



# *Friends of the Woodlands* Friends of the Woodlands

## A guide to the Community Contracting Initiative (CCI) in The Mersey Forest



The National *community forest* Partnership

Partners



MERSEY  
FOREST  
TRUST



# Friends of the Woodlands

## A Guide to the Community Contracting Initiative (CCI) in The Mersey Forest



The Community Contracting Initiative (CCI) is a project set up in partnership between The Mersey Forest Partnership, BTCV (British Trust for Conservation Volunteers), local authorities and woodland owners.

It was set up to provide support to communities within the Community Forest who wish to improve and look after their local woodlands.

This guide will lead you along the steps that the CCI partnership took to establish and develop new community groups. It sets out to show the process that groups follow as they develop their expertise, woodland and projects.

It will also provide you with some fresh ideas and tried and tested ways for making your community group more effective.

The Community Contracting Initiative aims to bring social, environmental and economic benefits to local people. This guide explores each of these themes in turn, giving practical suggestions on how groups can achieve these aims.

I hope that it will be a useful guide for all the groups that are part of the Community Contracting Initiative, for groups who may become CCI groups in the future and for anyone who is involved with community organisations and woodlands.

Friends of the Woodlands was compiled by Ms Mac Carding and Ms Jo Sayers  
Co-ordinators of the Community Contracting Initiative in The Mersey Forest  
April 2003

The Mersey Forest

The Mersey Forest is a 30 year project and the largest of the 12 Community Forests in England, covering 409 square miles across Merseyside and North Cheshire. The Forest is a partnership of nine local authorities in the area including Ellesmere Port and Neston BC, Vale Royal BC, Halton BC, Warrington BC, St Helens MBC, Liverpool CC, Knowsley MBC, Sefton Council, led by Cheshire County Council, it has a strong partnership of over 30 other key organisations.

The Mersey Forest has been in existence for over 10 years and is being created on all types of land including agricultural, public, private, derelict and industrial land.

Other habitats are created too, for a range of wildlife types. However, just as importantly, the Forest Partnership is working to manage existing areas of woodland and other types of green space within the boundaries.

The Community Forests are all about improving quality of life for people who live and work within it. Within The Mersey Forest Plan “It is a fundamental objective of The Mersey Forest that all should be encouraged to participate in the planning, development and enjoyment of their Forest and, through their commitment to it, play a part in its long term stewardship and ownership”.

This is the foundation for the Community Contracting Initiative, whereby the communities manage habitats in the long term and reap the benefits too.

BTCV are key partners within the creation and management of the Forest and have been instrumental in providing the support and experience in working with local people in delivery of this concept.

The success of this approach has been the joint ownership of and credit to the commitment of all the individuals from the community, groups and organisations involved.



