than outcomes (the longer term, wider and less predictable effects of producing those outputs) (Lawrence and Ambrose-Oji 2011).

4.5.2   Shifting priorities for monitoring and evaluation

The focus of evaluation has shifted from counting numbers of trees planted, to more socially relevant and sometimes more qualitative indicators.[5] The weight of evidence for

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[4] Despite the relevance of the title, this review asked the primary review question 'Does Community Forest Management supply global environmental and local welfare benefits in less developed countries?' Of the 42 deemed acceptable, 34 reported data on forest condition or cover, eight on resource extraction (fuelwood collection and number of cut stems) and 13 on livelihoods. On the social aspects, the review concludes 'Articles investigating the impact on livelihoods were variable in the type of data they collected and presented, which prevented quantitative synthesis.'

[5] This statement is based on an overview of monitoring and evaluation of community forestry (Lawrence and Ambrose-Oji 2010), particularly those cases (including Cydcoed, central Scotland (CSFT, WIAT), Mersey Forest, Newlands) which not only document the evidence but also the

both environmental and social well-being impacts is compelling, but this arises either from projects that provide 'for' the community, or it is not easy to separate the impacts of such provision from the impacts of participation. For example, the 2005 evaluation of the Community Forests programme measures the success of community involvement, in terms of numbers of educational events and volunteers involved (Land Use Consultants & SQW Ltd 2005). Whilst these are important data we cannot draw conclusions about role in decision-making, from such data alone.

One pattern emerging from that review was that the projects with highest levels of community engagement, and most subjective experiences, have the least formal project funding and therefore produce the least evidence. The projects providing excellent evaluation data are generally measuring awareness, use and perceived well-being indicators. The evaluation of *Cydcoed* however goes further, and provides indicators of social capital:

> *Case study research shows that knowledge and skills developed through* Cydcoed *are now being cascaded through the community. Whilst it is difficult at this stage of* Cydcoed *to ascertain the true depth of increased social capital, there is little doubt that projects have increased trust, networks and relationships at the individual and community level* (Owen et al. 2008).

Another evaluation that explicitly assessed the impact of community partnerships with Forestry Commission Scotland did address such outcomes. The response was 'very positive', the partnership approach was generally considered to offer added-value compared with trying to work alone, whilst the most important benefits included community empowerment - 'introducing a sense of influence over destiny of local environment' (Campbell and Bryan 2006).

4.5.3   Monitoring and evaluation in the case studies

These issues are further illustrated by our case studies. Most do not report monitoring and evaluation processes. For some, there will be internal monitoring of forest management as part of the management plan (particularly those examples where the community effectively contracts a forester to manage the forest on their behalf, or in the public forests).

The experience of Hill Holt Wood illustrates the challenges. For the past six years, Hill Holt Wood has measured the achievement of its objectives using social auditing. However it is reported that the quality of this has declined, thus affecting its usefulness. A new process is being initiated overseen by academics from Lincoln University.

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process for developing the evaluation method (Central Scotland Forest Trust 2011, Owen et al. 2008, Newlands Project 2011, Ward Thompson, Roe, and Alves 2008)

In several of our case studies monitoring is used as a tool for increasing participation. In the Joint Forest Management groups in Belgium, owners collaborated in developing the indicators for monitoring and this served as a means of increasing owner involvement as well as providing feedback on the health of the forest. In Clinkham Woods (Community Contracting Initiative) the youth group has conducted biodiversity monitoring and the data is checked by the St Helen's Council Rangers.

Little of this adds up to an evaluation of the impact of community involvement. The example from Colorado (4) is the exception, where improved management of public forests is clearly linked to empowerment (through data and knowledge enhancement) of local people.

Many of our case studies rely on academic and / or qualitative and / or local narratives. This is good material, often rich in detail and quality. But it is not the kind of evidence that demonstrates the effectiveness of community engagement at policy level. It is possible that some clearer thinking is needed about what is being evaluated – the fact of participation, or the results of that participation.

4.5.4   Judging 'success'

Judgements of the nature of success depend on the original objectives of a project, which vary, and on the perspective from which the project is judged. Amongst success outcomes for woodland groups the ability to continue to deliver project work, to learn and adapt are significant.

Stewart (2011) concluded that each woodland-related social enterprise is unique and will operate under different circumstances and within and individual context. Therefore there is not one model which can simply be replicated in various locations.

The Community Woodlands Association (2010a) found that success can be difficult to quantify for community management groups. Most, when asked, distinguished between successful delivery of specific projects (carrying out woodland management operations, creating a path or a building, running an open day or a forest school, etc) with a clear end-point, and the more general sense of the community group succeeding in its wider remit of using the community asset to address community issues, as an on-going process. There was general consensus that many systems designed to support them were unnecessarily complex and bureaucratic, and represented significant hurdles to engagement by volunteers and ultimately limited delivery. From this standpoint, success could be enhanced by reduction of this burden, either by system redesign or by greater availability of specialised support.

In summary, a judgement of success cannot be compared across these limited studies for the following reasons:

1. very few have actually evaluated their success;
2. such evaluations take place against the group's objectives, which vary from one case to the next;
3. the legal status that works, depends on the context and on the community group's choice
4. policy considerations are not fully addressed by individual project evaluations.

4.5.5   Dynamics, sustainability and learning processes

We noted above that community governance is dynamic, and evolves. Participation cannot be designed, and groups come and go. This was reflected in the case studies and wider evidence, in concerns about sustainability, efforts to network, and in some cases built-in social learning and adaptation processes.

The dynamics and evolution of community woodlands is most explicit in the review of delivery mechanisms by the Community Woodland Association. This describes how groups evolve from one type into another (e.g. from 'reference' or 'advisory' groups into more formally constituted groups and from there perhaps into woodland owning groups) (Community Woodland Association 2010a). The kind of forum provided by the CWA and its counterpart in Wales, *Llais y Goedwig*, is a catalyst for such development. There is no replacement for the amount of networking, reflection and sharing of experience (see the websites and newsletters of each at www.communitywoods.org/ and llaisygoedwig.org.uk/). Earlier and ongoing events, websites and newsletters by *Coed Lleol*, Reforesting Scotland, the Community Forests, and Small Woods Association have also fostered sharing of experience, as well as the various events listed in section 4.1 on UK evidence above.

Of the case studies, only one is explicitly adaptive and provides an exemplary model for conscious learning and development. The Public Lands Partnership, Colorado (4) benefited from being part of the Ford Foundation's Community Based Forestry demonstration programme which supported a learning approach, and hosted a public 'learning workshop' to share and reflect on the knowledge generated by their participation ecological monitoring programme.

Other innovative approaches to learning and adaptive capacity demonstrated in the case studies include:
- On-line journals by shareholders in Vermont Family Forests (1);
- Citizen advisory committees involved in more than one forest (3);
- Group learning based on selection of indicators for self-evaluation leading to improved feedback to government;
- Hosting international visits which foster reflection and comparison with other models (6, 11);
- More locally, networking and cross-visits to other community woodland groups within the Mersey Forest (8) and *Llais y Goedwig* membership (9).

There is also a need for learning across sectors. Both the review of mechanisms in Scotland and the survey of community woodlands in Wales conclude that various parts of government need to talk with each other:

> the various mechanisms have evolved independently, (and not necessarily coherently) and there is a need to draw them together and encourage more joined up thinking (Community Woodland Association 2010a)

and

> the potential for greater cooperation between the relevant departments with the Welsh Government, including Forestry Commission Wales, needs to be explored. This process should, we would suggest, go beyond simply broadening the understanding within the Welsh Government of the potential role of CWGs; it should also include discussions on how the various mechanisms that are available to support community and voluntary sector organisations in Wales and/or projects delivered by organisations in those sectors can be utilised for the benefit of CWGs (Wavehill Consulting 2010)

Concerns about sustainability were most evident in the UK cases and evidence, and took two distinctive approaches. An overview of English groups found that 'Many groups have concerns about their future sustainability. Groups should be supported as part of future self reliant communities to help them engage with their local communities' (Tidey and Pollard 2010). In contrast, a review of delivery mechanisms in Scotland highlights the dynamic process of group formation and evolution, and notes that groups come and go (Community Woodland Association 2010a) – although noting at the same time, the need for support and capacity building.

Particular concerns related to:
- timescales – both the longer timescale of forestry, and the older age group usually involved in volunteering (Pollard and Tidey 2009);
- reliance on grants or local government programmes (case study 10); the 'constant search for funding' (Community Woodland Association 2010a, Pollard and Tidey 2009).

5   Conclusions and recommendations

5.1   Increasing the options

This report set out to address the question: 'What are the options for community engagement in forest governance in England, based on evidence from England and elsewhere?'.

The evidence is limited. There is more evidence to describe options than there is to evaluate success and most of this review focuses on the options. While there are more options than those documented formally, this overview has shown a wide range of

possibilities for ownership and rights; for community organisation and business models; for participation in decision-making; and for evolving through learning, monitoring and sharing. It is important to note that much of this variety is home-grown: over the last 20 years, changing political and social priorities, and commitment from the forestry profession, in England, Scotland and Wales, have created the circumstances for some of the most rapid change in social involvement in forestry anywhere in the world. The speed of change may undermine the availability of evidence but it should not reduce the value of the range of models developed.

The variety of models from overseas is also a valuable resource. Whilst some models reviewed here are more historically validated, and / or benefit from a richer forest resource, there is no reason why any one of them might automatically be excluded in England. Many supposedly historical models in other countries have in fact originated within the last century, and the evidence shows continuing innovation and experimentation with community governance arrangements. England presents a great variety of contexts, both social and ecological, and what fits one context will be inappropriate in another.

Recommendation: develop a basket of options, to help communities, landowners, local government and NGOs develop arrangements that fit local conditions and work because they have been developed by the participants.
Recommendation: support the development and evolution of groups, rather than setting policy targets that rely on the instant creation of fully formed, representative and permanent organisations.

5.2   Summary of findings

5.2.1   Objectives
Central to choosing an appropriate model for community woodland management, are the objectives of the group. In much of the evidence studied, such objectives are implicit. Particularly in the case of overseas examples, sustainable production of woodfuel, timber and other forest products is considered to be a self-evident goal. England is very unusual in a global context, in the gap between community engagement and forest use. Selection of models, or development of new models using the elements highlighted below, will depend on the reasons that the various stakeholders have for proposing community woodland management.

Recommendation: begin with the objectives of all stakeholders, when designing approaches to community woodland management**.**

5.2.2   Ownership
Ownership is at the heart of making decisions about land use. Table 6 sets out models of engagement in community forestry governance by different ownerships.

Ownership is symbolically and economically important in many of the models, but the evidence does not support a direct correlation between community ownership and satisfaction with community forest governance. Where communities, or groups of individual owners, already own their land, ownership is unproblematic. But purchase is challenging financially and organisationally. Leasehold arrangements hold potential and are being pioneered in Scotland and Wales. Overseas, local government forest ownership often facilitates community empowerment and governance.

Recommendation: retain variety of potential ownership arrangements; consider support to local authority ownership;
Recommendation: maintain links with Scotland and Wales to monitor outcome of leasehold options, and make arrangements to support development of leasehold options.

Some community woodlands are based on agreements with private landowners. Most such arrangements in UK are based on the goodwill and personal interest of the landowner. Other innovative tenure arrangements, which have not been tested in the UK but have encouraging precedents elsewhere, include the distribution or purchase of shares; landowner cooperatives and joint management groups; and /or the purchase of development rights through conservation easements.

Recommendation: on privately-owned land support testing of innovative tenure arrangements including share purchase, landowner cooperatives and associations, joint management groups, and conservation easements to facilitate purchase.
Recommendation: provide incentives for private owners, and advisory support for communities, to encourage community-landowner agreements.

In the case of publicly-owned forest, the most innovative models are located in the UK, and include leaseholds, community management agreements, partnership agreements, and community right-to-buy. Early examples have often been experienced as overly bureaucratic by community participants, but there has been much organisational learning and policy adaptation.

Recommendation: in public forest develop ways to reduce the perceived bureaucracy related to partnership, and enhance impact of consultation.

5.2.3   Policy instruments and incentives

The evidence on effectiveness of particular policy instruments is thin, partly because of the time-lag between innovative schemes and outcomes. In general the evidence from Wales and Scotland suggests that conventional approaches (offering grants through existing institutional channels) are less successful than proactive programmes such as the National Forest Land Scheme supported by challenge funds. Evidence from overseas shows that groups (including associations of landowners) are motivated by business opportunities, for example shared access to technical services or to markets.

In many of the case studies and wider evidence presented here, the initiative came from the community, and the need is therefore less for 'incentives' to get involved, than for support to carry out what the community wants. To understand the appropriate kind of incentives, we need to understand the objectives and motivations of community groups.

Recommendation: invest in support services and build capacity of e.g. Woodland Officers to guide prospective groups through setting objectives and seeking support.
Recommendation: maintain links with developments in Scotland and Wales to monitor impact of NFLS, challenge funds and 'Woodlands and You'.
Recommendation: support development of more business / production based approaches, such as sustainable woodfuel production.

5.2.4   Community organisation and participation

There are many levels and modes of participation, and while our analysis separated consultation, collaboration and empowerment, in effect we found the distinction between them difficult to maintain. The type of participation is most empowering when it suits the objectives of the stakeholders, and these can include the wider public as well as communities. What is empowering to one group (e.g. a particular community) can disempower others (e.g. the wider public) if it excludes them. Whether consultation or community control is appropriate, is therefore a judgement, not an objective fact. Furthermore direct control or responsibility for a woodland is not appealing to all. Again our conclusion is that it is important to maintain the range of approaches, and to support informed choice of modes of participation.

Statutory community consultation on forest design plans, or management plans, has been required in Great Britain for the last two decades and has parallels in many countries. The experiences of citizen advisory committees in Canada can provide examples of more committed engagement, which attempts to include a representative sample of the community and compensates members for their time.

Recommendation: strengthen the role of community consultation by introducing payments to citizen representatives, and strengthening the contribution to decisions (e.g. by adopting elements of Canada's citizen advisory committee model in England).

Representativeness is a common concern in participatory approaches, i.e. whether those acting 'for' the community fairly represent the community. Where communities of place are concerned, these concerns can be addressed by defining the community (and group eligibility) with objective criteria such as postcode – as is the case in the Scottish community right-to-buy.

Recommendation: where representativeness is a concern, consider applying postcode definitions of community.

One objective of engagement is 'empowerment' and this was demonstrated in much but not all of the evidence from the UK. Where communities sought to empower themselves, or where governments or NGOs sought to help empower them, there were two constant factors behind success: control of the finances, and holding the casting vote in decisions. The factor that repeatedly *dis*empowers community groups is often described as 'bureaucracy'. This is experienced as paperwork and time involved in applying for project grants, tree planting grants, land transfer schemes; waiting for outcomes of applications; dealing with insurance, health and safety requirements; and at times, differences of institutional culture and expectation.

Recommendation: disseminate working models for group governance; develop guidance in accessible format; invest in advisory and support services to reduce paperwork and timeframes.

5.2.5   Networks

Given the strong expressed demand for capacity building in financial and project management, community governance processes, fundraising and dealing with bureaucracy administrative, as well as technical advice, the role of community woodland associations is important. The community woodland associations in Scotland and (recently) Wales fulfil an invaluable role in this regard and this model might be considered for England. It is recognised that earlier attempts to stimulate such an association have not originated among the community groups themselves and that a different approach may be needed.

Recommendation: explore the demand for a community woodland association in England, and options for supporting its development.

5.2.6   Learning and development

Community forest governance is not just about forests or forestry. The issues of empowerment, community enterprise, development and regeneration are repeated across many sectors. The common link between community woodlands and community development or regeneration, in the UK at least, and the lack of any tradition of productive management, means that groups consistently express an acute need for advice, support and capacity building in financial and project management, community governance processes, fundraising and dealing with bureaucracy.

Recommendation: improve links between sectors in providing access to advice, support and capacity building for community groups.

The evidence to assess success is limited, and comes mostly from large projects with public funding where there is a formal requirement for evaluation. With smaller projects or individual groups and woodlands, success can most easily be related to continued existence and evolution. Community governance (whether of forests or anything else) is

dynamic, and evolves. Participation cannot be designed as a blueprint; instead participants co-evolve with a participatory process. This evolution is stronger, and the results more adaptive and sustainable, when it is combined with learning processes such as participatory monitoring and evaluation, networking and sharing experiences.

Recommendation: encourage learning by community groups, through participatory monitoring and evaluation, networking and sharing.

5.2.7   Resources

Ownership, group constitution and forest resource are linked to the financial options and constraints experienced by groups. Most communities wishing to buy forest land need financial support. This may be possible through a combination of grants, mechanisms such as conservation easements, sale of shares, or a community enterprise. The scale of finance required is however daunting to most, and has only been achieved at a significant scale in Scotland and Wales with the availability of EU, government and lottery funds.

Recommendation: consider where funding options are available to support change in ownership.

Many community woodland groups function as social enterprises, where profit is reinvested in the community rather than distributed for private benefit, but this is not necessarily the case. In other countries beyond the UK, where the woodland in question provides a marketable resource (timber or firewood) it is possible for communities or landowner groups to operate a profitable business which may or may not be a social enterprise.

Recommendation: link funding options and woodland management to exploration of business options.

In an urban context, the Community Forest model has demonstrated its success over 20 years as a way of increasing (public) landowner investment as well as tackling anti-social behaviour in the urban forests through stable and effective public engagement.

Recommendation: continue to recognise and support the urban Community Forest model.

5.2.8   Knowledge

In many productive community forest models the relevant technical knowledge is provided by a professional forester, commissioned by the group or provided by government. A balance needs to be found between the community's aspirations, the potential for increasing production (and income), and the power that often accompanies

particular kinds of specialist knowledge. In other words there is an important role for forest management knowledge, but this must not override local objectives.

In many overseas cases it is routine (or mandatory) to involve a forester in community woodland management planning. Sometimes the reason to form a group is to improve access to such skills. In other cases such knowledge is present in the community. However there is a risk that by relying on this, ever greater demands are made on volunteers. More commonly, in England, awareness of sources of technical advice is low and community groups identify this as one of their greatest needs.

Recommendation: improve awareness of and access to sources of technical advice by community groups; empower woodland officers to focus on supporting community groups.

5.3   Further research needs

This evidence review has identified a number of innovative options for community woodland management suitable for testing and development in England. The great range of case studies available, and evidence about individual projects combined with scarcity of comparative evidence has also highlighted areas that would benefit from further research. In particular we have noted the lack of evidence about impact, and difficulties with interpretation of 'success' as community groups gain experience and evolve.

Recommendation: Further evidence needs therefore include the following:
- further work to develop a complete database of English community woodlands, objectives, resources and models of community organisation – in a similar way to the evidence available for Wales and Scotland;
- building on the wide range of examples identified through the call for evidence (see appendix 5), a meta-analysis of case studies to identify linkages between institutional context (policy instruments, programmes, advisory support services), community organisation and outcomes;
- a study of attitudes to and demand for woodland ownership (specifically in England);
- a study of attitudes to and demand for a national community woodland association or other forms of technical support;
- action research with innovative groups seeking to manage community woodlands productively, for woodfuel, non-wood products, timber, fencing materials etc. and to explore the interactions between such management and public benefit such as conservation and / or recreation value;
- research into the role(s) of technical knowledge from both within community groups, and accessed beyond the group, in the development and implementation of management plans – exploring the effects on power-sharing, public benefit, income generation etc.;
- case studies of the learning processes and impact of evolving community woodland groups.

Table 6 Options to support community forest governance

Private ownership	Community ownership	Public ownership	Across all ownerships
Support innovative tenure arrangements including: • Landowner associations and joint management groups • Conservation easements / purchasing development rights • Support for management agreements between community groups and landowners	Support innovative tenure arrangements including: • Share issues • Leaseholds • Community right to buy • Conservation easements	Consultation, and partnership, are well-established in GB public forest management. Additional options include: • Community management agreements • Partnership agreements • Leaseholds • Citizen advisory committees • Local government ownership Build on wealth of existing experience and organisation in England, including Community Forests, Local Authorities and relevant NGOs.	Support for diverse tenure arrangements. Investment in advisory services developing role of Woodland Officers to support community woodland groups. Dissemination of information and models in a format accessible to community woodlands groups. Sustainable demand-led development of network or association for community woodland groups. Medium to long-term support to allow for evolution of groups: from small/informal to formal/larger Support for social enterprise and other business models, with due consideration to: • development of products and markets based on sustainable forest management • business models based on purchase of professional forest management skills.

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6   Appendix 1. Methods used in this evidence review

6.1   Rationale

Evidence was defined as published data and analysis, available in academic and other journals, on-line, and through reports (for example consultancy or evaluation reports). Evidence is not the same as expert opinion, and in this context relies on a degree of objectivity.

However there is clearly a difficulty in this case because the aim of the review was to describe the range of options available. Description of an option is not an evaluation, and not 'evidence' in the strictest sense. Given the time limitations we therefore restricted evidence to the following:

- For the description of **models:** work which had already aimed to describe a range of models, and analyse them. It was beyond the scope of this report to provide a new analysis across all the studies available of individual models.
- For the analysis of **impact**: studies based on collection of evaluation data using a clear, unbiased and replicable method.
- For the presentation of **case studies:** a combination of all available information, taking into account possible reservations about objectivity. To find the depth of information required for each case study we had to look beyond the published academic literature and include project websites and internal project documents. Where we could establish contact with a key individual we sought their feedback on the case study text. This provided clarity on key facts and at times this personal communication offered further evidence on the case study.

There have been a number of studies of community ownership and assets recently which are publicly available (e.g. Aiken, Cairns, and Thake 2009, Slee and Moxey 2008). In the very limited time available for this study, we have limited our focus to work that relates to forests and woodlands.

6.2   Sources

Evidence was sought through two principle routes:
- a 'call for evidence' using the text indicated in box 1, which was sent to relevant contacts by email. 48 people responded and provided 39 documents. These contacts, and the evidence provided, are listed in Appendix 3.
- On-line bibliographic searches, using Scopus, Web of Science and Google Scholar, based on a combination of search terms indicated in box 2.

Box 1. Text of email circulated to invite contributions to Evidence Review

Forest Research has been asked by the Independent Panel on Forestry to review the evidence relating to community engagement in woodlands, to inform the Independent Forestry Panel in reaching their conclusions and to complement the tremendous response to the Panel's call for views and other research activities. You can find out more about the work of the Panel on their web pages at http://www.defra.gov.uk/forestrypanel/

The IFP have asked us to look at these two topics, alongside a comparison of how other countries approach forestry policy:

- Access: opportunities, barriers, perceptions and experiences of woodland / forest access from the perspective of woodland users, owners, managers, neighbours

- Governance: the motives, processes, experiences and / or outcomes of community engagement in any level of decision-making about woodland use and management (including models for ownership).

We would like to ensure that this review is as comprehensive as possible. We aim to take account of reports, theses and other material that may not be available through the standard on-line bibliographic search tools. In relation to the above two topics we are also particularly interested in any evaluations of projects/programme/interventions that aim to improve access or governance processes.

Eligible evidence will include a description of aim, method, data sources, findings and conclusions.

Box 2: search terms used in bibliographic searches

Forest* AND governance
Community forest AND governance
Community engagement AND forest*
Participat* AND forest AND management
Joint forest management
Forest AND owner*
Forest AND commons

7 Appendix 2. Background

7.1 Development of community forestry

The increasing role of local people in both forest ownership and forest decision-making has been well documented as a movement that has grown first in developing countries and more recently in industrialised countries (Charnley and Poe 2007, Lawrence 2007).

One such focus is 'community forestry', which refers to forest management that has ecological sustainability and local community benefits as central goals, with some degree of responsibility and authority for forest management formally vested in the community (Charnley and Poe 2007). The focus (reflected by many other authors) is on the community rather than the forest alone. The terminology of 'participatory forest management' (PFM) is also used, to focus attention to the processes of decision-making about the forest. One review concluded that motivations for a move towards PFM can include (Lawrence 2007):

- Reaction to failure of state forest management to maintain forest in good condition - a common basis for state-led PFM.
- Desire for historical justice, social justice, or poverty alleviation
- Resolution of conflict resulting from such injustices
- Neoliberal and donor-driven support for structural adjustment including decentralisation of governance (in both North America and in post-socialist donor-funded contexts). (McCarthy 2005, Verdery 2003)
- Focus for community regeneration in post-industrial contexts including Scotland, England and the USA (Kitchen, Marsden, and Milbourne 2006, Mackenzie et al. 2004, McCarthy 2005, Robbins and Fraser 2003)

The rural livelihood benefits are not however exclusive to developing countries (Jeanrenaud 2001, Wilson 2006).

From this brief summary we note that participation and community are sometimes, but not always, connected with power shifts and local benefit; sometimes, but not always, connected with decisions about forest management; and sometimes, but not always, connected with ownership.

In the next section we consider the connections with ownership more fully, and in the section after that we consider the term 'governance'.

7.2   Forest tenure and ownership

7.2.1   Relevance of ownership

Globally, community forestry can be associated with forest land in a wide range of ownership contexts, including private forest lands, common property, indigenous peoples' lands or public lands (Charnley and Poe 2007).

Tree and forest tenure has been a detailed subset of social forestry studies for decades, and has sought to analyse tenure (more widely than ownership) as a complex 'bundle of rights'. Rights to access, enjoy or exploit forest are socially constructed, and their local perception and *de facto* application may differ from their existence in law. This conclusion while commonly applied to developing countries is clearly demonstrated in economically developed countries, for example in the case of commons in England (Short 2000, Short and Winter 1999).

The complexity of tenure in the wider social and political context can be summarised as:

> *Empowerment does not come from titling alone, and titling does not ensure the capacity to benefit from forest resources, but requires a lot of additional support.* (FAO 2011)

Three influential authors concluded in a paper in Science, 2008 entitled 'Changing governance of the world's forests':

> *Although a majority of forests continue to be owned formally by governments, the effectiveness of forest governance is increasingly independent of formal ownership. … A greater role for community and market actors in forest governance and deeper attention to the factors that lead to effective governance, beyond ownership patterns, is necessary to address future forest governance challenges.* (Agrawal, Chhatre, and Hardin 2008)

From this literature we would highlight that:
1. community participation is not equivalent to community ownership
2. it is possible for communities to have considerable power in forest decision making, without owning the forest
3. it is also possible for communities to have very little power, whilst owning the forest.

7.2.2   Who are the owners?

The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation publishes a report on forest ownership, at five-yearly intervals. The most recent indicates that, taken as an average across the globe, both community and private ownership are increasing. A combination of FAO and Forestry Commission sources indicates

- Globally, 80% of forest is publicly owned.
- In Europe, which has the lowest proportion of publicly owned forest of any subregion, 43% of forest is publicly owned.
- In Great Britain, 40% is publicly owned (including 35% by the Forestry Commission and 3% by local authorities).
- In England, 30% is publicly owned (including 22% by the Forestry Commission and 6% by local authorities).

Data on community ownership in the UK is confused by lack of full registration (Short 2008), and by mixing of categories. The latest statistics on woodland ownership, dating from the National Inventory of Woods and Trees 1995-99 (currently being updated through the National Forest Inventory) combines 'community ownership or common land' and indicates less than 0.4% of woodland in England which falls into this category (Forestry Commission 2011).

7.3   Forest governance

7.3.1   Definitions and usage

The term 'governance' has come into widespread usage in the last 10 years and refers to the structures and processes whereby policy is made and implemented. As noted above we start from a simple definition of governance as:

> 'the institutions, organisations, instruments and processes involved in making and implementing policy'

However the term is used in two quite distinct ways:
- In contrast to 'government', implying a network of distributed and interacting points of power
- In a more neutral and descriptive way, to refer to all the different approaches to decision-making.

It is helpful to take the second approach in an analysis which does not seek to prejudge the outcome. In this report therefore we include all constellations of stakeholders, organisations and processes that lead to policy-making and implementation.

7.3.2   Trends in forest governance

Much of the literature on forest governance refers to international agreements, certification and climate change. It is only recently that this terminology has been applied to community forestry. There are however other trends which are relevant to the discussion.

There is a global trend to decentralise or devolve environmental governance, perhaps *particularly* forest governance (Andersson, Gibson, and Lehoucq 2006, Nygren 2005, Parkins 2006, Sabban 1997). This takes different forms, for example (Parkins 2006):

- Establishing advisory committees whereby citizens (usually local) can contribute to forest policy making
- Similar committees sponsored by the private sector, where forest companies manage forest on public land
- Non-state market-driven governance – i.e. certification - again a shift to the private sector. The role of the public or community in such processes is variable.

Donors and development think-tanks have portrayed forests as valuable laboratories for new forms of governance because they are seen to typify issues of multiple stakeholders, public interest, potential for high income, dependency of the poorest (Brown et al. 2002, Mayers and Vermeulen 2002).

As discussed above, like the broader term 'participation', governance shifts can be introduced as an end in themselves, or because they are expected to bring about more equitable outcomes. This distinction has been described as the benefit-sharing paradigm and the power-sharing paradigm (Wily and Mbaya 2001).

7.3.3   Dimensions of community forest governance

In order to describe models it is helpful to analyse the dimensions, or variables. There are of course numerous starting points for doing this. Here we draw on two that work in a complementary way to describe the detail of individual cases, and to relate such cases to a dynamic spatial and temporal context.

The first of these is the substantial literature that analyses what are collectively known as 'common property regimes'. In the field of new institutional economics led by Nobel-prize-winner Elinor Ostrom, this approach summarises the factors widely found to support successful common property management (table 4). This approach is most usefully applied at the scale of an individual case (forest or community).

Table 4: Design principles illustrated by long-enduring common-pool resource institutions adapted from (Ostrom 1990, Ostrom 2002) and C. Schurr (pers. comm.)

Factors which support common property management	Factors which undermine common property management
• *clearly defined boundaries*	• *blue print thinking*
• *rules matched to local needs and conditions*	• *overreliance on simple voting rules*
• *collective-choice arrangements*	• *rapid exogenous changes*
• *effective monitoring of rules*	• *transmission failures*
• *graduated sanctions*	• *external help too frequently*
• *low cost conflict-resolution mechanisms*	• *ignoring indigenous knowledge & institutions*
• *recognition of rights by external*	• *corruption & opportunistic behaviour*

authorities	
• *nested enterprises*	• *lack of large scale supportive institutions*

These criteria have been tested by a very large number of studies. Some of the most authoritative reviews note the value of combining large datasets with in-depth case studies. These provide breadth plus depth, thereby helping to understand common factors, as well as the role of context (e.g. Agrawal and Chhatre 2006).

The second approach steps back from the case specific analysis. The 'policy arrangements approach' represents a dynamic interaction between actors and their coalitions, resources (including power and influence), rules of the game (including law, and formal procedures), and discourse (Arts, Leroy, and van Tatenhove 2006, Arts and Tatenhove 2004). This is summarised in figure 2.

Figure 2: key components of policy arrangements approach
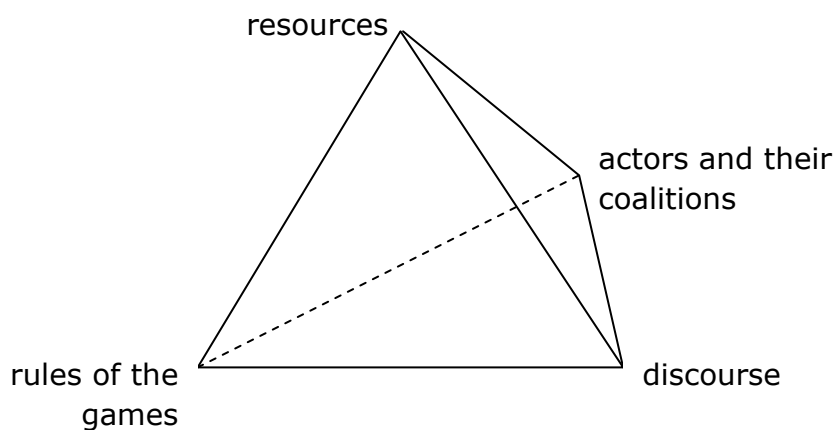
For example in thinking about community woodlands:
- o **resources** could include land and the forest on that land, money or access to funding, power to influence change in ownership, knowledge about forest management;
- o **actors** could include politicians, landowners, forest user cooperatives, schools;
- o **rules of the game** could include land ownership and inheritance law; forest harvesting regulations;
- o **discourse** could include political debates about renewable energy, media outrage at perceived injustice, or growing social demand for access to nature.

7.3.4   Dynamics and learning as integral to community forest governance

The policy arrangements approach indicates that governance results from the dynamic tension between people, institutions, resources and context. This idea of dynamic evolution has been elaborated in various reviews of community forestry.

Lawrence (2007) took as the starting point frequent references to 'second generation' community forestry, and analysed the development of participatory forest management as 'three generations'. Based on a review of 195 papers about community forestry from all six continents, this analysis found that success requires:

- supportive policy, and implementation;
- social and institutional arrangements;
- appropriate silviculture and monitoring;
- participatory methods to include people and develop appropriate silviculture;
- partnership, organisational learning, and adaptiveness across a range of spatial scales and cultural perspectives.

Community forestry is not (and cannot be) designed as a perfect model from the start, but instead grows through the experience of those involved. This is an essential conclusion that is difficult for policy makers to take on board: participation develops. Probably for this reason, the review showed a widespread pattern of moving through 'three generations':

1. attention to structural factors such as tenure and formal roles and relationships
2. addressing social concerns around diversity and inequity
3. a more qualitative, actor-centred approach to learning and adaptation.

McDermott (2009b) similarly likens the development of a community-based forest initiative to the floors of a house 'in which expanded resource access and decision-space provides the foundation.' In her case studies she finds that rights of access and decision-making often constitute the first floor, on which ecology, economics and equity may then be built.

Reviews informed by a wealth of experience in Scotland illustrate this with examples close to home. They point out that community woodlands arise less through policy change and more through the process of local initiative and grassroots radical change, although there is of course an interactive relationship between local initiative and government policy (Community Woodland Association 2010a, Ritchie and Haggith 2005). Both contexts and groups change, and individual groups evolve through experience and capacity (Community Woodland Association 2010a).

These analyses have a key messages: community woodlands develop as a dynamic interaction between local conditions and wider context. This implicitly requires learning. In a review paper focused specifically on learning, Cheng and colleagues (2011) find that community based forest groups are engaged in a wide variety of social and policy learning. Such learning primarily focuses on operational-level governance - while policy learning and change at the collective- and constitutional-choice levels is scarcer and more resource intensive.

8   Appendix 3. Case studies

Important note: the case studies are selected based on available evidence, and are not necessarily those considered to be 'successful'.

The cases selected are those for which there was enough evidence to be able to describe most of the dimensions in the framework.

In these case studies we use the framework to summarise the *available* evidence. These are <u>not new research</u> but attempts to collate what is known, in a structured way that makes them easier to learn from.

8.1   Vermont Family Forests, Vermont, USA
Focus on Little Hogback Community Forest

Type: private shareholder / empowering

What is it?

A non-profit conservation organisation (Vermont Family Forests) sought to establish a community-owned woodland and secured funding to enable local people, of varying incomes, to purchase plots. Through a coordinator, the 16 shareholders were supported to form a cohesive group capable of overseeing the management of the woodland.

Points of interest:
- The Little Hogback Community Forest (LHCF) has been described as 'a new model for cooperative forest ownership that preserves forest health and offers economic returns on an affordable, living investment' [1].
- Sixteen individuals hold shares in the forest costing less than US$3000 each.
- A unique feature of this project is that equity considerations were built into projects' agenda from the outset. A donation and conservation easement, as well as an 'affordability covenant' (described below) made it possible to sell the shares of land at an affordable price.

Background:

The parent organisation 'Vermont Family Forests' (VFF) began as a grassroots effort in 1995, when David Brynn, then Addison County Forester, collaborated with the Lewis Creek Association to offer workshops on elements of careful forest stewardship. In 1997, VFF identified 32 forest landowners, with about 5,000 acres to form a pool of well-managed family-owned forests. VFF applied for a grant through the Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund to become certified through the Forest Stewardship Council [3].