Friends of the Woodlands

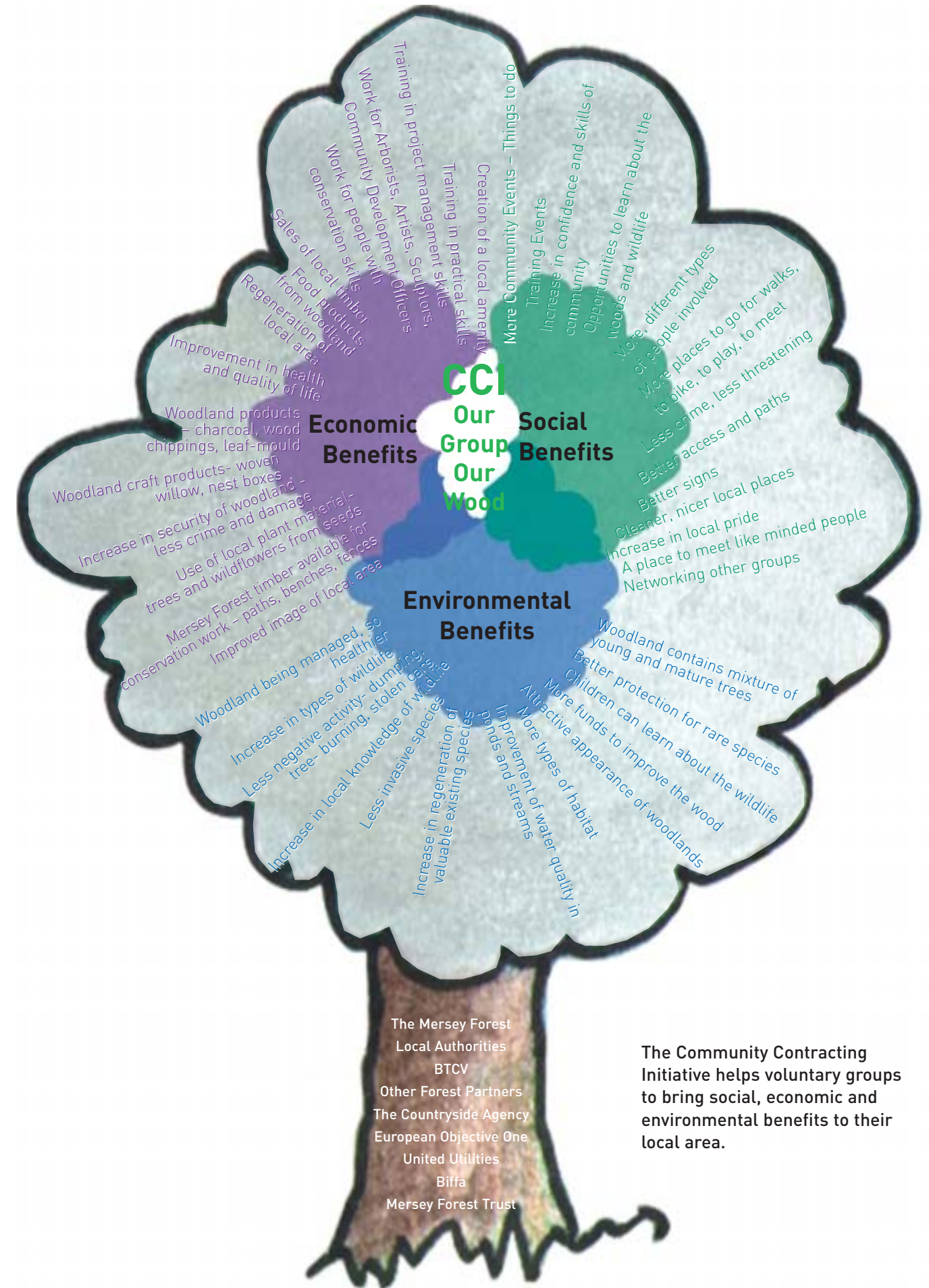
A Guide to the Community Contracting Initiative (CCI) in The Mersey Forest



	Page
Introducing the Community Contracting Initiative in The Mersey Forest	3
Following the CCI Model	7
Section A:	7
Starting from Scratch. No site, No Group	7
A1 Choosing a woodland	8
A2 Getting a group started	8
Section B:	9
Starting from a Base: Existing Group with a woodland	9
B1 Aiming for affiliation to CCI	9
B2 Action planning – Making a development plan for the group	10
B3 Implementation - The annual cycle of planning, implementation and review	12
B4 Annual review	15
Section C:	16
Well established groups in the CCI Network	16
Bringing Social Benefits	17
1. Publicising your group	20
2. Holding meetings	21
3. Telephone tree	22
4. Running events	23
Bringing Environmental Benefits	27
1. Creating a Woodland Management Plan	30
2. Education and awareness raising	32
3. Carrying out woodland management	32
4. Training and skills	33
5. Woodland tasks	33
Bringing Economic Benefits	35
1. What are the economic benefits?	39
2. Economic audit	40

Appendices





## The Community Contracting Initiative - CCI

The Community Contracting Initiative provides support to community groups who undertake the long-term stewardship of woodlands in The Mersey Forest.

### Why CCI?

#### Community

The CCI brings together members of the **Community** with an interest in improving their local woodland, with the landowner. Through the CCI, the group receives a package of funding and professional support from a wide range of forest partners, coordinated by The Mersey Forest Team and BTCV. The landowner still maintains liability and responsibility for the site.

#### Contracting

The community group decides which tasks are required for the improvement and sustainable management of their woodland and the level of activity that they can undertake. They **contract** professional help for tasks that are beyond the capacity of the group.

#### Initiative

The CCI project is an **Initiative** that was developed and is coordinated by The Mersey Forest Team in partnership with BTCV.



### Some Background to the CCI

*Why involve Community Groups in the long-term stewardship of woodlands in The Mersey Forest?*

The high costs of bringing neglected woodlands into management and ongoing battles against negative use are major disincentives for landowners to manage these sites.



Community involvement at Littlewood

A woodland and its wildlife that is understood and cared for local people has a greater degree of protection from abuses such as fly tipping, tree-burning, criminal activity and damaging developments. Local groups can often devise original successful strategies for minimising and remedying abuse of the woods.



Littlewood 'Before'



'After'

The existence of and publicity generated by a 'Friends of The Local Woodland' group often helps the wider local community to value this resource and can bring ongoing protection to the woodland through future generations.

A greater use of woodland areas by the community and a reduction in negative pressures allows the landowners to justify higher levels of expenditure on managing the woodland; as it becomes an amenity now valued by the local community. (See figure 1 - page 6)



## Section A:

### Starting from scratch - No Woodland, No group

The CCI Model has been developed by The Forest Partnership, with Friends Groups undertaking this approach over the past 5 years.