The LHCF began with a Vermont Family forest employee, Deb Brighton, seeking a grant from the Ford Foundation for an equitable community forest project. LCHF was formed in 2007. There are now six community woodlands linked to VFF though they do not all follow the same model as the LHCF.

How it works:

The Vermont Land Trust (VLT) holds a conservation easement on the land of the LHCF that protects it from development and requires that it is managed sustainably. The VLT is a member-supported, non-profit land conservation organization providing technical and legal assistance to individuals, communities, and local land trusts including VFF. In addition the land is enrolled in Vermont's Use Value Appraisal Program whereby taxes on the land are based on its forestry value, not its development value.

The money from all the shares sold in LHCF was enough to buy the rights to the land, to cover closing costs and taxes, and to set aside a small amount in a 'Management

Reserve Fund.' Management of the woodland follows a plan jointly approved by the LHCF company, VFF and VLT. Management activities are largely done through a professional forester.

Impact:
Every year, the VLT conducts a site visit to examine compliance with the conservation easement they hold on the property. The Addison County Forester from the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation is required to visit about once every five years to examine compliance with the Use Value Forest Management Plan.

Transferability:
A key factor in the success of this project was a generous grant from an individual that made it possible to offer the ownership shares at an affordable price. In addition the Inland Revenue Service of the US granted tax-exempt status to the Community Forests Project.

Profile	
1. Institutional context	
1.1 Ownership	There are sixteen individual shareholders who own a share in the LHCF Limited Liability Company rather than a tract of land. Each shareholder receives returns from the various products of the forest. The sixteen shares cost less than $3000 each.
1.2 Access and use rights	The LHCF company members hold the rights to manage and use the land, including rights to cut firewood, harvest timber, hike, hunt, and camp.
1.3 Regulations / statutory responsibilities	The Vermont Land Trust holds a conservation easement that prohibits subdivision and development and requires a certain standard of forest management. The Use Value Forest Management Plan requires that the land is managed for forestry purposes only. The land is bound by an 'affordability covenant'. Should any of the shares come up for sale, VFF has the right to purchase them at the appraised forest value, ensuring that they can be re-sold affordably to Vermonters who might not otherwise be able to afford forestland.
2. Internal organisation	
2.1 Community members	Shares in the LCHF were made available to Vermont residents. Half of the shares are reserved for community members whose incomes are below the county median. VFF set up a revolving loan fund to help lower-income community members with their investment.
2.2 Structure / legal status /	LHCF is a Limited Liability Company. Vermont Family Forests is a non-profit family forest conservation

financial structures	organization.
2.3 Representation	There is no profile of the actual shareholders, though given the equity concerns of the project it can be assumed that shareholders come from a wide range of social economic groupings.
2.4 Participation in decision making	At the start of the project the shareholders met frequently to decide on collective issues. It was their aim to make decisions by consensus.
2.5 Communication and learning processes	The shareholders kept an on-line journal for the first year of the project but this has not been maintained.
2.6 Forest management objectives and planning procedures	The land is managed according to a long-term management plan jointly approved by the LLC, the VLT and VFF. This plan adheres to Vermont Family Forests' (VFF) principles, and is carried out under the direction of a forester. VFF staff visits at once per year on average to mark additional firewood and to examine compliance with the plan with VLT. It is anticipated that VFF will coordinate the inventory and planning for the 2014 update.
2.7 Business models	An additional contribution from a sponsor lowered the price of shares to one that should provide a modest rate of return from the land under careful management. A covenant allows VFF to repurchase the land, if it is ever offered for sale, at a price that could similarly yield a return. This makes the parcel perpetually affordable to community members who need a return on their investment. [1] The shareholders plan to convert some of the logs from the land into VFF/VLT flooring so that the project can maximize the return to shareholders.
2.8 Benefit distribution rules	The last commercial timber sale was conducted in 2005. Proceeds went back into the Management Reserve Fund. This account is used to pay for property taxes, insurance and management of the parcel as originally planned. When there is revenue to be distributed to members, it will be divided evenly between shares. Since 2005 LHCF shareholders have purchased and cut firewood in 3-cord lots. Twenty-six lots have been sold. The shareholders pay the cost of the marking and paint but do not pay stumpage for the firewood.

	Every year the shareholders cut and split a cord or so of firewood to donate (anonymously) to a family in need.
3. External linkages	
3.1 Partnerships and agreements	Vermont Family Forests has partnered with the Vermont Land Trust, the Ford Foundation, and the National Wildlife Federation.
3.2 Associations	
4. Resources	
4.1 Forest	LHCF is a 46.5ha parcel. On the land there are red oak (*Quercus rubra*) and hard maple (Acer *saccharum*) trees.
4.2 Funding sources	Two main donations made the project possible: • A grant from the Ford Foundation for a community-based forestry demonstration project • A personal donation to Vermont Land Trust made the sale of shares affordable
4.3 Knowledge	Vermont Land Trust runs training courses in forest skills. In February 2011 VFF launched Hogback Community College that aims to 'celebrate and sustain our community through offering a diverse, changing array of useful and attractive courses' [3].

Sources

1.   Cooperative Conservation America (2011) Website with case study on *Vermont Family Forests Community Forests Project*.
http://www.cooperativeconservation.org/viewproject.asp?pid=354 (accessed 13.11.11)

2.   Vermont Land Trust (2008) *Little Hogback Community Forest: Making Forestland Possible for All.* Vermont Land Trust 2007-8 annual report*, pp. 26-7

3.   Vermont Family Forests (2011) *Vermont Family Forests Website.*
http://www.familyforests.org/ (accessed 3.1.12)

4.   O'Brien, E (2003) *Public and institutional perspectives on forests and trees:a view from Vermont.* Forestry Commission; Surrey.

8.2   Randolph Community Forest, New Hampshire, USA

Type: public local / empowering

What is it?
The large forest area surrounding the town of Randolph came up for sale as the timber company's interests moved elsewhere. Active town members saw an opportunity for the town to regain control over its natural surroundings and the money was raised to purchase the forest on behalf of the town. The town owns the land subject to a conservation easement held by the State. This easement sets requirements for a certain standard of sustainable management of the forest.

Points of interest:
- The Randolph Community forest, with 4,047 ha, is described as 'community forestry on an unprecedented scale' [1].
- The USA Government's Forest Legacy Program provided a grant that enabled the town to purchase the conservation easement for the land.
- Taking over ownership of the surrounding forest required a new state statute to legalize the structures of town ownership and management.
- The move to community ownership was significant in the context of general shifts in land ownership as 'decision-making about the forest was getting farther and farther away from town' [1].

Background:
Randolph is a town with less than 300 year round residents. Sandwiched between two stretches of White Mountain National Forest, the land around the town has been commercially managed for timber harvesting for over 100 years. Town interest in the forest was triggered when the company owning the land submitted an application to enrol its local landholdings in the federally funded Forest Legacy Program. The town supported this move, as it would protect the land from development pressure and retain its valuable recreational role. However, in 1998 a severe ice-storm caused widespread destruction with nearly three-quarters of the trees losing their crowns. The land-owning company surveyed the forest, cut what timber remained, and decided to sell the land outright. The US Trust for Public Land bought the entire tract, ready to sell on to another company with a conservation easement. At this point the local community saw an opportunity to bring control of the land into local hands.

How it works:
The town was only able to purchase the land and the conservation easement through the support of the US Forest Legacy Program. This was established in 1990 to provide up to 75% of the cost of the conservation easement and a grant was provided to Randolph. There was still $1.8 million to be raised for the underlying fee and this was met through a series of grants, charitable donations and $600,000 from within the community.

The management of the forest is integrated into the town governance structures. A town Forestry Commission manage the forest and report to the Planning Board of the town. In the words of a long-term summer resident and board member 'this is really an effort to keep the forest under local control. We want to protect the historic recreational uses. We want to make a contribution to the wood products industry. We want this land to be preserved and properly managed as a working resource in the North Country' [1].

Following Forest Legacy Program guidelines, the management objectives were threefold:
1. Traditional outdoor recreation
2. Environmental protection
3. Responsible timber harvesting [2].

Impact:
The Randolph Community forest has not been formally evaluated as far as we are aware, but the process of taking over ownership has been documented in a book chapter [2] and is starting to come to the attention of the academic community [1].

'To most townspeople, the real values of the community forest lie in the recreational opportunities it provides and the ecological protections it affords. If those values can be preserved without creating a burden on the taxpayers of the town, the aims with which the Planning Board started the project will have been achieved' [2].

Transferability:
Wilcox describes as 'lucky' the combination of events that gave rise to the creation of the Randolph Community Forest: the company's willingness to sell, people with skills necessary for advocating the venture to a wider community, and the strength of the economy at the time of fundraising [1]. The aims of the project were deliberately kept broad and inclusive so that 'they would speak to all segments of the community' [2].

Profile	
1. Institutional context	
1.1 Ownership	Randolph town owns the land.
1.2 Access and use rights	The public has recreational access to the forest. The town has timber rights. Development rights are limited by the conservation easement (see 1.3).
1.3 Regulations / statutory responsibilities	The State of New Hampshire holds a conservation easement outlining forest management practices. 'An easement involves the exchange of one or more rights from the landowner to someone who does not own the land. Easements have been used for years to provide governments, utilities, and extractive industries with certain property rights. An easement

	permits the holder certain rights regarding the land for specified purposes while the ownership of the land remains with the private property owner' [2].
2. Internal organisation	
2.1 Community members	All townspeople of Randolph are considered to be members of the community. This includes permanent residents and the large numbers of seasonal residents.
2.2 Structure / legal status / financial structures	A town Forestry Commission manages the community forest. They in turn report to the Planning Board. This is unusual in New Hampshire where towns are governed by a Board of Selectmen. This Board of Selectmen is composed of residents who are elected to serve specific terms. A special Act was passed by the state legislature to give overall supervisory authority for the forest to the Planning Board, not the Selectmen. The Planning Board is an elected body and the Selectmen are represented on it. The Forest Commission has five members: one from the Conservation Commission, one from the Planning Board and three appointed by the Board of Selectmen. 'The management system devised for the Randolph Community Forest, something of a departure from the model laid out for town forests in state law, was designed in part to enable interested people and organizations from out of town to have a voice when decisions are made concerning the land' [2].
2.3 Representation	The surrounding community has a large constituency of second home owners with 500 or so summer residents compared with 300 year round residents. The case study indicates that both groups supported the venture.
2.4 Participation in decision making	By state statute, the Planning Board is authorized and required to hold public hearings before it makes decisions and those requirements are extended by the ordinance to forest affairs.
2.5 Communication and learning processes	Community consultation is largely done through public meetings and the annual town meeting.
2.6 Forest management	High priorities for the town include support for traditional wood product industries, and preserving and expanding recreational

objectives and planning procedures	use. There is an emphasis on long-rotation hardwoods and saw log production instead of pulpwood.
2.7 Business models	The support of the community was founded on the commitment that the project would not add to the local tax burden. Due to the destruction by ice and salvage logging it will be a long time before the town will benefit financially from timber harvesting.
2.8 Benefit distribution rules	Any income is stored in a fund to be reinvested in the management of the community forest, unless there is a surplus and the Planning Board approves a transfer of funds to the town general account. An annual budget, drawn up by the Forest Commission, is approved by the Planning Board at a public hearing.
3. External linkages	
3.1 Partnerships and agreements	There is no evidence of formal partnerships or agreements.
3.2 Associations	In the early stages of negotiating the ownership of the forest, the neighbouring town was involved with Randolph but decided not to join full ownership.
4. Resources	
4.1 Forest	The forest is coniferous, covering 4,047 ha. This forest area was formerly industrial forestland and nearly all logged over at one time or another during the last century. The forest is very degraded following the ice storm of 1998 and the salvage logging of the previous owner.
4.2 Funding sources	$1.8 million was raised to purchase the forest. The price was reduced through the purchase of a conservation easement by New Hampshire state through the Forest Legacy Program. • $800,000 came from regional and national charitable organizations. • $250,000 from a state land conservation funding program, The Land and Community Heritage Program (LCHIP). • $600,000 was raised from some 200 individual donors. 'There were few large donations, but many smaller ones, with some families listing gifts in the names of their children' [2].
4.3 Knowledge	There is a town forester.

Sources

1.   Nickens, T.E (2001) *A Northern Forest Fairy Tale - Randolph, New Hampshire, buys 10,000 acres of White Mountains forest to preserve it*. American Forests, Summer 2001.

2.   Willcox, D (2005) *The story of the Randolph Community Forest: Building on local stewardship*. In: Child, B.C. and Lyman, M.W. Natural Resources as Community Assets: Lessons from Two Continents, pp. 51-82.

8.3   Local Citizens Committees, Ontario, Canada
Focus on Timmins Local Citizens Committee

Type: private commercial / consultative

What is it?
In Ontario forest management is required by legislation to use a multi-level stakeholder participation process. At the lowest level Local Citizens Committees (LCC) are formalized to give a voice to the needs of residents. Participation is voluntary but members are compensated for their time.

Points of interest:
- Ontario's LCCs are the oldest local multi-stakeholder platforms in Canada dating back to 1994 [2].
- It is a legal requirement in Ontario that advisory committees are a part of the provincial infrastructure for providing direction and advice on forest policy and forest management [1].

Background:
Ontario has over 71 million ha of forest, 90% percent of this is owned by the province of Ontario and called 'Crown forests'. Timber companies can apply to manage the Crown forest through a Sustainable Forest Licence that is set for up to twenty years and reviewed every five years. Through this the company is responsible for managing the land in accordance with The Crown Forest Sustainability Act (1994) and the Environmental Assessment Act (1992). These acts also stipulate that formal involvement of various stakeholder groups within forest management decision-making is a legal requirement.

How it works:
The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) oversees and regulates forest management planning in the province. A multi-stakeholder platform approach has been adopted with three levels of stakeholder committees reporting to the MNR:

1. **Provincial advisory committees**: two technical committees advise on forest policy and ensure that 'the best available science is incorporated' [2].
2. **Regional advisory committees:** representing a range of regional concerns these committees advise the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) Regional Director. These committees are intended to provide a link between the MNR and the local citizens committees.
3. **Local citizens committees:** made up of people who live and work in a particular area, these committees are appointed to assist in the process of preparing forest management plans across the Ministry of Natural Resources forest management planning area; as such 'they are provided with on-going opportunities for review,

comment and input during forest management plan preparation and implementation' [9].

We focus on Timmins LCC in North-eastern Ontario. This LCC is involved with two forests; we focus on one that has been well documented, the Romeo Malette forest legally known as Sustainable Forest Licence (SFL) 550398.

There are presently more than 40 LCCs in Northern Ontario and we are not in a position to judge whether the Timmins LCC is typical. It is one of the few LCCs with its own website.

Impact:
In 2008 an independent consultancy company conducted an audit of the Romeo Malette forest, including the planning process. 'During the site visit, the audit team interviewed members of the Romeo Malette Forest LCC, and members of the LCC were invited to participate on the field site visits. Overall, most LCC members felt the LCC was effective and that members were able to make a significant contribution to the forest management planning process' [3].

'The diversity of stakeholders on the LCC is also a benefit. It allows a cross-pollination of ideas and allows the LCC to expand its scope to discuss issues such as mining and other land uses' [3]. This same report points out however, that the forest management planning process did not have sufficient time to discuss these wider issues.

Transferability:
This model relies on government support to institute a multi-level stakeholder process and make it a statutory obligation. Without this it is difficult for local stakeholder groups to gain access to the decision making of private corporations.

Profile	
1. Institutional context	
1.1 Ownership	The Romeo Malette forest is Crown land leased to Tembec Industries Inc under a Sustainable Forest Licence.
1.2 Access and use rights	Harvesting operations are conducted by contractors working for Tembec Industries Inc.
1.3 Regulations / statutory responsibilities	Ontario MNR produces a Forest Management planning manual for Ontario's Crown Lands that outlines requirements for public consultation. The process includes formal stages of consultation, along with opportunities to interact with the planning team and local citizens committee. The Timmins LCC is mandated to provide advice to the District Manager: • To aid in the creation of practical strategies for integrated management of the ecosystem;

	• To review concerns expressed by local citizens/interest groups on management issues as they arise; • To provide a forum for the discussion of management issues and areas of concern; • To improve the participation of the 'general' public in forest management planning [5]
2. Internal organisation	
2.1 Community members	The LCC members are intended to represent the different interest groups of the local community. Any other stakeholder in the Timmins area that has expressed interest in the Timmins Forest Region may request to join. All potential members have to be approved by the district manager. The LCC members elect a chairperson and a representative to sit on the on the forest management planning teams.
2.2 Structure / legal status / financial structures	The LCC is a voluntary group. The LCC members elect an annual chair and have a secretary.
2.3 Representation	It is not clear if First Nations people are involved in the LCC and, more generally, whether the flexible structures for including these groups are successful. 'LCCs are intended to improve and not replace participation by the general public and native communities who also have opportunities for ongoing participation through a parallel five-stage public consultation process' [2]. 'Local advisory committees often struggle to maintain a diverse base of local representatives— with frequent gaps in representation from conservation groups, Aboriginal communities, and a lack of involvement by women' [7].
2.4 Participation in decision making	Timmins LCC meets every 3 months. The LCC representatives sit in on the planning meetings to develop the forest management plan. 'The members of the LCC will strive for consensus in making informed recommendations to the District Manager. If the LCC should fail to reach a consensus, a majority of the LCC members may agree to a recommendation' [5]. Each local interest group represented on the LCC has one vote.
2.5 Communication and learning processes	'The Ministry shall provide information to the LCC on all aspects of management of the Timmins District-Porcupine administrative area in a timely manner' [5]. The forest auditors record that 'at the end of each LCC meeting, participants would assess their satisfaction with the meeting. This

	evaluation of meetings shows an innovative approach to ensuring member participation' [3]. The Timmins LCC participates in two forests. The independent forest audit notes that 'while this creates extra work, it also allows the LCC members to broaden their experience and share knowledge and capacity between the two forests' [3].
2.6 Forest management objectives and planning procedures	A ten-year forest management plan is prepared by a registered professional forester with the assistance of a multi-disciplinary planning team. 'During plan preparation, LCCs nominate a member to represent themselves on the planning team and joint meetings of the plan author and LCC are held at agreed upon stages of the planning process. LCCs also assist in monitoring plan implementation and provide advice to district managers if amendments to forest management plans are required' [2]. LCCs begin advising on the preparation of a plan 27 months prior to renewal [2].
2.7 Business models	n/a
2.8 Benefit distribution rules	All LCC members are volunteers. The Timmins LCC website records the number of volunteer hours. Since 2002 this is 6271 with an average of 260 in the last 2 years. The MNR reimburses members of the LCC for reasonable out-of-pocket expenses in connection with their participation. The LCC member serving on the planning team is provided a reasonable per diem fee for attendance at planning team meetings [5]. In addition MNR pay for the expenses of a secretary for the LCC.
3. External linkages	
3.1 Partnerships and agreements	The MNR supports the LCC 'morally and financially as well as administratively' [8].
3.2 Associations	'There is very little networking between LCCs aside from an annual workshop of North-Eastern LCCs, organised by MNR, … I believe an association of LCCs or a Council of Chairs of LCCs could coordinate and improve educational capabilities of LCCs and also be a voice for Northern Ontario in matters of forestry' [8].
4. Resources	
4.1 Forest	Ontario forests are composed of 26% broadleaves, 57% conifer,

	17% mixed. Timmins LCC is involved with 2 forests in its vicinity: the Romeo Malette Forest and the Abitibi River Forest. The Romeo Malette Forest was established in 1983. It is made up of 622,000 ha of coniferous woodland of which 474,772 ha are crown-managed land.
4.2 Funding sources	Beyond the reimbursements made by the MNR for travel and time there is no additional funding for LCCs.
4.3 Knowledge	Professional foresters are employed to assist with the forest management plan. The independent audit of the Romeo Malette forest found that 'the information presented at the Information Centres in Timmins was very detailed. Some LCC members and stakeholders commented on the difficulty of understanding some information due to the extremely technical nature of the material' [3].

Sources:

1.   Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (2011) Website avaliable at http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business/Forests/index.html

2.   Robson, M. and L.M. Hunt (2010) *Evaluating local multi-stakeholder platforms in forest management in Ontario.* The Forestry Chronicle, **86**(6): 742-752.

3.   KBM Forestry Consultants (2008) *Romeo Malette Forest Independent forest Audit 2002-2007.* Queens Printers, Ontario.

4.   Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (2006) *Help shape the future of our forests. - Get Involved in Ontario's Forest Management Planning Process* http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business/Forests/Publication/index.html (downloaded on 27.11.11)

5.   Timmins Local Citizen Committee (2010) *Terms of Reference.* http://www.timminslcc.org/index.html (downloaded on 27.11.11)

7.   Robson, M. and J.R. Parkins (2010) *Taking the pulse of civic engagement in forest management.* Forestry Chronicle, 2010. **86**(6): 692-696.

8.   Corbeil, L., *Local Citizens Committee Network for Northern Ontario.* http://www.hearst.ca/docs_upload/documents/zone1/langue1/BES/LCC_Network_ for_Northern_Ontario.pdf (downloaded on 27.11.11)

8.4   Participatory monitoring, Colorado, USA
Focus on Public Lands Partnership

Type: public national / consultative

What is it?
Volunteer groups engage community members in monitoring local wildlife areas, contributing to the knowledge base and increasing their ability to influence management decisions by public agencies. In the Burn Canyon project, the group gathered data on the ecological impact of salvage timber sales on the local State forest.

Points of interest:
- A 'bottom up' initiative driven from inside the community [1].
- It 'provides a table of trust where diverse interests can come together and learn from each other, so that public land decisions can be made that take into account all perspectives and all stakeholders' [3].
- The group has used information gathering to empower itself and change its role in public land decisions.

Background:
Community-based forestry organisations (CBFO) have emerged in the USA in the past two decades, it is suggested in response to cuts in government-sponsored monitoring programmes. The CBFOs 'complement, strengthen and sometimes replace the roles of government forestry agencies where decreasing staff and funding have led to a loss of management capacity' [1]. In addition there has been a growing desire on the part of citizens to participate in management decisions that affect them.

How it works:
The Public Lands Partnership (PLP) came together in 1992. It describes itself as 'a loose organization of people, businesses, local governments, and land management agencies. The PLP strives to be a catalyst, promoting public education and awareness of economic and environmental issues related to public lands, and to provide a local forum for airing different sides of natural resource issues' [3].

The PLP benefitted from the Community-based Forestry demonstration program funded by the Ford Foundation. This program funded 13 CBF groups with the aim of effecting positive social, economic, and ecological change through forest stewardship. As well as awarding grants the CBF demonstration program included technical assistance from the Aspen Institute, and a research team [2].
The Ford Foundation funding helped the PLP facilitate the Burn Canyon long-term monitoring project. In 2002, after a wildfire scorched over 50,000 acres of oak and ponderosa pine woodlands the United States Forestry Service (USFS) intended to sell salvage timber rights to logging companies, which caused concern to environmentalists.

The PLP monitoring project was able to influence the decisions affecting the sale of salvage timber by providing important information about the ecological, social, and economic impacts of salvage logging [3].

Impact:
The Ford Foundation CBF funding program has been evaluated [2,4] and studied by academic researchers [1,5]. The evaluations report that:

- The PLP 'helped define common ground and overcome longstanding divisions among those who support forest utilisation versus forest protection' [4].

- 'In this case.… the monitoring influenced environmentalists' perceptions of the impacts of thinning, and may also have strengthened the CBF groups' credibility with environmental observers' [4].

The academic studies conclude that:

- 'Participatory monitoring by CBFO's has changed the social, political and economic relationships between these small rural communities, environmental organisations, and federal land agencies' [1].

- 'These conditions gave rise to a new kind of community-based organisation: community forestry organisations that sought to reconcile local land-based economic and social development with ecological stewardship and restoration of vulnerable or degraded forest, by bringing together diverse stakeholders to seek a common vision for their forests and communities' [1].

The project has won numerous awards including:
- 2007 - United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary's Award. The PLP was honoured for "Protecting and enhancing the Nation's Natural Resource Base and Environment." The Honour Awards are the most prestigious awards given by USDA. [3]
- 2006 - US Forest Service Regional Honour - Cooperative Support/Community Connection Award
- 2005 - Chapter of Wildlife Society Outstanding Achievement Award
- 2004 - Secretary of the Interior's Four C's Award

Transferability:
The project is reported as one of several participatory monitoring projects on public forestland. Ballard cautions against copying the model directly: 'on the whole these projects provide many lessons but perhaps should not be used as templates… it became clear that they operate best at small scales and in very site-specific ways' [1].

Profile	
1. Institutional context	
1.1 Ownership	This project was undertaken on public land, National Forest, managed by the United States Forest Service (USFS).
1.2 Access and use rights	The project arose from a conflict over preferred use of public land, when the USFS announced its intention to sell salvage timber rights in Burn Canyon, following the 2002 wildfire.

1.3 Regulations / statutory responsibilities	Public forest is managed according to federal forest policy, which includes a requirement for ecosystem approach to management, and public participation [6].
2. Internal organisation	
2.1 Community members	'Everyone is welcome and encouraged to join the PLP!' [3]. The PLP consists of city and county officials, citizens, and representatives from a variety of local interests – i.e. logging, ranching, recreation and conservation.
2.2 Structure / legal status / financial structures	The PLP is an informal organization. A companion organization was set up in 2000 to administer grant and other funds related to the PLP's projects and activities. Called Unc/Com., Inc., this is a tax-exempt, non-profit corporation or association. Leadership and day-to-day management of PLP activities comes from a 6-person Executive Committee (made up of community leaders) and from numerous working groups [3].
2.3 Representation	The ethnic composition of the surrounding community is predominantly white, with a growing Hispanic population [1]. We have not seen data on the ethnic composition of PLP members.
2.4 Participation in decision making	The data generated by the monitoring project enabled community participation in the forest plan revision process.
2.5 Communication and learning processes	Communication and learning is at the heart of the PLP's activities. An agency manager involved with PLP stated 'that was kind of a founding philosophy of that strategy, that it was going to be adaptive, that we were going to … revisit our objectives, revisit the effects we were actually getting on the ground, and be willing to change course' [4]. The PLP meet monthly and hold an annual meeting each spring 'to review goals and to identify desired outcomes for the year' [3]. 'We believe that we have a responsibility to maintain open lines of communication and to work toward balanced solutions to public lands issues. We come with a willingness to listen and learn' [3]. The PLP held a public 'learning workshop' on restoration and monitoring, in part to showcase and discuss their experience with the Burn Canyon project [5]. The PLP used the Burn Canyon monitoring project to bring local high school youth into the woods and expose them to the complex ecological and socioeconomic issues related to the debate over

	salvage logging. The wider Ford Foundation project has provided a well-funded platform for wider learning amongst CBF projects, and has produced many books, manuals and case studies. The Aspen Institute, in its role as managing partner for the Ford demonstration project, also facilitated process-oriented mid-project learning meetings with many of the CBFOs. [4]
2.6 Forest management objectives and planning procedures	Ballard summarises the ecological goals of the PLP as to: • Enhance and maintain diverse, healthy and viable environments • Restore the link between livelihoods and the land [1] The PLP is not involved directly in forest management planning but aims to have an impact on this through the results of the monitoring projects.
2.7 Business models	All PLP members work on a voluntary basis.
2.8 Benefit distribution rules	Whilst there are no formal processes of benefit distribution, as a public asset the project arose because some stakeholders felt that their needs were not being addressed by current forest management practice.
3. External linkages	
3.1 Partnerships and agreements	Several local governments (two cities and four counties) plus three federal agencies are members of the loose partnership that is the PLP [3].
3.2 Associations	As a member of the Ford Foundation's Community-based Forestry demonstration program the project has the opportunity to network with other projects. We have not seen evidence of the effect of this.
4. Resources	
4.1 Forest	Burn Canyon is primarily oak (*Quercus* spp.*)* and ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) [1].
4.2 Funding sources	The project has been funded by grants from the Ford Foundation and the National Forest Foundation and from contributions from the Colorado counties of: San Miguel, Ouray, Montrose and Delta [3]. 'We rely on our local governments to provide our basic operating funds' [3].
4.3 Knowledge	Knowledge creation is at the core of this project. By commissioning and collecting their own ecological data participants empowered themselves to influence public forest

	management. 'The diverse participants nominated scientists to help clarify the group's monitoring objectives, identify appropriate indicators, and craft a monitoring protocol the group could implement on its own, with participation from local interests and citizens' [1]. PLP conducted an oral history project to document local residents' and ranchers' knowledge and land use history and effects of fire [1]. 'Participants in the PLP projects described how they increased local people's understanding of the scientific process and of the ecosystem of which they were a part' [1].

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8.5   Joint forest management groups, Flanders, Belgium

Type: private joint / empowering

What is it?
A government funded project to bring private owners of small and fragmented woodland together to form more effective management units. These joint forest groups are co-ordinated by a regional officer, and, in the area of this study, innovative methods were used for involving owners in collective learning processes for evaluation.

Points of interest:
- An innovative approach to working with individual private forest owners on a collective learning process to produce indicators for evaluation.
- By forming a group the management costs to individual owners are lowered as they can collectively apply for timber felling licences. This provides the incentive to participate.

Background:
Non Industrial Private Forest (NIPF) owners own more than half the forests in Belgium; this figure is nearly 70% in Flanders, and their co-operation with national forestry objectives is a priority. The Flemish Government has adopted criteria for sustainable forest management stemming from the Pan European forestry process and made these compulsory for forests larger than 5ha [1]. Fragmented ownership is an obstacle in this, with the majority of small owners having plots between 0.5ha and 1.5ha. Conventional policy measures to encourage compliance amongst small NIPFs were found to be unsuccessful.

Begun in 1995, the joint forest management (JFM) project was an initiative of the Antwerp Provincial Authority and the Forest Service of the Flemish Government. The project was deemed necessary due to the poor condition of forests and the lack of success with incentive led policies in the early 1990s.

How it works:
The forest groups established through the project are of interest to the small forest owners as they simplify the bureaucracy surrounding private woodland management. If not part of a JFM group, private owners are required to apply for a permit when they wish to fell timber. A JFM group can apply for a single permit for the whole group thus simplifying the management tasks of the owner. Similarly, the JFM facilitates the negotiation of forest access plans by organising collective dialogue between user groups, owners and local administration. Furthermore, joining a JFM group is attractive to owners as it brings with it funding for 'uneconomic works in the forest' [2].

The JFM project has the statutory task of promoting SFM with all forest owners and through the work of a paid coordinator owners are offered training, participate in collective management tasks and decision making.

By 2009, 19 JFM organisations were operating in Flanders ranging in size from 400ha to 10,000ha. The overall region covered is estimated at 100,000ha and accounts for 75% of the forest in Flanders [1].

Impact:
The forest groups of Flanders have been evaluated in several academic papers [1,3,4]. While we assume there are internal evaluations we have not been able to access these in English.

One of the key objectives of the joint forest groups was to bring more owners into the groups. In one area (Bosgroep Zuiderkempen) the average involvement rate increased from 17.34% in the initial phase to 41.76% after several years [1]. The author of this study attributes this success to the collective learning process. The Joint Forest Management group organized a learning process on the definition of sustainability that was evaluated at regular intervals by the participants. This produced the indicators to be used in monitoring, hence monitoring became a learning device [1].

The same study concludes that this project succeeded where others failed because the 'project starts from the interests and needs of the forest owners' and created a sense of responsibility among private forest owners for shared natural heritage through 'bringing the owners back to their forests' [1]. The author also argues that this process contributed to the resilience and adaptability of the groups [1].

However, the coordinator of one JFM group, in a conference presentation outlines two weaknesses of the JFM model [2]:
1. Financial - the reliance on continued subsidies to fund the co-ordinator and administrative staff.

2. Distortion of competition – as there is no difference in the fees on the sale of timber for owners of large or small estates

Transferability:
Interest in forest groups as a tool of policy implementation has spread internationally across Europe, to New Zealand, Japan, South Korea and the US [5]. Van Gossum [4] states that to be successful policy instruments joint forest groups should:
• Inform and educate the owner
• Allow wood trade
• Involve the owners of the adjacent forest
• Be independent of the regional, federal and European governments.

Profile	
1. Institutional context	
1.1 Ownership	The forests are owned by private individuals. Activities are targeted at private forest owners with plots under 5ha but larger owners can join. In Kempense Heuvelrug forest group the mean size of holding is 1ha [3].
1.2 Access and use rights	Tree felling on private land requires a permit from the administration. Part of the remit of JFM groups is to negotiate a forest access plan through dialogue with user groups and the local administration.
1.3 Regulations / statutory responsibilities	The forest group has the statutory task of promoting Sustainable Forest Management with all forest owners. Each forest owner retains the right to decide which services they request from the forest group, and remains fully responsible for the management of the forest [4].
2. Internal organisation	
2.1 Community identity	Membership of the forest group is voluntary and there is no fee. The main decision making body for the JFM is the general assembly of forest owners, assisted by a JFM coordinator and one administrative member of staff. [1] A Board of Directors is elected from the general assembly to guide the group. All forest groups have a full-time coordinator. All have half-time employees for administrative work and sometimes a work crew for forest management tasks [4].
2.2 Structure / legal status / financial structures	In 1999 a legal basis for forest groups and their targets was created in order to facilitate recognition and funding. The JFM groups operate as not-for-profit organisations. The status of the forest groups is changing and in the next few years will grow from initiating projects to independent non-profit associations [4].
2.3 Representation	At the most around 50% of forest owners participate in a Forest Group. The larger owners are typically the first to join, with the smaller holders joining later. There have been attempts to bring more passive owners into groups through a focus on activities that provide new occasions to involve forest owners in management of their own land – e.g. eradication of invasive species and thinning activities. Figures show that this has been successful as 'through the creation of groups the average involvement

	rate is between 17.34% in the initial phase to 41.76% after some years' [1].
2.4 Participation in decision making	Votes in the General Assembly of forest owners are on the basis of one member, one vote, irrespective of holding size [1].
2.5 Communication and learning processes	As part of the project, collective learning processes have been used to develop monitoring indicators. Each group builds their own management plan by selecting the indicators they consider most relevant for their own forest landscape. These indicators allow for self-evaluation and feedback to government.
2.6 Forest management objectives and planning procedures	All decisions on forest management, felling and negotiations with user organisations are taken by the general assembly of the JFM. The development of the management plan brings together different stakeholders. In Kempense Heuvelrug FG the plan was developed by a forest consultant in cooperation with the forest group, the forest service, all interested owners (n = 300) and the forest users (mainly recreationists and tourism) [3].
2.7 Business models	Timber is sold collectively though owners pay the same fee for the sale of timber regardless of whether their plot size is large or small.
2.8 Benefit distribution rules	The owners receive income from the collective sale of timber. [2].
3. External linkages	
3.1 Partnerships and agreements	There is no evidence of formal partnerships between the JFM groups and other organisations. The 'neutral' position of the forest group is highlighted by one coordinator as a strength of the project [2].
3.2 Associations	There is a central association founded by the 19 forest groups to act as a point of contact for government and others and to engage in lobby work regarding subsidies [2]. It is also reported that there is increased cooperation between conservation NGOs and forest owners, who have traditionally demonstrated opposing values.
4. Resources	
4.1 Forest	The small areas of individually owned forest form a contiguous larger area, but only some owners join the forest group. In Kempense Heuvelrug 1000ha of coniferous forest was planted on poor sandy soil at the beginning of the 20th century [3]

4.2 Funding sources	The groups are reliant on government funding. There are four types of grants for a forest group: [4]
	1. Basic grant - €100,00 for the staff positions.
	2. Management grants – for each ha of forest incorporated into an FG the group receives €5, plus an additional €5 when this ha is 'managed according to the close-to-nature rules' [4]
	3. Project grants – for uneconomic forest management practices including control of invasive species *Prunus serotina* and improving the recreational infrastructure.
	4. Educational grants – subsidies for education days for forest group members and the coordinator.
4.3 Knowledge	A professional forest consultant is employed to assist with the management plan. The JFM group organizes activities such as walks and courses to stimulate owners' interest and knowledge of management practices.