Firstly, it describes a simple step by step process through which a new group would form (Section 'A'). Secondly, it enables existing groups to become part of the 'Network of CCI Friends' (section 'B').

The long term aim is so each of the Friends Groups' build up expertise, to the extent where the group can negotiate and work directly with the landowner through the yearly action planning process, with the CCI Forest Network acting in support, if desired.

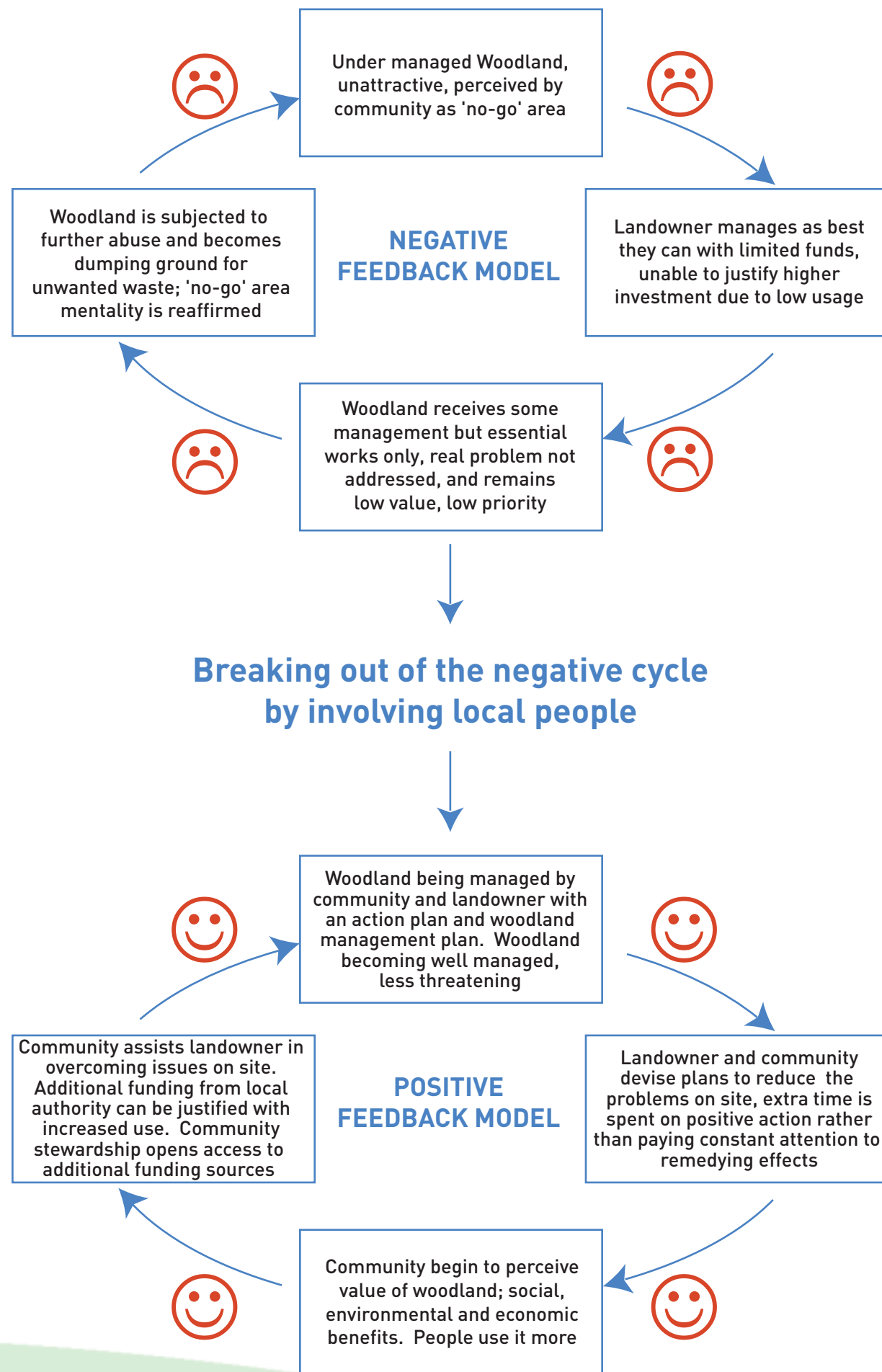
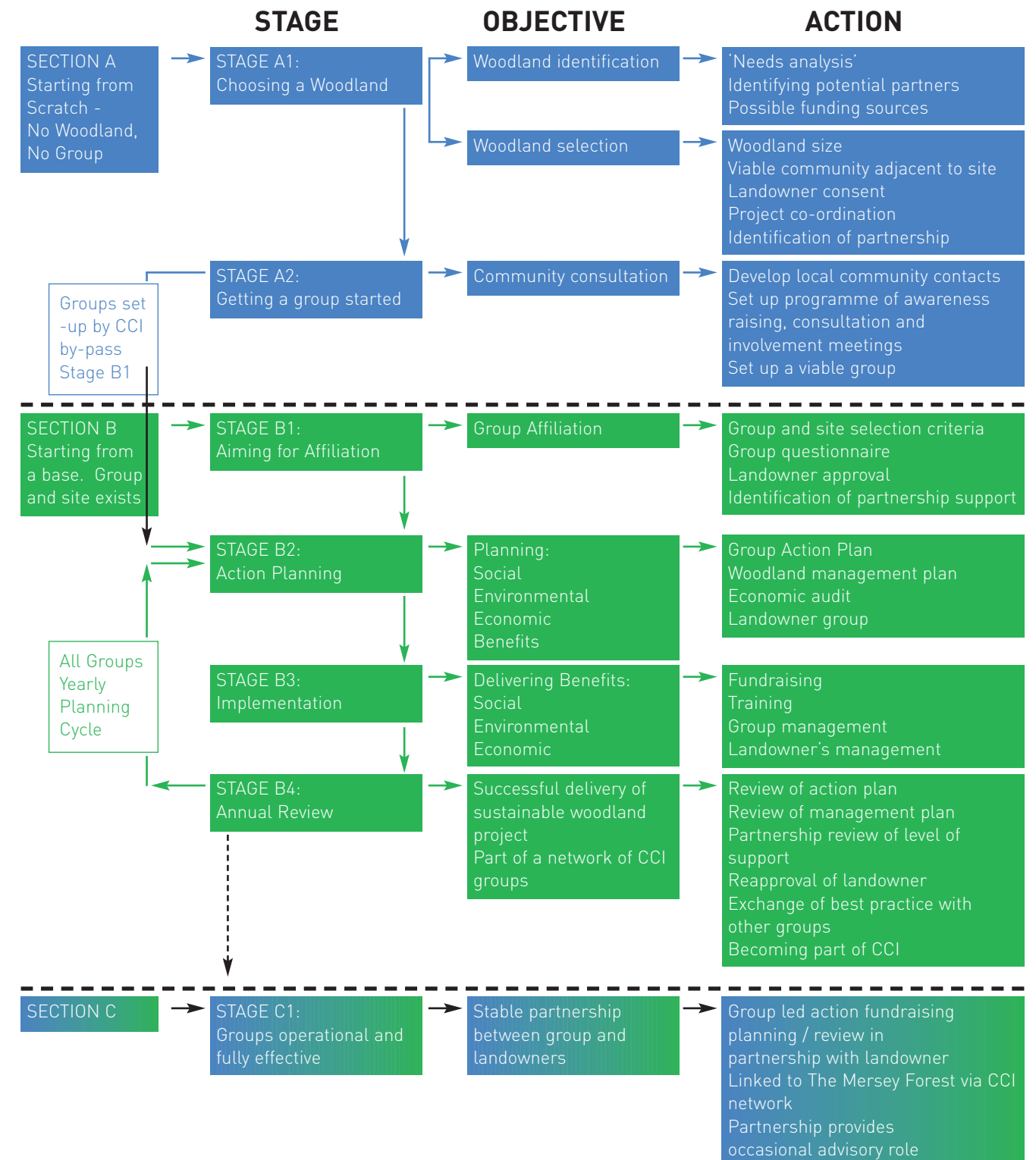


Figure 1 - Local people can change a neglected wood into a local amenity.

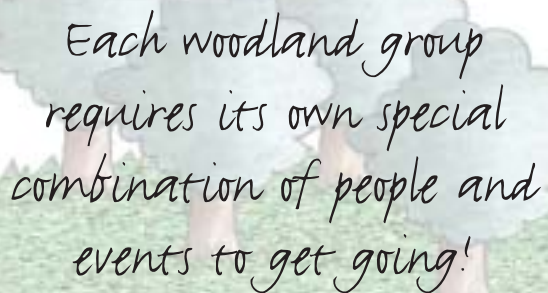
## A1 Choosing a woodland

Throughout The Mersey Forest there are neglected woodland sites with no community group involvement. During the last three years, the CCI has set up community groups to care for some of these neglected woods.

In each case The Mersey Forest partnership has first assessed the potential of a woodland as a CCI site.

### The ideal community woodland

- 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



*Each woodland group requires its own special combination of people and events to get going!*

## A2 Getting a group started

Carry out an information search

- Management plans
- Historical information
- Maps
- Memories
- Wildlife surveys
- Community plans
- Previous events on site

Get people together –

- The landowner
- Local Authority and councillors
- Residents and Users
- Voluntary and other organisations

Organise some awareness raising events

- Walks
- Talks
- Presence on site to talk to dog walkers and other users
- Press
- Internet
- Approach other interest groups
- Run training events
- Run craft courses
- 'Piggy-back' events (using events set up by other organisations to promote the idea of a woodland friends group)
- Fun Day events
- Public Consultation

A viable group can be formed when a minimum of six people with an agreed aim are prepared to hold scheduled meetings. The Friends Group can then start to plan, begin to put together a constitution, obtain insurance and open a bank account!

## Section B:

### Starting from a base

#### **B1 A group with a woodland, aiming for affiliation to the Community Contracting Initiative**

If an existing 'Friends Group' wishes to affiliate to the Community Contracting Initiative it needs to meet the CCI criteria. (See box below)

An enquiry is made to the CCI Co-ordinator who sends out a questionnaire to the group. (See the Appendix - 'Questionnaire').

Groups may be very new and inexperienced, providing that they are committed to the principles, in Section C of the Criteria set out below.



#### **Criteria for existing community groups wishing to join the Community Contracting Initiative**

- A. Groups must be based at a woodland site in The Mersey Forest area. The woodland must be at least 2 acres (0.7 hectares) or more.
- B. Groups must have the agreement of the landowner that they may undertake work and hold events at the woodland site.
- C. Groups must demonstrate a commitment to:
  1. The long term stability of their group: ideally with a constitution or set of rules, a bank account, insurance cover, new membership recruitment, regular meetings, a calendar of events, active links with other community groups and professional organisations, the ability to secure and capacity to manage funds, development of the skills of the group's members.
  2. Active management of their woodland for wildlife and habitat conservation, following a professional action plan.
  3. 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. Developing the economic potential of the wood, eg. as a training venue for conservation skills, producing woodland products, eg. charcoal, hazel or ash rods, craft materials.
  5. Sharing information about its activities, events, achievements, success and failures with other CCI groups and CCI funders.



B2 Action Planning

A Development Plan

Where a new group is set up, or when an existing group is struggling, it can be beneficial for the members to come together to create a long term strategy for the group.

This strategy or development plan, looks at the long term goals for the group - what they are aiming to achieve over a five year period (or longer). The group would then prioritise actions into those which **must** be done first, those which **should** be done one day, and those which **could** be done one day, and whether these will be done now, soon or later.

The plan will outline the range of areas of work, including the group's own management. A group will also consider including its own values, its broad aims and 'mission statement'.

Once completed and formally adopted by the group, the development plan can be professionally printed and used to inform funders about the group.

It should be used as a working document to check progress, and as a basis for creating the annual action plan.

Making a Development Plan

An ideal way to create a development plan for a group is to hold an "Away-day" or even a weekend. Then, everyone can focus on the future for the woodland.

An experienced facilitator will lead a group through a sequence of stages to produce a coherent strategy for the future of the group.



Littlewoods at Stockbridge Association working with 'the icarus collective' to produce their development plan

The planning day or weekend should be fun, friendly, well fed and have an experienced facilitator. You can ask the local schools to make a model of the woodland and use this (or large maps) to help you to plan.

A page from The Littlewoods Development Plan

Area : Community Involvement					
Aim : Encourage local people to become actively involved with all aspects of the project					
Objectives	Priority	When	Who	Evaluation	Completion Date
1 : Organise events that are relevant to woods, LWSA, and of interest to local community e.g. Open day with fun run, Don Whiting - walks, and craft displays; Walks with Ramblers; Woodland Management and Clean ups; Talks; Halloween party; Trips to Grizedale; Social events for LWSA; Arts Projects	Must	Now - ongoing	Group with partners	Number of events/ activities, local people taking part	
2 : Work with KMBC to provide socially acceptable frontage treatment to woodland adjacent to housing	Should	March 02	With partners	Level of satisfaction of residents affected, reduction in litter, fly tipping	
3 : With KMBC, 'Tidy Britain' and other partners undertake a 'stop litter' campaign to educate the community and to raise awareness of issues	Could	March 02	With KMBC environmental campaign team	Reduction in litter	
4 : Undertake projects in woods including removal of dangerous trees and improve paths to help motivate local community	Must	Sept 01	Group with partners	Number of visible activities / projects taking place and level of community interest & involvement	

Example Themes Used to Create a Development Plan

Each theme would be explored by group members in structured workshops until the group's own ethos and priorities are identified and agreed.