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8.6   Community Forests in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany
Focus on Burbach municipality

Type: private shareholders / empowering

What is it?

The forest cooperatives in Burbach were formed initially to counter the trend towards fragmented forest ownership prevalent in the 19th Century. In the forest cooperative private owners hold shares in the forest rather than individual plots. This creates larger, more effective management units run by the cooperative assembly. Timber rights are allocated in an annual lottery.

Points of interest:
- Private individuals own shares in a single forest, rather than individual plots of forestland.
- This form of multiple ownership is a means of facilitating collective management more efficiently where there are many owners of small holdings.
- These areas have a long tradition of collective use dating back to the middle ages.

NB: The term 'Gemeinschaftswald' has been translated in various ways as 'forest cooperatives', forest commons and community forests. We use the term forest cooperatives except where directly citing an author.

Background:

Models of community forests vary within Germany as a historical result of the collective utilisation of forests in the middle ages. This affects their present uneven geographical distribution. The greatest concentration is found in the Olpe and Siegen-Wittgenstein districts where the forest cooperatives together encompass 32% of the total forest area [3].

Within Nordrhein-Westfalien, the district of Siegen-Wittgenstein is amongst the most heavily forested regions in Germany with more than 60 % forest coverage [1]. The town of Burbach is found in this district, and around Burbach forest ownership is distributed as follows:
- 3600 ha of community forest, divided between 10 forest cooperatives
- 640 ha 'common forest' owned and managed by the municipality of Burbach
- 520 ha state forest owned by the region of North Rhine-Westphalia
- 440 ha other private forest

How it works:

Nordrhein-Westfalien is one of sixteen states, each of which makes its own forest policy. In 1975 the Community Forest Act for the state of North Rhine-Westphalia was passed, updating the legal form of all community forests in the state. Tied in with this Act were

conditions that prescribed uniform basic principles of management for all types of community forest. Further, it prohibited the division of forest areas belonging to the communal assets, while it made provision for the amalgamation and re-establishment of new community forests. These prescriptions were founded on the premise that the fragmentation of ownership makes sustainable forest management more difficult [3].

Impact:
The only document available in English discussing the forest cooperatives of North Rhine-Westphalia is a collection of scholarly articles compiled by Landesbetrieb Wald und Holz (the state department of forestry and wood North Rhine-Westphalia) [3,4,5].

Impact is seen in terms of changes to community participation. The 1975 law provided for the amalgamation of groups and the creation of new ones. Amalgamation has taken place; 'a great many cooperatives in the Siegen-Wittgenstein region have availed themselves of this possibility, so that since the Community Forest Act came into effect the number of forest cooperatives there has been reduced by 100 through amalgamation' [3].
In contrast very few new forest cooperatives have been created, 'it is almost impossible to win owners over to a transference from individual ownership to communal ownership. For this reason there were only two cases between 1975 and 2002 where use was made of this possibility' [3]. There are however small signs of renewed interest in the communal forest potential [4].

Transferability:
There is renewed interest in this model within Germany as it is seen as a possible way forward to facilitate efficient forestry management [4]. In 2008 an analysis of the decline in public interest in forestry by Ewers concluded 'the work in forest commons is done almost exclusively by members of the governing boards' [1]. Ewers states that 'I believe I have seen a recent change in this trend. In response to the global financial crisis and the energy crises, people have gained renewed interest in investing in forestland and forestry' [1].

At an international workshop on the forest commons in October 2011, the Minister for North Rhine-Westphalia, declared 'we want to design our forest policies in such a way that we can utilise the model of collective forests as an example for the future management of small, private forests' [2].

One obstacle to the more widespread adoption of forest cooperatives is the owners' unwillingness to give up their rights to specific pieces of land. In the re-establishment of the Wickersbach forest cooperative this was described as:
- the concern that the conversion of hitherto real property to future theoretical shares in a forest community would lead to a loss of value and to availability restrictions
- the wish for continued independent, individual management of actual forest property

- private reasons, e.g. in memory of a grandfather, earlier agricultural work on this plot, family property etc. [4].

Profile	
1. Institutional context	
1.1 Ownership	Each cooperative member owns a share in the forest, not a particular tract of land. An individual may be the owner of more than one holding. Shares can be sold or inherited.
1.2 Access and use rights	The owners have access and timber rights. In one community forest in Burbach, of 300 members, 25% have timber rights each year. They draw lots to determine who gets which area.
1.3 Regulations / statutory responsibilities	The forest cooperative is required to prepare an annual budget [5].
2. Internal organisation	
2.1 Community members	Membership in a forest cooperative is open to all forest owners within the area of the existing cooperatives. Largely this is a historical pattern with ownership being passed down through families.
2.2 Structure / legal status / financial structures	As prescribed in the 1975 Act, community forests have to be 'a corporation under Public Act.' Prior to 1975 they existed as associations with communal forest ownership.
2.3 Representation	All members of the cooperative are entitled to attend the cooperative assembly. This assembly elect the Board and chair person who perform the administrative duties of the cooperative. The voting rights of members are relative to their entitlement to holdings in the joint ownership association. One vote corresponds to the smallest holding.
2.4 Participation in decision making	'The cooperative assembly convenes annually or when this has been requested in writing and with reasons given by one fifth of its members' [5]. 'In most cooperatives it is the committee [board] that has a significant influence on the forest management, frequently the chairman alone' [3]. 'Regrettable, however, is the increasing lack of interest of most of the shareholders. The extensive fragmentation of ownership and the associated low value of the shares as well as dwindling ties to

	the forest have a detrimental effect on the life of the cooperatives' [1].
2.5 Communication and learning processes	No processes are reported apart from forest management decision-making. However the community forests in Burbach have recently been the subject of case studies and exchange visits, from German and international academics and practitioners.
2.6 Forest management objectives and planning procedures	The 1975 Act stipulated that there should be uniform basic principles of management for all types of community forest - 'adhering to the regulations of the state Forest Act and adapted to modern high forest management' [3]. Yearly management plans are required, aligned to those of the municipal forest.
2.7 Business models	
2.8 Benefit distribution rules	Revenues are shared among the members of the association.
3. External linkages	
3.1 Partnerships and agreements	Forest officials from the state of North Rhine-Westphalia supervise the forest cooperatives and manage the forests on their behalf [3].
3.2 Associations	No data
4. Resources	
4.1 Forest	Burbach has 60% of forest cover of which about half is broadleaves. Because of demand for firewood, coppiced hazel is preferred by the owners and now predominates. Conservation concerns maintain that it must be broadleaf, and there is a drive to push towards greater proportion of Beech.
4.2 Funding sources	The 1975 Act states that 'further to the constitution, the forest cooperative may raise a shared cost from members to cover its expenditure or call on other customary payments from its members. Shared costs and payments shall be determined by the entitlement to holdings' [5].
4.3 Knowledge	The 1975 Act states that 'the forest cooperatives shall appoint their own forestry experts for the planning and supervision of operation (technical management) and also for forestry operation (forestry services) or failing this by contracting the services of management and forestry services from the forestry authorities [5]. In actuality most community forests rely on the knowledge of the state forest authorities.

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8.7   Forest Commons, Sweden

Type: Private shareholders / consultative

What is it?
Established in the late 19th century, the Swedish forest commons are large areas of privately owned, but commonly managed forests. The owners receive a dividend on their share and have hunting and fishing rights on the land. Forest management is decided through boards elected by shareholders and supervised by county administration and forestry boards according to county by-laws.

Points of interest:
*   The Swedish Forest Commons, or 'community forests' are a form of joint ownership between private owners including individuals and sometimes forest companies who until 1906 were allowed to buy land from farmers.
*   Through legislation, the state retains a highly influential role in the management of these forests.

Background:
The forest commons were established during a time of widespread land tenure reform in Sweden. Much land in the interior remained unallocated and 'many politicians and officials were convinced that Swedish forests were on the brink of devastation and both the authorities and forest experts had little confidence in the farmers' ability to manage their forests appropriately' [4]. Between 1861-1918 the forest commons were created by allocating a proportion of each owner's forestland to be managed jointly. In one area allocation of the land was based on coercion, as it was perceived that the state were taking ownership [2].

The forest commons were established by the state as a means of partial deregulation. According to researchers, 'The [Forest Commons] were introduced in order to prevent forest companies from gaining control over the forest resources' [1] but their introduction also reflects 'government distrust of the farmers' capacity to manage their forests' [2].

At the time of establishment the aims of the Forest Commons were:
1. To serve as an instrument for improved forest management (timber production)
2. To serve as an instrument for sustainable economic support for farmers and the local economy
3. To provide a solid basis for taxation and secure the existence of an independent class of farmers
4. To support rural development and wellbeing

How it works:

There are currently 33 Swedish forest commons, all in the four northern counties. There are in all around 25,000 shareholders of whom 20% are remote owners [3]. In the districts where they occur, community forests make up between 7% to 13% of the forested land. Together they cover 540,000 ha of productive forestland. Management is performed jointly through elected boards and executed by professional foresters [2].

Impact:
An evaluation by the Swedish Commission on collectively owned forestland concluded that the Swedish forest commons are 'among the best managed forests in the country' [2]. This is based on adherence to the approved management plans and is a view challenged by recent research. Holmgren *et al* (2004) found considerable diversity in the management of commons in different districts and question the generalisability of the ministry report. The same authors also examined biodiversity indicators, comparing community forests with forests of other ownership types [5]. They found 'no evidence that forests managed in common have been conducted in ways promoting biodiversity more effectively than other ownership categories' [5].

Other research concludes that other interests, including reindeer husbandry, tourism and nature conservation have reduced the owners' control of the forest commons and limited the range of action they can take [2].

Transferability:
At the time of establishing the forest commons some owners had to be coerced into giving their shares to the cooperative. Similar resistance may be encountered today.

Profile	
1. Institutional context	
1.1 Ownership	Private individuals own 76% of the total area of forest commons. Forest Companies own 22% [1]. There are in all around 25,000 shareholders.
1.2 Access and use rights	Shareholders also hold hunting and fishing rights within their forest commons [2]. One study found that 41% of surveyed owners hunt on the land. [3]
1.3 Regulations / statutory responsibilities	The community forests face stricter regulations than other privately owned forests [1]. Large forest owners (>500ha) are obliged to consult the reindeer herders before deciding on any major forest activities [1]. All forest commons are under the same national laws and regulations, including the Swedish Forest Act (SFS 1979), which regulates the management of Swedish forests. However, their formal organisation and activities are regulated by a special law, the Forest Commons Law (1952). Each forest common also has its own set of by-laws, authorised by the County Administration, which regulates the direct management of the commons [4].

2. Internal organisation	
2.1 Community members	Originally shareholders were all local farmers who owned forestland. Given the passing of shares through the generations a large proportion of shareholders no longer live in the vicinity [2]. Considering that also forest companies are shareholders, less than half of shares are in the hands of local individuals' [1].
2.2 Structure / legal status / financial structures	Formal control is executed by the county administration and the Forestry Board [2].
2.3 Representation	'Participation of female shareholders significantly low – both in governance/management and in benefits sharing from the commons. They also appear largely indifferent compared to male shareholders' [3].
2.4 Participation in decision making	Only 31% of surveyed shareholders take part in annual meetings of the general assembly. In a study of shareholders views on the Forest Commons it was found that although shareholders seem generally satisfied with the status quo regarding governance/management and benefits from the forest commons, there was a considerable level of 'indifference' suggested by 'no opinion' response [3]. 25% of shareholders say that it is hard to get most shareholders to agree and act for a common goal. [3]
2.5 Communication and learning processes	
2.6 Forest management objectives and planning procedures	Management is performed jointly, through boards elected by the assembly of shareholders, and executed by professional foresters [2]. The State's intentions for the forest commons are that they should be managed intensively following management plans aiming at high and even outputs [2].
2.7 Business models	Timber is sold collectively and dividends divided between shareholders. Part of the aim of the forest commons is to support local markets. Income from the forest commons is retained locally and local contractors are employed where possible.
2.8 Benefit distribution rules	The policy for how the dividend is distributed differs due to historical arrangements, and regional patterns can be discerned [2].

	In general dividends are paid to the shareholders and some revenue is sent to the county boards and placed in funds and safeguarded for spending on local needs. By and large, profits are shared proportionally to the shareholder ownership, except in one forest commons where profits are distributed mainly as subsidies for investments in shareholders own farming and forestry. [1]. 46% of surveyed shareholders say they receive cash payment from the forest commons [3].
3. External linkages	
3.1 Partnerships and agreements	No data
3.2 Associations	No data
4. Resources	
4.1 Forest	The districts in which Forest Commons exist is part of the boreal forest region, dominated by stands of Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris)* and Norway spruce (*Picea abies*), sometimes mixed, and sometimes supplemented by broadleaved trees, mainly birch (*Betula* sp.) [2].
4.2 Funding sources	The income for Forest commons appears to be predominantly from timber sales.
4.4 Knowledge	Professional foresters are employed.

Sources

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8.8 Community Contracting Initiative, Mersey Forest, England
Focus on Friends of Clinkham, Moss Bank and Carr Mill (FOCMC) in St Helens

Type: Public local / collaborative

What it is?
Part of Mersey Forest, one of the original 12 Community Forests in England, this initiative was a top-down process for generating community woodland groups and supporting them to take a greater role in woodland management. Local 'friends of…' groups were offered 'seed-corn' funding and supported by a link officer to become stronger community groups capable of managing their local woodland. Thirteen groups were initiated with differing results; ten are still active.

Points of interest:
- There have been 13 groups initiated, of which 10 are ongoing. One in particular had difficulties in forming a cohesive group despite the consistent efforts of the supporting organisations.
- Notable for its partnership approach, with successful collaboration between the Mersey Forest Partnership, BTCV (British Trust for Conservation Volunteers), local authorities and woodland owners.
- Involving communities in their local sites was seen as the best way of tackling issues of anti-social behaviour prevalent in these urban woodlands.
- Highlights the supporting role of key individuals such as the Mersey Forest CCI Coordinator (now called Community Officer).

Background:
The Mersey Forest is a network of woodlands and green spaces being created across Merseyside and North Cheshire by a wide-ranging partnership of different organisations including local authorities, community groups and businesses. In common with the other community forests it is not a contiguous area of forest, but rather an initiative to increase forestry coverage in an area close to urban communities.

The Mersey Forest Partnership has been in existence since 1991. It is the largest of the original 12 Community Forests in England, covering 420 square miles. The Mersey Forest is one of the leading environmental regeneration initiatives in the North West of England, planting more than 8 million trees across Merseyside and North Cheshire since 1994 [6].

Many of the woodlands in the community forest area were neglected, and the high costs of battling against negative use and bringing these woodlands into management were major disincentives to existing landowners to take action. The existing grant structure, which supports the continued management of woodlands, was insufficient to promote the restoration of neglected woods and a negative feedback cycle was evident.

How it works:

The CCI is a model for community involvement where community groups receive a package of support including a link Officer to help co-ordinate activities as 'seed-corn' funds for implementation and training [2]. Through the CCI, the Friends of Clinkham, Moss Bank and Carr Mill group have received funding and professional support from a wide range of forest partners, coordinated by The Mersey Forest Team and BTCV.

Friends of Clinkham, Moss Bank and Carr Mill (FOCMC) in St Helens was selected for our focus as Clinkham Wood estate, which is very large, has the highest level of unemployment in St Helens. 'The private housing on the other side of the wood is relatively prosperous and there has been a 'them and us' situation between the more affluent and less affluent sides of the wood. There is a drug problem with drug users using the wood' [1]. Over the years the wood has suffered from many of the problems experienced by urban woodland including car dumping, tipping and other forms of anti-social behaviour. There has been sporadic community involvement mostly involving residents from the private estate, in 2001 the newly formed Clinkham Wood Tenants and Residents Group became involved [1].

Impact:

Both the Mersey Forest, and the CCI project are very well documented and good investment has been made in evidence. The CCI project was evaluated in 2001 and 2007.

In 2001 the evaluation concluded:

> 'Through the CCI project we have been able to demonstrate a change from a negative feedback system to a positive feedback. The outcome of this has been a greater usage of the woodland areas by the community and a reduction in negative pressures. This, in turn, has allowed the landowners to justify higher levels of expenditure in managing the woodland as a valued resource by the community' [2].

In 2007 the evaluation concluded:

> 'It is clear from the large number of positive comments gathered from the interviews that CCI over the last 10 years has made an invaluable contribution to the successful running of the community groups involved. All the groups speak very highly of the work of the Mersey Forest and in particular the work of the CCI Coordinator' [3].