- **Ground rules for meetings**  
eg. Respect for each other.  
One person to speak at a time.
- **Values**  
eg. "We believe that everyone has a right to be able to get into the woods", "We want to ensure the wood has a long term future", "We believe that preserving wildlife and habitats is our main priority".
- **Core purpose and vision** - usually a one sentence statement  
eg. "Our group will ensure that Womble Wood will be a peaceful haven for wildlife and will be used and valued by local people".
- **Areas of work**
  - Running the group
  - Holding events
  - Woodland tasks
  - Training our members
  - Community involvement



- **Main aims under each work area**  
eg. Community Involvement - Aim: Encourage local people to become actively involved
- **Specific activities or objectives with priority order**  
Must, Should, Could (or Now, Soon, One Day)  

eg. Organise charcoal burn and barbeque	Could
Adopt constitution	Must
Improve paths	Must
Organise and publicise walk at bluebell time	Should

B3 Implementation - The annual cycle of planning, implementation and review

In the spring of each year, with assistance from their support officers, groups should plan their tasks, events and activities and work out the projected expenditure for the financial year ahead.

Groups should look at the long-term development plan and the woodland management plan and review the progress in each area of work.

Write down, one point at a time what you will do in the coming year.

For each action work out – what, why, where, when and who will do it? and a rough estimate of the costs. Your activities will all bring social, environmental or economic benefits to your woodland and the surrounding area.

EXAMPLE

Friends of Woolmiltonley Woods Action Plan 2004

- Action 1:

Create a smooth path and celebrate the opening with a Sunday Picnic for Groups and Mums and Toddlers
- Why?

For all users of the woods, especially requested by the Nursing Home residents and the Mums and Toddlers from the Community Centre. (Social benefits)
- Where?

Linking our new bench with Woolmill Road and Milton Ley.
- When?

Summer, while the weather is dry!
- Who?

BTCV and Friends group with assistance from Local Authority Rangers. Mike and Jim to liaise with Rangers. Ted and Sue to organise.
- £££ Needed:

Path: Material costs to be met by Local Authority; 3 x BTCV Days; Picnic for 30 adults and 20 children £150 max
- Action 2:

Create wild flower meadow
- Why?

To encourage butterflies and other insects, for the enjoyment of all wood users and for the Junior Rangers to study. (Environmental benefits)
- Where?

Opposite new bench.
- When?

Seed sowing in pots spring/summer 2004; ground preparation winter 2004; seed sowing and planting of pot grown plants, early spring 2005.
- Who?

Junior Rangers, school groups and Scouts to sow and grow seeds in pots. Friends group and BTCV to prepare ground. Friends group and Junior Rangers to direct sow seed and plant pot grown plants. Jim to liaise with school and garden centre, Ted with Scouts.
- £££ Needed:

for 1 BTCV day; Seeds £250; Plant pots and compost free from Garden Centre
- Action 3:

Cut the willow planted three years ago, use for 'Willow in the Garden Course'
- Why?

Annual cutting of willow required. Group earns large portion of the course fees. (Economic benefits)
- Where?

The willow beds and Woolmiltonley Community Centre.
- When?

February/March 2005.
- Who?

Group to cut willow, Pam to run course with Ted. Group to put up posters around pubs and shops in Woolmiltonley, Clinkgate and Whisterham.
- £££ Needed:

4 new secateurs £36; Community Centre Hire £14; Posters £5
- Projected income generated £100:

£50 from Course; £50 for Pam; £50 for the Group



Community Contracting Initiative Groups receive advice, practical assistance and networking opportunities.

- 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.
- The CCI Coordinator 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.

CCI Groups can have practical, physical work carried out.

- The BTCV provides teams to work with group members to carry out practical work, paid for by the CCI.
- Additional professional expertise, labour and sometimes additional funding can be brought in where necessary.

Training

- 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.

Funding

The Mersey Forest Team raises the funds, which are allocated to the groups as necessary, depending on what the group needs to carry out their annual action plan.

- Funding can be provided for the group's running costs, insurance, equipment and materials such as plants, trees, tools, display boards, reference books, safety boots, etc.
- Funding can be provided to help groups to organise successful woodland events and volunteer activity days; for example, money for publicity materials, environmental artists, refreshments for volunteers.

What does a group have to do in return for CCI support?

To qualify for the resources and support given by CCI, groups participating must aim to bring some social, environmental and economic benefits to their local woodland and its immediate area.

The group must also strive to 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, eg. "Trees of Time and Place", "Bluebell Recovery", "Woodland Wildflower Project"
- Be open and try to attract new members

The work that is planned by the fictitious Friends of Woolmiltonley Woods would bring social, environmental and economic benefits to its local area, meeting all the requirements of the Community Contracting Initiative.



**Each spring the group should**

- Provide an evaluation and annual summary of the previous year's activities, events and achievements. (See Appendix A)
- Produce a costed action plan of activities for the coming year bringing social, environmental and economic benefits, with a calendar of events and activities.

Each year during May or June a summary of the Action Plan with the request for funding has to be submitted to the CCI Coordinator.