Transferability

The Mersey Forest approached this initiative aiming to build a replicable process, and have documented the process. The guidelines characterise the ideal woodland setting for community woodland that includes [4]:

- Variety of types of habitat
- Landowner agreement

- Minimum size of 0.7 hectares
- Proximity to a community
- Community has history of involvement in other activities
- Open access
- Potential for social, economic and environmental benefits

Profile	
1. Institutional context	
1.1 Ownership	Clinkham Woods are owned by the Local Authority (St Helens Metropolitan Borough Council). This is typical of other 'friends of' groups in The Mersey Forest where the landowner maintains liability and responsibility for the site. Of the other groups, one co-manages a woodland owned by the Woodland Trust. [5].
1.2 Access and use rights	Groups receiving funding through the CCI must demonstrate a commitment to 'providing access for the local community to the wood – encouraging the safe enjoyment and leisure use of the wood for all sections of the population' [4]. With the consent of the landowner, a CCI group may undertake thinning or felling to earn income for their group.
1.3 Regulations / statutory responsibilities	To qualify for the resources and support given by CCI, groups must write a successful proposal demonstrating how they: a) aim to bring some social, environmental and economic benefits to their local woodland and its immediate area. b) will ensure the long-term stability of the group. Ideally it will: • Have a minimum of 6 members • Have a constitution • Have insurance for its activities • Keep accounts, invoices and receipts, which could be audited • Seek additional funding from sources outside The Mersey Forest and BTCV for projects, events and activities. • Promote The Mersey Forest and take part in its campaigns where appropriate, e.g. "Trees of Time and Place", "Bluebell Recovery", "Woodland Wildflower Project" • Be open and try to attract new members [4].
2. Internal organisation	
2.1 Community members	Membership is open to all, though members are typically local and are regular users of the wood (for example dog walkers) and/or have children who want more green spaces to enjoy. In the FOCMC group there are currently 11 adult members, some of whom are also on the committee (6 adults, including CCI coordinator and a representative of the St Helens rangers). This group also benefits from having a member of staff from BTCV who lives locally

	and is part of the group and can do work on the site through BTCV. There is also a youth group called the 'dream team' that has about 12 members under 18.
2.2 Structure / legal status / financial structures	All the Friends groups are unincorporated and are relatively informal. The FOCMC group is formalized only in the sense that it has its own constitution and bank account.
2.3 Representation	The level of active membership in groups is relatively small in most cases and, in one or two, lack of members could affect the current viability of the group. However most are able to call on wider support for specific activities such as clean-up days [1]. While the group is open to all, there is a lack of participation from black and minority ethnic groups [5].
2.4 Participation in decision making	The FOCMC committee makes decisions for the local management tasks. Monthly meetings are held with an AGM once a year where the new committee are voted in.
2.5 Communication and learning processes	When the groups were being set up, regular network training days and site visits were organised for members of each group to learn from one another and share ideas and information [5]. The Mersey Forest Community Officer who is also the coordinator of the Friends Network produces a CCI Newsletter regularly. 'Everyone has access to other group's contact details via email and the internet these days and groups do regularly exchange information without The Mersey Forest's help' [5].
2.6 Forest management objectives and planning procedures	Friends groups within the CCI are required to provide an evaluation and annual summary of the previous year's activities, events and achievements. They are also required to produce a costed action plan of activities for the coming year bringing social, environmental and economic benefits, with a calendar of events and activities [4]. The FOCMC committee and partners agree the annual action plan that specifies management tasks/surveys for the site. A representative from the St Helens Borough council sits on the committee and agrees the work Friends can undertake on their land.
2.7 Business models	The group receives funds from the CCI project sufficient for running costs, equipment and putting on small events. There can also be income from the sale of products, though in practice this is small. For example the FOCMC group has on occasion used old trees that had to be felled to produce wooden coasters and chopping boards, which they sold at events.
2.8 Benefit distribution	Money from the sale of woodland products is returned into the group for woodland projects.

rules	
3. External linkages	
3.1 Partnerships and agreements	The Mersey Forest is a partnership of seven local authorities in the area including: Cheshire West and Chester Council, Halton BC, Warrington BC, St Helens MBC, Liverpool CC, Knowsley MBC, Sefton Council.
3.2 Associations	The CCI Network is a group comprising of representatives from all the Friends groups within the CCI project. The CCI Coordinator/Community Officer provides additional support to all the groups, organises visits, training and network meetings, bringing members of all the groups together from time to time to learn from each other and share successful ideas. The CCI Coordinator keeps groups informed of new funding initiatives, campaigns, events and other CCI Groups initiatives [4].
4. Resources	
4.1 Forest	The Mersey Forest is an area covering 105,930 ha across Merseyside and North Cheshire within which woodlands are being created on all types of land including agricultural, public, private, derelict and industrial land. Clinkham Woods is deciduous "clough" woodland (a woodland valley) containing oak, sycamore, ash and birch. It has been in existence since the early 1800s and covers nearly 8 hectares on Moss Bank Hill, St Helens. It became a Local nature reserve in 2000 and has great ecological interest with streams and marsh areas as well as trees.
4.2 Funding sources	The groups apply for individual funding from the Mersey Forest each new financial year. The funding from the Mersey Forest is used to pay for small projects, tools and resources such as insurance, equipment and materials such as plants, trees, tools, display boards, reference books, safety boots, etc. The Community Officer helps groups secure other funding for projects. For example, the Friends of Griffin Wood with The Mersey Forest's help, secured £9000 from Awards for All for their Working with Nature project.
4.3 Knowledge	The long-term aim is for each of the Friends Groups to build up expertise, to the extent where the group can negotiate and work directly with the landowner through the yearly action planning process, supported by the CCI Forest Network, if desired. The groups are able to contract professional help for tasks that are beyond the capacity of the group [4].

	A BTCV Project Officer or Local Authority Officer is nominated to offer support to each group and provides advice, practical woodland management expertise and professional contacts. The officer attends the meetings of the group and will help the group to obtain the necessary equipment and expertise to carry out their plans. The officer can help the group to draw up their annual Action Plan and work out their funding requirements [4]. Members of CCI groups can receive course fees and travel costs to attend local, national or regional training courses in skills to manage their woodlands and run their groups effectively [4]. Each group and site does its own monitoring. In Clinkham woods it is the youth group who undertake regular surveys of animals and plants and have made photographic references to them on their own maps of the site. The data is checked over by the St Helens Council rangers.

Sources

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8.9   Coppicewood College, North Pembrokeshire, Wales

Type: private personal / empowering

What is it?
A small group of individuals united by an interest in woodland coppice crafts have leased woodland from a private owner. Established as an educational charity, the group manages the woodland using traditional techniques including coppicing and hand tools, while also using the site as a training centre. They offer a wide range of woodland management and craft courses. The group is still reliant on grants but is now partly functioning as a social enterprise.

Points of interest:
* Coppicewood College started from an interest-based group of individuals.
* The college leases land from a private landowner who is supportive of the project and joins volunteer days with his family [1].
* While this case study includes less evidence than others, it is featured as a contrasting example of productive community relations with woodland and landowners. It draws heavily on a case study conducted by our colleague, Amy Stewart [1].

Background:
'Established in 2006, Coppicewood College is a small educational charity dedicated to the promotion of traditional woodland management through sustainable methods, which includes coppicing and the use of hand tools' [2].

How it works:
The college is an example of a woodland social enterprise and generates a significant part of its income from the educational programmes it runs. These focus on woodland-based traditional rural skills and related crafts and include a range of short courses teaching skills such as coppicing, greenwood craft, hedge laying and willow weaving. Their signature course is a woodland skills course, run over the winter period, 2 days every week for 6 months [1].
The formal objectives of the initiative are stated in its constitution as to:
* advance education and training by developing and delivering a range of educational activities, courses and programmes in traditional rural skills and allied crafts and global environmental issues for the local community in the area of Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire and all Wales.
* relieve financial hardship to those who through social and economic circumstances are in need and are unable to gain employment by promoting and supporting schemes where such people may receive training for employment in rural land based industries.

Impact:
There has not been any formal evaluation of the project of which we are aware. Only

qualitative indicators are available. In line with their stated objective to improve employment based on rural skills, the chair of the trustees reports that most of their past students who have come to the college independently are now working in the environmental sector. Other students, who were referred to the college 'have grown in their confidence and self-esteem through their time at the college, which has enabled many of them to find employment' (Slark, 2011 Cited in [1]).

The college has also had referrals from the probation service, some of whom have gained work in the environmental sector, with one student becoming a tree surgeon.

A case study from the website highlights the positive cycle aspired to in the aims of the college:
Adam Thorogood - Woodland Skills Course 2008/2009: Adam and a friend approached a woodland owner about working a piece of neglected woodland. The owner asked them to produce a management plan. As a result the woodland went into the 'Better Woodlands for Wales' scheme. Adam and his friend are now working the woods in return for the harvested timber. They intend to add value by producing fence posts and garden furniture as well as supplying firewood locally.

> 'This is exactly the kind of opportunity that was envisaged by the college when we designed the Woodland Skills Course. It is very heartening for us at Coppicewood to that our course equips students for the opportunities that are available.'

Transferability
The support of the landowner has been a contributing factor to the success of Coppicewood College.

The economic viability of the project has depended on getting sufficient students to enrol on the six month woodland skills training course and in some years numbers have been low. The college has had to rely on grants that are not restricted so that they can be used to pay tutor's salaries.

Profile	
1. Institutional context	
1.1 Ownership	Privately owned. Formerly part of the Assembly Woodland Estate.
1.2 Access and use rights	The college has held a ten-year, free-of-charge lease since 2005 and anticipates that the landlord will be willing to renew it in due course [1].
1.3 Regulations / statutory responsibilities	The college is responsible for managing the woodland.
2. Internal organisation	
2.1 Community members	The college comprises the board of trustees, the course instructors, the trainees, and the volunteers. Participation is open to all interested individuals, regardless of where they live.

2.2 Structure / legal status / financial structures	Coppicewood College is a Registered Charity number 1107250. This allows them to receive donations but because of this the trustees are currently personally liable. There is an ideological reluctance to become a Company Limited by Guarantee (see 2.7)[1] There is a board of 4 trustees.
2.3 Representation	Although volunteers come from the nearby area there are none currently participating from the closest settlement, Cilgerran [1]. The landowner and his family are active volunteers within the project [1].
2.4 Participation in decision making	Once a week the college has a volunteer day that is open to anyone keen to get involved with woodland conservation. 'Working alongside the staff and students, volunteers are an important element in the restoration of the 13 acre broadleaf woodland' [2]. Attracting enough volunteers to get involved on a regular basis has proved to be challenging [1].
2.5 Communication and learning processes	The group has a website which features case studies and testimonials. The woodland is a venue for many short training courses including for Llais y Goedwig, the Welsh community woodland network. There is no documented evidence of learning processes within the organisation of the college itself.
2.6 Forest management objectives and planning procedures	The woodland management plan has been created by the college and focuses on traditional woodland sustainable methods, including coppicing and the use of hand tools. The restoration work is 'laying down the foundations for a coppice rotation system and creating a diverse plant and wildlife habitat'. Much of the work in the plan is will be carried out by staff and students involved with the annual 6 month woodland skills course and the rest by volunteers.
2.7 Business model	The college is constituted as a charity. The group did not want to make themselves a trading company because of personally held convictions within the group that they did not want to create an organisation than engaged in profit-making and be considered 'profiteers' because 'all we are trying to do is make a margin on what we sell in order to cover our costs, nothing more than that' (Slark, 2011) cited in [1]. There are three course instructors who act as both paid instructors when a course is running and 'expert volunteers' who manage the volunteering process out of term-time. In addition there is an IT volunteer. 'The volunteer group give their time for free but in return the college assists them in developing their own woodland skills' [1]

	In addition the college makes some items for sale such as rustic furniture and turned items. They have a contract to supply charcoal to a neighbour. The college market their products through the website http://www.coppice-products.co.uk
2.8 Benefit distribution rules	As a social enterprise any profit or 'surplus' is usually invested in furthering the social or environmental objectives and developing the business. The college offers subsidies to some students who wish to enrol on the courses but struggle to pay.

3. External linkages	
3.1 Partnerships and agreements	No clear data.
3.2 Associations	Information on the college is incorporated into the Welsh *Coed Lleol* website http://www.coedlleol.org.uk linking organisations and projects involved in woodlands in Wales. It is an active member of *Llais y Goedwig* – the Welsh community woodland association. The groups' own website states that 'we also have woodland owners in need of graduates from Coppicewood to manage their woodlands' [2] implying that the college is actively involved in connecting with woodland owners.

4. Resources	
4.1 Forest	The wood covers 6.87ha, the majority of which is mixed broadleaf. It was described as 'neglected' prior to the work of the college [2].
4.2 Funding sources	Income generated in the year ending 2011 totalled £5,500. The main part of this is the 6 month training course. The chair of the trustees estimated that roughly: 25% of income has come from grants and is spent on equipment and building maintenance - Around 5% comes from donations Two grants from the Ernest Cook Trust were allowed to be put towards the tutors' wages on the course. This enabled the college to offer subsidized places to some students 'without this they 'would really struggle'' [1]. 'The college now has sufficient funding to see them through to 2013' [1].
4.3 Knowledge	Being an interest group many of the trustees also hold considerable traditional woodland skills. The paid instructors also have the required Knowledge.

Sources

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8.10 Hill Holt Wood, England

Type: private community / empowering

What is it?
The woodland was bought by a couple in 1995 that have turned it into a thriving community-managed social enterprise. Income is generated through training for disadvantaged groups such as excluded young people and mental health service users. In addition the woodland is a valued recreational space for the community.

Points of interest:
• This award-winning woodland has demonstrated the potential of combining community-owned woodland with a successful social enterprise.
• The majority of income comes from contracts with statutory agencies through training contracts.

Background:
Hill Holt Wood (HHW) was purchased in 1995 by two private individuals who developed the business together. From the beginning they had an ambition to involve the community in woodland governance and benefits, and this led them to form the Hill Holt Management Committee in 1997 [1]. The business was transferred to community control in 2002; the majority of the land purchased by the social enterprise in 2004 and the business became a registered charity in 2007 [2].

Its mission statement titled 'Proving the value of Ancient woodland in the 21st Century' outlines their aims as to
• Maintain our ancient woodland for use by the public
• Teach and develop young people to help them realise their potential
• Create products and services valuable to the community
• Promote the cause of environmentalism and sustainability

How it works:
HHW's main focus is on providing vocational training for young people who have either been excluded from school or are unemployed. It holds various contracts with statutory agencies for this work [3]. HHW includes a school for young males excluded from mainstream education (Ofsted 1) and provides training for young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET). The business is used as a case study by the National Care Farming Initiative and is developing Hill Holt Health to provide green activity for mental health service users [4].

The woodland had been heavily felled by the previous owners and was 40% rhododendron with no public access, described as 'woodland in decline' by Natural England [2].

Impact:
HHW has featured in several research reports, including two by forest research [4,5] and one by Defra [6]. For the last six years HHW have assessed their progress with an annual evaluation that they call 'social auditing'. In the past two years this process has been unsatisfactory for their needs and they are looking to engage professionals from Lincoln University in developing new auditing techniques [5].

The achievements of HHW are reflected in recent awards that include:
- 2011 - Royal Forestry Awards - HHW won the Community Forest Award
- 2011 - Sustain Award for Construction
- 2009 - Lord Stafford Award for Innovation in Sustainability
- 2009 - Green Apple Champion of Champions for the built environment – the community hall won this for it's low impact design
- Ernst and Young Entrepreneur North and Midlands K Lowthrop CEO

The economic success of HHW is evident in their annual figures:
Turnover 2009 – 2010 £1,190,000
Retained profits 2002 – 2010 £1,060,000 [2]

Transferability:
Considerable interest has been shown in the replication of the Hill Holt model and the founders are sought-after advisers on social enterprises in woodland. Nigel Lowthrop, the founder, describes how difficult it is for a community enterprise to borrow money to purchase woodland as a starting point for a community business. He is of the opinion that 'transfer of land by FC to communities would allow money raised by funding, donation or community shares to be invested in the business development rather than the usual first step of financing the acquisition' [1].

Profile	
1. Institutional context	
1.1 Ownership	In 2002 HHW board of directors purchased 2/3 of the land from the founders who had owned it since 1995. The HHW company recently acquired another 16ha ancient woodland site 'Big Wood' for the nominal fee of £1 from a gravel extraction company.
1.2 Access and use rights	The committee drew up rules of access: the site is open to the public from 8am to one hour before dark, dogs have to be on leads, no picking of flowers is allowed, and children under 14 should be accompanied by an adult [4].
1.3 Regulations / statutory responsibilities	Through contracting with agencies to deliver training HHW has statutory responsibilities to these bodies.

2. Internal organisation	
2.1 Community membership	There are 160 individual and organisational members of HHW Ltd, each with a £1 limited liability. In addition there is a wider subscription based group called Friends of HHW that produces a quarterly news letter. Many 'friends' make donations to Hill Holt but are not formal members. In terms of the total number of people engaged in the enterprise as trainees and learners, 'on an average day on site there are touching 100 people: around 20 under 16s, about 25 16-19 year-olds and then the Future Jobs people who are employed 3 days a week on minimum wage' [5]. HHW is also used extensively by the local community as a resource for social and educational activities. Facilities include a network of paths including seating, earth toilets and information boards and a recently built café and community hall.
2.2 Structure / legal status / financial structures	HHW is a Company limited by guarantee. In 2002, a volunteer Board of Directors took control of the woodland and the business became a social enterprise. It is also a charity with a separate subsidiary trading arm whose profits were all invested back into the charity. It is interesting to note that The Lincoln Co-op provided funding to pay for a consultant to identify the most appropriate structure for HHW as a not for profit organisation before it was created in 2002 [4].
2.3 Representation	Members of HHW elect a board with 12 members who meet quarterly. From this group is formed a 7 member Executive who meet monthly. There are 27 full time members of staff and 6 part time staff. In addition there are volunteer board members [5]. The 12 members of the HHW board originally represented the 12 surrounding parishes, now they reflect a broader membership of interested individuals.
2.4 Participation in decision making	Any member of HHW Ltd has the right to stand for election as a board member and to vote in elections. There is a £1 fee to become a member.
2.5 Communication and learning processes	A quarterly newsletter is circulated to the Friends of HHW.
2.6 Forest	There is no information in the reports we have seen on how the

management objectives and planning procedures	management plan is constructed.
2.7 Business models	HHW Ltd is a social enterprise, meaning that it is a business that operates primarily to achieve social and environmental objectives, rather than to provide returns to owners and share holders. It turned over £1.19 million in the year ending 2011 and made a surplus of £448,000 which equates to a surplus of around £31,500 per hectare [5]. The business uses the 'local multiplier' measure to better manage its expenditure to benefit the local economy [2]. This economic tool enables organisations to measure the impact they have on a local economy by tracking where the money they receive is then spent and re-spent. The purpose of tracking and measuring this spending is to identify opportunities to get more money circulating locally.
2.8 Benefit distribution rules	As a social enterprise, all profits are retained. A Christmas and end of year bonus is given to staff by the board when there is a surplus. All staff members receive an equal share.
3. External linkages	
3.1 Partnerships and agreements	HHW company manages, at no charge, two woodlands for the Woodland Trust and one for the local Wildlife Trust in return for timber [2].
3.2 Associations	Although situated in England, HHW is a full member of the [Scottish] Community Woodlands Association, reflecting both shared aspirations and the absence of such an association in England.
4. Resources	
4.1 Forest	The site of HHW is 14.2ha of woodland consisting of hazel coppice, oak standards, ash and birch. Although it is not registered as a semi-natural ancient woodland the founder believes it to be one because of indicator species such as wood anemone, bugle and bluebells that can be found on the site and historic features/record p14 [4]. HHW has recently acquired a further 16ha ancient woodland site. (Big Wood)
4.2 Funding sources	A large part of HHW's income is from training contracts with statutory agencies - Solutions 4 and Entry to Employment Environmental Task Force (ETF) [4]. The enterprise also creates and sells wood craft products as well as designing and constructing sustainable buildings, particularly timber, and providing consultancy services and skill

	demonstrations. Hill Holt Health is being set up with £250,000 'Ecominds' investment from the Big Lottery. After the lifetime of the Big Lottery funding, the aim is to fund the enterprise through paid NHS referrals from local GPs and through personal budgets [5].
4.3 Knowledge	The staff team includes people with forestry experience. Two professional senior rangers are employed.

Sources

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8.11 Laggan Community Forest, Scotland

Type: Public national / collaborative *and* private community / empowering

What it is?
This community aimed to influence or purchase the public forest to ensure greater economic benefit for local people. After a well-documented campaign, in 1998 a groundbreaking management partnership was formed between Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) and the community. Following the Land Reform Act (2003) and a new scheme created by FCS, the community purchased three small areas of the forest in 2006 but continue to co-manage the larger area through a 25-year partnership agreement with FCS.

Points of interest:
- A Community-driven project which has led the way in developing models of community participation through a long-running and evolving relationship between FCS and the community.
- The evolution of the community group illustrates the development of capacity of such groups, leading ultimately to the group taking ownership of small sections of the forest.

Background:
Laggan is a small, scattered community in the central northwest Highlands in an area of intense forestry activity. The Laggan Forestry Trust (LFT) administrator estimated that the average household income was £11-15000 per annum in 2009 [3]. There are a high proportion of seasonal residents with 70 locally occupied houses, compared with 56 holiday homes.

In 1900 the population was 929; by 1945 it had fallen to about 650, and in 1990 it had sunk to 200. The Laggan Community Association was established in 1974 to help stem this population drift [1]. The biggest point of concern in the community at that time was the need to provide local jobs for local people, and try to prevent the younger generation from moving away [3].

In the early 1990s rumours of the potential sale of the Strathmashie forest triggered the formation of a community action group to give voice to local interests in the forest. The next few years saw a build up of local support, and at that time the community was aspiring to buy the forest from the FCS. This was resisted by the FCS and proved beyond the means of the community in financial terms. Instead, in 1998 a 5-year partnership agreement was made between FCS and the newly formed Laggan Forest Trust (LFT) to jointly manage forest. This was the first co-management arrangement between the Forestry Commission and a community.

From 2003 two key interventions altered the communities relationship to the woodland:

the 2003 Land Reform Act in Scotland gave local communities first option to buy land in their vicinity; and the FCS National Forest Land Scheme made public funds available to help communities buy land. Members of the Laggan community were concerned that the FCS could sell the woodland on and that the effort of the community would be lost. In 2003 the whole community were balloted and 85% voted in favour of buying some parts of the forest. They purchased three parcels (20ha) with strategic value but have chosen to stay in the partnership arrangement for the rest of the forest. In 2004 the LFT and FCS signed a new long partnership agreement of 25 years for the remaining forest.

How it works:
The Laggan Forest Trust (LFT) set up the Laggan Forest Trust Forestry Company (LFTFCo) as its trading arm to undertake contracted work in the forest.
Two key features of the partnership are that:

1. Forestry work is done through local contractors where possible: FCS is still bound by its tendering policy, but contracts have been restructured to make them accessible to smaller contractors in acceptance that continuity of employment should be maintained where possible. Since 2000, the LFTFCo has been contracted to harvest almost 20,000 tonnes of timber in Strathmashie, using local labour. [5] In a major shift in strategy, the original emphasis on finding work for hand-cutters trained in chainsaw use has given way to machine harvesting using local self-employed contractors.

2. FCS supports the community organisation through personnel: Up till 2004 FCS funded a community forest foreman to work with the LFTFCo. When funding for this dried up it was replaced by a part time administrator post to help manage local forest contractors. FCS also created a Community Liaison Officer to supervise operations at Laggan [2].

There have been recurring issues with cash flow within the LFT as it took on larger projects. Without assets LFT could not run an overdraft, which it needed to cover the period between paying wages and receiving payment for contract work. In a supportive move FCS offered to bridge this deficit for capital projects such as the car park [6].

Impact:
Laggan is a well known and much visited case study, which has become the focus of international networking and learning approaches [7, 8, 9, 10]. Forest research has reported on Laggan as a case study in its review of Community Partnerships on the national forest estate in Scotland [5] and has evaluated the impact of the NLPS on the community process [3]. Work is also under way on a three-year monitoring project of The Laggan Forest Partnership [6].
The original aims of the group were to stem depopulation and provide local incomes. This has been successful as it was reported in 2000 that Laggan has seen the first upturn in its population for at least 150 years [6].

One of the successes of this project has been the establishment of Wolftrax. This is 18km of mixed ability mountain bike trails now draws 30,000 visitors annually with knock on economic benefits to the wider area and to local small businesses [3].

Through the partnership process Laggan Community members now feel they benefit from a very strong relationship with the FCS. 'The partnership with FCS has shown that by engaging with other bodies it is possible for a community to achieve far more than it would alone' [3].

Since taking over full ownership of some of the forest new challenges have arisen. 'Ownership has highlighted some very specific challenges to the community and focused all attention on applications for planning permission and grants. This has taken some of the attention away from forest management, and hence possibly reduced tension with FCS' [3]. Ownership has also been uplifting for some community members:
> 'A lot of us have never owned anything in our lives so for the community it's fantastic. It's symbolic.' [Committee member, LFT]

Transferability:
Laggan has provided many lessons for community forestry. Tylden-Wright concludes that 'an important factor in the growth of trust and the development of joint management activities is continuity of personnel' [6]. This serves to develop the required capacity in both sides of the partnership.

The community must develop the necessary commercial, administrative and forestry know-how. 'To become a competent community enterprise may require considerable support in view of the ways in which public agencies operate' [6]. On the other side, the FCS was also required to evolve and adapt to facilitate this partnership. 'The Laggan experience was very influential as it forced the FC and the FE to have direct experience of co-management and thereby learn from it' [1].

Profile	
1. Institutional context	
1.1 Ownership	FCS own 1329ha that is managed through partnership with Laggan Forest Trust (LFT). Since LFT now own 18.1ha of woodland across three parcels.
1.2 Access and use rights	The 2003 Scottish Land reform Act gives a right of responsible access to all land. Tree Felling is contracted to the Laggan Forest Trust Forestry Company (LFTFCo).
1.3 Regulations / statutory responsibilities	As part of the public forest estate the land is subject to Forestry Commission operational, including the preparation of a Forest Design Plan, and conforms to the UK Forestry Standard.

2. Internal organisation	
2.1 Community members	Only residents within the Badenoch area postcodes are eligible to be members of the LFT.
2.2 Structure / legal status / financial structures	There are 2 legal entities: 1. Laggan Forest Trust: a charitable company limited by guarantee with 12 Trustees. This trust was formed from the Laggan Forest Initiative and was created in order that the group were able to sign a legally binding agreement. 2. Laggan Forest Trust Forest Company: a limited liability company with charitable status, wholly owned by the 12 directors This is the trading arm for forest management activities. It is also charged with managing and delivering the Trust developmental projects planned for 2010-13 and beyond.
2.3 Representation	The Laggan Forest Trust is the body representative of local interest. As such, members of the LFT elect the trustees, and the majority of the 12 trustees are required to be local Laggan residents. In 2009 there were 88 trust members out of the community of 220 individuals.
2.4 Participation in decision making	In 2003 the whole community was balloted to decide between purchasing the whole forest vs. purchasing of small parts vs. no purchase. The return rate was 66% of whom 85% were in favour of buying parts of the forest.
2.5 Communication and learning processes	There have been two feasibility studies: one business impact study in relation to the proposed forest centre, and a community consultation about buying the land. An informal working party holds monthly meetings providing an opportunity to give feedback and share ideas. These meetings are open to anyone who is interested, and are usually attended by contractors and business people as well as trustees and directors. A considerable amount of training has been carried out through the LFT. It has provided some lessons, particularly by showing the importance of asking for commitment in return for training. The administrator found it difficult to get takers for courses on offer. She mentioned three areas in which training had been offered, without any uptake from board or community members or local forest contractors [3].

2.6 Forest management objectives and planning procedures	The forest management plan is jointly constructed between FCS and the LFT building on FCS principles of management, incorporating local concerns.
2.7 Business models	Since 2000 The Laggan Forest Trust Forestry Company has been contracted to harvest almost 20,000 tonnes of timber in Strathmashie, using local labour. [5] Laggan Wolftrax is an 18km mountain bike trail with marked trails of varying degrees of difficulty. Mountain bikes can be hired on site and a café and showers are available at 'BaseCamp'. Wolftax now attracts 30,000 visitors annually, who bring economic benefits to the wider area and to local small businesses. New projects on the horizon include building a new forest centre, developing a community wood fuel business and providing community woodland and recreation facilities.
2.8 Benefit distribution rules	Income is retained in the Laggan Forest Trust Company for future projects.
3. External linkages	
3.1 Partnerships and agreements	In 2004 the LFT and FCS signed a new long partnership agreement of 25 years for the Strathmashie forest.
3.2 Associations	'Much of the attention on networks and partnerships in Laggan focuses on the relationship with FCS. Other organisations were scarcely mentioned' [3]. LFT is a member of the Community Woodland Association. The Community Woodlands Association was established in 2003 as the direct representative body of Scotland's community woodland groups.
4. Resources	
4.1 Forest	Strathmashie Forest comprises three very different woodlands. Covering 1,401 hectares, 65% of which was planted mainly with Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) and Sitka spruce (*Picea sitchensis*) between 1955 and 1964 after felling in the Second World War. A small area, six per cent of the total area, is over 100 years old and 25 per cent is currently un-stocked.
4.2 Funding sources	The National Forest Land Scheme provided funding for the LFT to purchase three parcels of land in 2007. The total land cost was £75,000.

	The LFT/FCS partnership between them have secured a total of almost £350,000 from the following agencies and organisations: European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise's Community Land Unit, the European LEADER II Programme, Moray, Badenoch and Strathspey Enterprise, Rural Challenge Fund, Scottish Natural Heritage, Millennium Forest for Scotland Trust, The Highland Council, and World Wildlife Fund. Most recently LFT has secured £122,320.82 from the Cairngorms LEADER programme for development 2010-2013 [2].
4.3 Knowledge	FCS provide technical assistance where needed. Local knowledge is accessed through the use of local contractors.

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8.12 Long Wood Community Woodland, Lampeter, Wales

Type: Public national / empowering

What is it?

A community initiated endeavour, the Long Wood Group has a ten-year management agreement with FCW to manage the local woodland for the benefit of the local community. With financial support from *Cydcoed*, a large-scale funding program, they have been able to embark on new projects making the woodland a valued resource for the community.

Points of interest:
- Part of the *Cydcoed* funding program which supported 163 community woodland projects across Wales between 2001 and 2008.
- The group has recently been successful in its bid for a Big Lottery Community Asset Transfer (CAT) grant to purchase Long Wood and the sale has been agreed by the Welsh Government. As well as covering purchase costs, the grant of £787,714 will enable a wide programme of activities and enterprise ventures, such as the establishment of a green burial site, the running of educational programmes through the forest school, outdoor theatre events and an eco camp site.

Background:

Cydcoed was a £16 million European Union Objective 1 and Welsh Assembly Government funded grant and community development programme, specifically aimed at using woodlands as a means to empower and involve communities.
Initiatives ranged from small school grounds projects, through to those managed by tenants and residents associations and Communities First partnerships, to social enterprises and woodland businesses [4]. *Cydcoed* provided 100% funding of project costs and funds were given directly to the community groups for themselves to manage. Groups were supported through the four regional project officers.

Around Long Wood, a steering group of local residents was set up in 2002, who sought to engage Forestry Commission Wales in discussions to make the woodland a local resource for education and social activities, and to provide timber for local business and craftspeople [2]. This steering group went on to form the Coedwig Cymunedol Long Wood Community Woodland Group by involving people who live in and around the woodland, council representatives and others who have an interest in the wood. A *Cydcoed* grant of £195,000 was given to the group in 2004.

How it works:

The group aims to conserve the ancient woodland, replacing conifers with local provenance broadleaf trees, and increase public awareness and use of the woodland. The group holds a ten-year agreement to manage Long Wood jointly with Forestry Commission Wales that was begun in 2007.

Seven hundred local people attended a recently held open day and local community support is increasing as the project becomes better known and its successes are more visible.

The early relationship with FCW was not easy resulting in delays, tensions and a loss of trust on both sides. 'Despite this tension, or perhaps because of it, the Community Woodland Group is very proactive, very cohesive and committed to the project and eventually hope to be able to lease or own the woodland outright' [3]. However, joint working continued and improved sufficiently for the Group to successfully bid for Big Lottery funds to purchase the woodland in order to deliver greater community benefits.

Impact:
The *Cydcoed* programme has been evaluated by Forest Research [3]. The group has also featured as a case study in a review of community forestry in Wales [2], and was the subject of an MSc thesis [1].

Through the *Cydcoed* funding many infrastructure improvements have been made including:
- Construction of a new bridleway, wildlife pond and car park
- Creation of a viewing area with a log-cabin shelter and picnic tables
- Establishment of a tree nursery in the wood to provide native broadleaf trees for the on-going replanting
- Establishment of Longwood Forest School site within the wood.
- Erection of new interpretation panels to show the paths and points of interest. [3]

The *Cydcoed* evaluation reports that many of the aims of the Longwood project have been achieved: More people are using the woodland; anti social behaviour has decreased considerably; eleven schools are involved in Forest School activities; Young carer groups use the woodland twice a month and tourism businesses in the area say the woodland is widely used by their visitors, and that they now use it in their marketing material as a place to visit [3].

The path of this group has not always been smooth. 'The Longwood Community Group faced and overcame many obstacles remaining determined to complete the project' [1]. It is reported that 'the group have found the time commitment needed onerous … However, having to manage the grant themselves has resulted in members of the group attaining new skills and gaining confidence in themselves as individuals' [3].

Transferability:
In this case the issues between FCW and the community group serve to offer lessons to other projects. 'The process that FC Wales and Long Wood have gone through has highlighted areas potentially in need of further consideration for future partnership working' [1].

Profile
1. Institutional context

1.1 Ownership	FCW manages the land on behalf of the Welsh Government. The Longwood community group have a ten-year management agreement on the land.
1.2 Access and use rights	The community group has the right to manage the land including felling and selling timber in accordance with an agreed and prescriptive woodland management plan.
1.3 Regulations / statutory responsibilities	In order to comply with the Forestry Acts, the group has to manage the land in accordance with the plan agreed by FCW.
2. Internal organisation	
2.1 Community members	The Long Wood Group was set up by a steering group established in 2002 from people who live in and around the woodland, and others who have an interest in the wood, together with a representative from each of the three community councils that cover the Longwood area [3].
2.2 Structure / legal status / financial structures	The group is a Company Limited by Guarantee and works as a community co-operative.
2.3 Representation	The group includes representatives of the community councils of LLangybi, Llanfair Clydogau and Lampeter. Local groups use the site representing different sectors of the community: forest school, woodland theatre, and volunteer groups. There is no evidence of the composition of users by gender or ethnicity.
2.4 Participation in decision making	Monthly meetings are open to all.
2.5 Communication and learning processes	Through the research for the evaluation of Long Wood members have taken the opportunity to reflect on difficulties and experience gained. FCW has also established a series of meetings and workshops to learn about the experience jointly with community woodland groups.
2.6 Forest management objectives and planning procedures	The Longwood group has a ten-year agreement to manage Long Wood jointly with Forestry Commission Wales. A new Forest Design Plan was agreed which would see Long Wood return to a native broadleaf woodland in a generation mostly though Continuous Cover Forestry [2].
2.7 Business models	Long Wood was the first Community Woodland in Wales to have felled and marketed timber – the potential now exists for others to do so too. This has provided employment for local people and a

	valuable source of timber for use by local businesses.
2.8 Benefit distribution rules	All income goes back into the community group for further projects.
3. External linkages	
3.1 Partnerships and agreements	The community woodland group is party to a forest management agreement with FCW.
3.2 Associations	Longwood is a member of Llais y Goedwig and benefits from the support of Coed Lleol. Coed Lleol is a partnership project hosted by the Smallwoods Association that aims to help more people enjoy and care for woodlands in Wales [5]. Llais y Goedwig is a voluntary association of woodland community groups that formed in Nov 2009 to provide a voice for community woodlands [6].
4. Resources	
4.1 Forest	Long wood is 120ha which includes some ancient woodland. For the most part it is coniferous though the group aims to replace this with local provenance broadleaf trees.
4.2 Funding sources	A *Cydcoed* grant of £195,000 was given in 2004 for projects. The group is currently applying for big lottery bid to build visitor centre.
4.3 Knowledge	*Coed Lleol* run training programmes for people involved in Welsh community woodlands [5].

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8.12 Neroche Landscape Partnership Scheme, England

Type: Public National / collaborative

What is it?
A large-scale landscape partnership scheme, managed by FCE with Heritage Lottery funding enabled community involvement in publicly owned woodland. Community members were facilitated to form a stakeholder group, which had a key role in decision making from early on in the scheme. This group has formed the Blackdown Hills Trust to continue managing the landscape area even though the funded project has come to an end.