The work must be consistent with the woodland management plan and be undertaken with the agreement of the landowner.

It helps if you think about the following headings:

- **Practical work days:** Any large scale activity that the group feels it cannot do alone, eg. step, path or boardwalk creation, woodland thinning, large scale rubbish removal, pond or meadow creation. These are often co-ordinated by BTCV.



Large scale rubbish removal

- **Training:** Members can request training in any aspect of woodland management or craft skills that they feel would be useful to the group or training that would help to sustain the group, eg. facilitation or chairing skills, bookkeeping, fundraising.
- **Equipment:** Groups need basic equipment to run the group and carry out tasks
  - They can request funds for stationery, printer ink, tools, safety equipment, reference books, etc.
- **Events and publications:** Groups are encouraged to organise events and open days to attract new members and spread awareness of the woodland and its wildlife. Some funding is available towards the cost of such events and for newsletters, display boards and publicity fliers.
- **Other support required:** eg. insurance.

Groups should consider whether they have any other needs, eg. professional assistance to undertake major physical works, guidance on drawing up a management plan or a constitution or help revitalising the group or resolving entrenched conflicts between group members.

**B4 Annual Review**

Every year in the April or May, groups need to produce a review of the previous year in an annual report.

Thinking about the past year's work is often very helpful for groups as it can create a real sense of achievement!



Groups can have help from their support officer to write their annual review.

The outcome of the work is not just about how many events or clean-ups you did, but also about the beneficial effects of doing them!

**EXAMPLE of Outputs and Outcomes from a CCI group****Social Output****5 events run**

- More people getting to know others, close to where they live

**3 woodland clean-up activities**

- Healthier and fitter from physical activity, happy to be part of something 'good'
- Woodland feels nicer to be in - can see species people didn't know existed, and 'feels good'

**5 people trained in wildlife knowledge**

- Transferable skills to workplace - learning, increased knowledge, teach to other people in the group

**Economic Output****10 trees felled**

- Learned to use tools, increased confidence in practical things
- Received chainsaw certificate - helped get a job six months later
- Woodland less dense and threatening, less crime here now and less cost to clear up tipping, as it's more obvious when people tip

**5 products created & sold**

- Helped craft worker to 'stay in business' through our activities

**10 New-Deal trainees trained**

- Helped them think about their career choices
- The experience helped some of them get jobs
- 1 person employed for 2 days
- Income for local consultant

**Environmental Output****10 trees felled to increase light and create glade**

- Wild flowers came up in the glade area because of more light
- Dead wood we left encouraged more species of fungus and beetles created mini beast havens



## Section C:

### Group well established - fully operational and effective

After a few years, groups will not need the same level of support from CCI officers. They will make their own Action Plans, in partnership with the landowner, only drawing on the CCI officers occasionally for advice. They will have experience and confidence in running events, attracting funding and new members.

Members of established groups will have their own links with professional environmentalists and other voluntary organisations. With such a lot of useful experience to share with newer groups, they will be very valuable members of the CCI Network of Friends Groups.



## Bringing social Benefits



### Bringing social Benefits

1. Publicising your group
2. Holding meetings
3. Telephone tree
4. Running Events



## Bringing Social Benefits - What are we aiming for?

Every CCI group has its own strengths and many groups will recognise theirs in the following.

### Imagine the perfect group!

- They would have a well planned and publicised events and activities programme, be frequently gaining new, active members and have a membership with people of all ages and backgrounds.
- Their skilled committee would welcome all comers and would not allow one or two people to dominate their meetings or have to carry out all the work.
- The woodland would be a focus for the local community and part of the local identity; an area that people would feel proud to live in.
- The group would be working to make at least some parts of the wood accessible and welcoming to all, including parents with pushchairs, teenagers and the elderly. The wood would feel safe and be free of rubbish.
- The group would create opportunities for the local community to learn about the wood and its wildlife.
- The smiling, friendly group would be regularly seen with their display at other community events in the vicinity, talking to people about visiting the woods.
- The group would network with other groups to swap experience and knowledge.





## 1. Publicising your Group

Some ideas for publicising your group

- **Create a slide show** or video about your woodland and group activities. Make contact with other local groups and ask if they would like to see it!

*Loan of a slide projector and screen can be arranged.*

- **Community groups** who might like to use the woodland or see your presentation.
  - Photography group
  - Art Clubs
  - Local history society
  - Church groups
  - Women's organisations
  - Round Tables and Rotary Clubs
  - Trade Unions
  - Walkers groups
  - Scouts, guides, woodcraft folk, Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Wildlife Trust
  - Schools

Lists of your local organisations and societies are available at Libraries, from some Councils for Voluntary Services and from some Local Authorities.