Points of interest:
• The project adopted an innovative and evolving approach to community involvement through the empowerment of a Local Stakeholder Group. The project was explicitly built on an ethos of respect for local people's views, and a desire to share ownership with the community.
• A pioneering project for the public forest estate in England; the landscape approach involved some forest clearance and the introduction of cattle grazing to create a more sustainable structure of open space and broadleaved woodland.
• A wide range of activities and projects were used to involve new and existing users to the area. This included creating long-distance trails, an oral history project and activities such as bush-craft and family days.

Background:
The 1,000ha public forest estate stretching across the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding National Beauty (an official designation in England) presented a challenge for forestry with much boggy, clay-rich agricultural land and some steep scarp slopes that were afforested in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. There was a desire to open up the landscape and return it to more natural woodland.

The Neroche Landscape Partnership Scheme (NLPS) was made possible through a £2 million Heritage Lottery fund grant. It ran from 2006 to 2011 with the aims of:
• Creating a more diverse, robust forest structure with a network of open space and broadleaved woodland, within which wildlife can better adapt to the pressures of climate change
• Opening up the landscape for people to explore, for recreation, health and volunteering
• Building the use of the landscape into local learning, as a mainstream part of local children's education, and as a space for families and young people to spend time together and gain new skills

Opening up the landscape through tree clearance and cattle grazing was an innovative approach, transforming forested areas into low intensity mixed wood pasture. Despite

good community involvement in the planning, this raised strong voices of concern about the scale of the tree clearance and how the sites looked after felling. This conflict was resolved successfully and served to strengthen the dialogue with the community groups.

How it works:
The NLPS consists of a combination of landscape and heritage based activities, seeking to maximise the value of the area for wildlife conservation, access and recreation, learning and skills development [1]. The formal governing body of the NLPS is the Neroche Landscape Partnership Board. This is a partnership, led by the Forestry Commission, including 17 agencies, authorities, local organisations and companies representing funding partners and key delivery partners. The community of the Blackdown Hills was also represented on this board with 2 members of the Local Stakeholder Group in attendance at all board meetings.

While the LPB was the formal governing body, approving and supporting the different NLPS projects, the LSG were given ultimate responsibility to select the projects to be funded under the NLPS. The day-to-day running of the projects was the responsibility of the project manager supported by the core team and individual project leaders.

'The local stakeholders group were surprised and pleased to be given a strong role in decision-making within the scheme and to have the casting vote in decision-making on the landscape partnership board.' The success of this process is evident in the fact that near to the end of the project five members of the local stakeholders group formed the 'Blackdown Hills Trust' to continue their work on supporting landscape and community-related projects to benefit the area. 'This is an important legacy of the scheme and fits well with the emerging 'Big Society' policy agenda.' [1]

Delivery of the scheme is led by a core team comprising a Project Manager, Access & Interpretation Officer, Community History Officer Forest Works Supervisor, Forest Schools Officer and Administrator.

Impact:
Neroche has been evaluated by Forest Research [1] and has been widely cited as an example of a new approach to partnership working on a landscape scale project [2]. The programme evaluation judged that as well as effecting transformations in the landscape, the project also transformed work practices, local lives and communities [1]. A board member felt that '… the project has brought communities together, has achieved a real sense of community spirit and involvement that may have been there but Neroche was the vehicle to put a bit of life back into it. Sitting on the board meetings I found that the local community was at the heart of the project.' [1]

'The early decision to grant significant influence and power over the design and decision-making to the local stakeholders group increased legitimacy and accountability. It helped to achieve sensitivity to local context and provided a strong sense of 'acting in the community interest' [1].

The diverse range of activities undertaken as part of the NLPS enabled new audiences to be reached and provided some existing users with new experiences [1]. Those who took part in the various activities talked about gaining new knowledge about the area, learning new skills and increasing confidence to participate in and enjoy the local landscape.

Transferability:
Umbrella funding from the Lottery has now come to an end and the project's website states that 'from October 2011 Neroche moves into a new phase, developing new initiatives in the Forest and working with new partners in the wider AONB, while maintaining the value of everyone's previous investments of hard work, heart and soul into this special landscape' [3].

The model for creating and supporting the Local Stakeholder Group (LSG) has potential to be used in other FC projects.

Profile	
1. Institutional context	
1.1 Ownership	The project was centred on 1000ha of public forest managed by FC, on long lease from the Crown Estate.
1.2 Access and use rights	Although access was formally available beforehand, the project aimed to increase the sense of being welcome and provide interpretative information, and connect public rights of way through a series of promoted circular off-road routes [4].
1.3 Regulations / statutory responsibilities	As part of the public forest estate the land is subject to Forestry Commission operational, including the preparation of a Forest Design Plan, and conforms to the UK Forestry Standard.
2. Internal organisation	
2.1 Community members	The Local Stakeholders Group (LSG) was formed by recruiting members of local communities who had experience of representing wider community interests. The process was guided by a set of selection and scoring criteria to attract people from diverse backgrounds and to avoid the dominance of single-issue agendas [1]. Eleven people were chosen to make up the LSG.
2.2 Structure / legal status / financial structures	The formal governing body of the NLPS is the Neroche Landscape Partnership Board. This is a partnership, led by the Forestry Commission, including 17 agencies, authorities, local organisations and companies representing funding partners and key delivery partners. Two members of the LSG were present at governing body meetings. To redress possible any power imbalances in this setting the LSG members given a casting vote. This was never actually used. [1]

	The LSG evolved from an un-formalised group at the start of the project to become, in 2010, a Trust and limited company. This move was initiated by five of the ten LSG members, supported by the Neroche project manager. The group then became established as a company with charitable status able to apply for funding and administer grants for projects similar to those under the NLPS. 'Setting up the Trust took 18 months, entailing much discussion, information seeking and form-filling' [1].
2.3 Representation	The LSG did not directly involve many of the wider population e.g. people under 40, unemployed, 'newcomers'. 'The LSG consisted predominantly of older and retired people, bringing with them a long and wide range of experiences and contacts, and a high level of familiarity with parts of the landscape and its inhabitants' [1]. In striving to be representative the LSG selection criteria sought individuals with a connection to a sector of community. This could have been through their profession (e.g. parish councillors, teacher), their hobbies and interests (e.g. walkers, horse-riders) or their social situation (e.g. being parents / grandparents; contact with friends and neighbours) [1].
2.4 Participation in decision making	The project was explicitly built on an ethos of respect for local people's views, and a desire to share ownership with the community. 'LSG members were involved in the selection process for the project manager, amongst others, signalling to the candidates the strength of the already evolved partnership' [1]. 'Locals experienced their views being considered and action taken. One specific example is that of the forest management plan, another was an alteration to the amount and type of felling carried out in one particular area' [1]. Many activities were designed to increase general public's participation in the woodland. These included family bushcraft days, dawn chorus walks, public arts events and tours of historic sites. In addition the scheme has an active volunteering programme involving participants in site conservation, wildlife recording, local history research and oral history recording.
2.5 Communication and learning processes	In the early years of the project Landscape Partnership Board (LPB) meetings were held quarterly; this frequency decreased to biannual meetings later in the scheme. [1]. Partners had communication structures in place to share progress updates, successes and lessons learnt, be it through formal or informal direct communication, features in their organisation's

	bulletin or newsletter, project reports, or entries on their organisation's website. In the early phase of the NLPS, members of the core project team also went to the different partner organisations to talk to senior staff / councillors about the scheme's objectives and provide updates on current work. Some LPB members were also in contact with each other through other projects and work-related duties [1]. Marketing of the project's 'offer' to its local audiences was through the project website, newspaper features, leaflets, posters and other means, including increasingly word of mouth. In its early stages the project team found it difficult to reach those audiences, and participation was relatively low' [4].
2.6 Forest management objectives and planning procedures	Local consultation was sought for the forest management plan which was taken by LSG members to their neighbours and friends for discussion and comments.
2.7 Business models	The project was not primarily a business operation, although it experimented with livestock management (using longhorn cattle to maintain a more open woodland structure). FCE supported the Blackdown Hills Trust to take on a tenancy and enter the grazed areas of the forest into a Higher Level Stewardship agreement to fund on-going costs. Future funding models are still being explored. [1, 4].
2.8 Benefit distribution rules	n/a
3. External linkages	
3.1 Partnerships and agreements	The whole project functions as a partnership organisation. Partners include: Forestry Commission, Blackdown Hills AONB, Devon County Council, Somerset County Council, Mid Devon District Council, Taunton Deane Borough Council, Natural England, The National Trust, Somerset Wildlife Trust, Butterfly Conservation and Somerset Art Works. A formal arrangement was made with a local farmer over the grazing herd of longhorn cows.
3.2 Associations	n/a
4. Resources	
4.1 Forest	1,000 ha of woodland. 'Hugely varied, these woods span the full spectrum from deeply ancient combes of oak, ash and hazel, through planted pine, larch and spruce, to scrubby willow and birch which has only recently reclaimed former wet pastures on the springline' [2].

	The habitat restoration programme referred to above created a network of over 200 hectares of grazed open space with the overall 1000 ha estate.
4.2 Funding sources	Heritage Lottery Fund Landscape Partnership programme grant of £2,000,000. In addition Partnership funding totalled £945,000. Total cost of the programme £2,945,000
4.3 Knowledge	A combination of expert and local knowledge was used to produce the NLPS plan of work and activities. 'The largest influence came from those who had lived and worked in the area ... For those relatively new to the area, as was the case for some project leaders, being able to access local resources and knowledge proved critical' [1].

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Appendix 4. Glossary

BTCV – British Trust for Conservation Volunteers

CBF – Community Based Forestry

CBFO-Community Based Forestry Organisation

CLG – Company Limited by Guarantee

CCI- Community Contracting Initiative

CWA – Community Woodlands Association (Scotland)

CWG – community woodland group

FC – Forest Commons

FCE – Forestry Commission England

FCS – Forestry Commission Scotland

FCW – Forestry Commission Wales

FOCMC - Friends of Clinkham, Moss Bank and Carr Mill

FSC – Forest Stewardship Council

HHW – Hill Holt Wood

HLF – Heritage Lottery Fund

LCA – Laggan Community Association

LCC – Local Citizen's Committee

LCHIP - Land and Community Heritage Program

LFI – Laggan Forest Initiative

LFT – Laggan Forest Trust

LFTFCo - Laggan Forest Trust Forestry Company

LHCF – Little Hogback Community Forest

LLC – Limited Liability Company

LPP – Landscape Partnership Programme

LPB – Landscape Partnership Board

LSG – Local Stakeholders Group

MNR – Ministry of Natural Resources (Ontario, Canada)

NEET – Not in Education, Employment and Training

NIPF – Non-industrial Private Forest

NLPS – Neroche Landscape Partnership Scheme

PLP – Public Lands Partnership

SFL – Sustainable Forest License

TMF – the Mersey Forest

USFS – United States Forest Service

VFF – Vermont Family Forests

VLT – Vermont Land Trust

Appendix 5. Response to call for evidence

156 references were received, 71 of which were relevant to the Community Governance theme as detailed below:

Name	Organisation	Reports/Papers Cited	Documents Provided	Weblinks
Kate Ashbrook	The Open Spaces Society		OpenSpaces (2010) Finding Common Ground	http://www.oss.org.uk/publications/free-publications/
Giles Brockman	FC Scotland		Local person (undated) Theberton Community Wood - Draft Management Statement	
			Bacton Wood Countryside Partnership (2008). A partnership between north norfolk district council and forestry commission england. Memorandum of agreement (2005 – 2008)	
		Friends of Thetford Forest		http://www.fotf.org.uk/
		Lynford Arboretum		http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/recreation.nsf/LUWebDocsByKey/EnglandEastAngliaNoForestThetfordForestParkLynfordArboretum
		Mildenhall community project.		http://www.mildenhall.org/organise.html
		Dunwich forest Community Engagement		http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/recreation.nsf/LUWebDocsByKey/EnglandEastAngliaNoForestDunwichForest
Mike Downey	Natural England	Mersey Forest through Sefton Coast Woodlands Forest plan.	The Mersey Forest (2003) the Sefton Coast Woodlands, A 20 Year Woodland Working Plan, 2003 - 2023	
Rob Gazzard	South East England Forest District		Ambrose-Oji (2010) Forestry Commission: working with civil society organisations	
Jon Hollingdale	Community Woodlands Association		The Community Woodlands Association (2010) The Mechanisms to Support Community Engagement with Forestry	

Name	Organisation	Reports/Papers Cited	Documents Provided	Weblinks
Keith Jones	FC North West & West Midlands		TEP/ Vision 21/The Countryside Agency (2004) Newlands Community Involvement Report	
Anita Konrad	Groundwork	London Trees and Woodlands Grant Scheme (now part of the RE:LEAF initiative)		http://www.ltwgs.org/
Nigel Lowthorpe	Hill Holt Wood	Issues of access and governance	Personal Communication	
Fraser MacLeod	Defra		Wildlife Trusts (undated) Community Engagement	
Bill Murphy	Head Recreation Coilllte	Dublin Mountains Partnership		http://www.dublinmountains.ie/home/
Paul Nolan	Mersey Forest	Study into impact of mersey forest		www.merseyforest.org.uk/pages/displayDocuments.asp?iDocumentID=191
		Green streets		www.merseyforest.org.uk/pages/displayProjects.asp?iProjectID=31
		Griffin wood, community managed woodland		www.merseyforest.org.uk/pages/displayProjects.asp?iProjectID=26
			Nail, S. (2008) Forest Policies and Social Change in England	
			The Mersey forest (2003) A guide to the Community Contracting Initiative (CCI) in the Mersey Forest	
			England's Community Forests -(2005) Review	
Tim Oliver	FC - Delamere	Cheltenham / Gloucester University ongoing monitoring and evaluation report of CMF	Countryside and Community Research Unit, Gloucester (2000) LRUFR CMFS Sustainable woodlands thriving communities	
		National Audit Office (NAO) report completed on CMF project	NAO (2005) Community Forests: A review of the Capital Modernisation Fund project	
		Newlands, the Spaceshaper social benchmarking work done by Pathways	Pathways Consultancy (2008) Measuring the social impact of Town Lane – a new community woodland	

Name	Organisation	Reports/Papers Cited	Documents Provided	Weblinks
		Consultantancy for each site		
			Pathways Consutlatncy (2008) Netherley Spaceshaper Report	
		Landscape institute award nominations for Old Pale and Newlands		www.landscapeinstitute.org/casestudies/casestudy.php?id=218
		Butterfly Conservation award for Old Pale		http://www.forestry.gov.uk/newsrele.nsf/WebPressReleases/BCFAFBDC366F0ACB80256ECC003E2BD4
Jo Sayers	The Mersey Forest Team		Weldon (2004) Public participation and partnership	
			Icarus (2001) The Mersey Forest Community Contracting Initiative 3 Year Review	
			Mersey Forest (2001) Community Contracting Initiative 1998 – 2001 3 year project report	
		Newlands community Involvement Research Final Report	doc not found.	
		Web page on friends of groups		www.merseyforest.org.uk/pages/displayProjects.asp?iProjectID=21
		Web page on all community forests, reports etc		www.communityforest.org.uk/publicationsandevents.htm
		Nail, S.Forest policies and Social Change in England		
Chris Short	CCRI	Forests as Commons – Changing Traditions and Governance in Europe	Short, C. (2011) Forests and Forest Landscapes as Commons: Changing traditions and governance in Europe	
		Cydcoed evaluation project		http://www.forestry.gov.uk/fr/INFD-76KC7H
		Integrated local delivery - framework for community governance in land issues		http://sd.defra.gov.uk/2011/08/integrated-local-delivery-model/
			D. Dauksta (eds) Society, culture and forests: human-landscape relationships in a changing world	

Name	Organisation	Reports/Papers Cited	Documents Provided	Weblinks
Bill Slee	James Hutton Institute	Comments on Opportunities to access woodland	Short, C. (2011) Forests and Forest Landscapes as Commons: Changing traditions and governance in Europe Personal Communication	
Richard Snow	Plunkett Foundation		Plunkett foundation (undated) Abriachan forest trust Plunkett foundation (undated) Hill holt wood Plunkett foundation (undated) Metsaliitto case study Plunkett foundation (2011) Community owned village shops: a better form of business Plunkett foundation (undated) Steward wood.	
Wendy Thompson	Natural England			www.jrf.org.uk/publications/community-organisations-controlling-assets
Judy Walker	Smallwoods	Coed Lleol. End of Project Report	Coed Lleol (2010) Coed Lleol End of Project Report 2008-10	
Jenny Wong	Wild Resources Ltd			www.golygfagwydyr.org www.longwood-lampeter.org.uk www.dyfiwoodlands.org.uk
			Coetir Mynydd (2009) Russell Commission Youth Volunteering Grants 2008-09 Coetir Mynydd (2011) Parc y Bwlch Forestry Questionnaire results: Rhiwlas Coetir Mynydd (2011) Parc y Bwlch Forestry Questionnaire results:Tregarth WTA Education Services (2009) Parc y Bwlch consultation - project evaluation	

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Name	Organisation	Reports/Papers Cited	Documents Provided	Weblinks
			Coetir Mynydd (2009) The Parc y Bwlch Community Consultation Report	
			Responding to opportunities: Blaen Bran Community Woodland	http://llaisygoedwig.org.uk/what-we-do/case-studies/
			By the people – for the people: Coed y Bobl Community Woodland	http://llaisygoedwig.org.uk/what-we-do/case-studies/
			Sustainable local firewood: Llangattock Community Woodlands	http://llaisygoedwig.org.uk/what-we-do/case-studies/
			A steep learning curve. Ruperra Conservation Trust	http://llaisygoedwig.org.uk/what-we-do/case-studies/
			Turning a vision into reality: Coed Marros Co-operative	http://llaisygoedwig.org.uk/what-we-do/case-studies/
Sarah Vaughan	The Silvanus Trust			www.pentiddy.co.uk/
				www.axewoods.org/
				www.friendsofkilminorthwoods.co.uk/
				www.bulworthyproject.org.uk/
				www.bcwoodland.org.uk/
				www.newtonnoss.co.uk/brookings_down_wood.asp
				www.theblackdownhillstrust.org.uk/
				www.nerochescheme.org/
				www.wiltshire.gov.uk/leisureandrecreation/parksandopenspaces/countryparks.htm?cp=CP_OAKF&ac=show