- **Create a leaflet and display boards**, describing your group to attract new members.

A leaflet or flier could give details of meetings and the events programme. Include a name and telephone number that people could contact for further information and an address or email address for them to send in their contact details, so that you can keep them informed.

Group members could carry some of these leaflets with them all the time so that they never miss an opportunity to encourage new members!



Other organisation's events are ideal opportunities to recruit new members.

A membership secretary who takes details of everyone who has ever expressed an interest in the group is a useful role for a group member with access to a computer. Details of all meetings and events can then be mailed out.

Where the local area is compact and the group are energetic, house to house leafleting about a specific event or meeting can be very effective.

*Help with leaflet design is available.*

Your local newspapers are useful for publicising your activities. Cultivate a relationship with a reporter from the paper. Invite them to come to one of your activities and ask them to bring a photographer. Newspapers like pictures of children, busily doing things. Many papers have a notice board or 'What's On' feature where you can list your regular meetings. A designated Press Officer is another useful role for a group member who can write short features about the group and develop a relationship with reporters.



## 2. Holding meetings

Are your group's meetings welcoming, productive and enjoyable?



### Welcoming new members

If a new person attends a meeting an established member of the group **must immediately** make them feel welcome and explain the proceedings of the meeting to them. They should talk to the new person about their interest in the woodland and group, find out what they hoped the group would be like and what skills they may have to offer to the group. Make the new person feel needed. Make them feel part of the group by giving them some of the group's leaflets to distribute or a role at an event that you are planning. There is always a danger of a group not appearing to need new people because of their fear of overwhelming the new person with responsibility too soon. Don't suggest that they become the group's Chairperson at their first meeting, but do find them a small task, so that they feel the group wants them to be involved.

### Making Meetings Enjoyable

Where do you hold your meetings? Ideally the room should be warm, well lit and large enough to hold the group. A large draughty, village hall is not ideal, and you may find you lose potential members, because spending evenings in such an environment is not their idea of fun. Some groups meet at the homes of their members, share a bottle of wine or eat cakes. Make your meetings enjoyable and you will thrive!

### Have a 15 minute 'tea-break' at your meetings.

This gives everyone the chance to get to know each other better and be sociable.

*Funding is available to buy refreshments for meetings.*

Consider inviting an outside speaker to give a short presentation at some of your meetings to make the meetings interesting and informative.

### Roles at a meeting

There are two important roles at any meeting which enable things to run smoothly: the Chair (or facilitator) and the minute-taker (or recorder).

The Chair and minute taker do not have to be the same at every meeting, as long as someone takes each role and everyone knows who it is at that meeting.

Sometimes if the group Chair has a lot of information to give out or a strong view on a subject, it may be preferable for another member to facilitate or take the chair at that meeting to ensure that other members get a chance to speak.

### The role of the Chair or meeting facilitator

This person runs the meeting and needs to have a plan, agenda or list of topics to be included in the meeting.

#### The Chair or facilitator makes sure that:

- Everyone who wishes to speak has the opportunity
- The group's ground rules are always observed (eg. respect other's opinions, try to offer positive views, one speaker at a time, etc)
- New members are acknowledged, introduced and welcomed
- Decisions are reached
- Someone is responsible for taking forward each action that the group decides to take
- Every point on the agenda is covered
- Notices and information are given out
- The meeting and tea break keep to time
- There is a date for the next meeting





## The minute-taker or recorder

This person keeps a note of the decisions reached, why, who and when the agreed activities will be carried out. Usually they ensure that the notes are circulated to the relevant people after the meeting, in time for action to be taken.

*CCI funding can be used to cover group's running costs such as stationery and postage*

*There are training courses available in the skills required for running local groups*

## Preparing an Agenda

The agenda is the list of topics to be discussed at the meeting. The Group Chair would usually plan it in advance of the meeting. Members with items to add would contact the chair in advance. The agenda can follow a standard pattern at every meeting, or it can be assembled at the beginning of a meeting and posted up on a wall or blackboard.

## Reaching decisions

It is important that everyone in the group understands the decisions that are being taken and ideally that a consensus is reached. If an issue is very controversial and agreement cannot be reached, it may be wise to defer making a decision to a later date. In the meantime alternative, compromise solutions can be explored. In a voluntary group it is important that all points of view are respected and accommodated wherever possible.

**Groups should be democratic.** It is a good idea to change the Chairperson of a group every two or three years. This will prevent the group becoming too dependent on or dominated by one person. This could be written into the constitution if the group is new.

**In practice, people rarely put themselves forward for election to posts or for a committee. It is always best to make a face-to-face personal request to a group member that they stand for a position. Once they have agreed to stand, then they can be formally nominated and elected at the appropriate meeting.**

## 3. A Telephone Tree for communication within the group

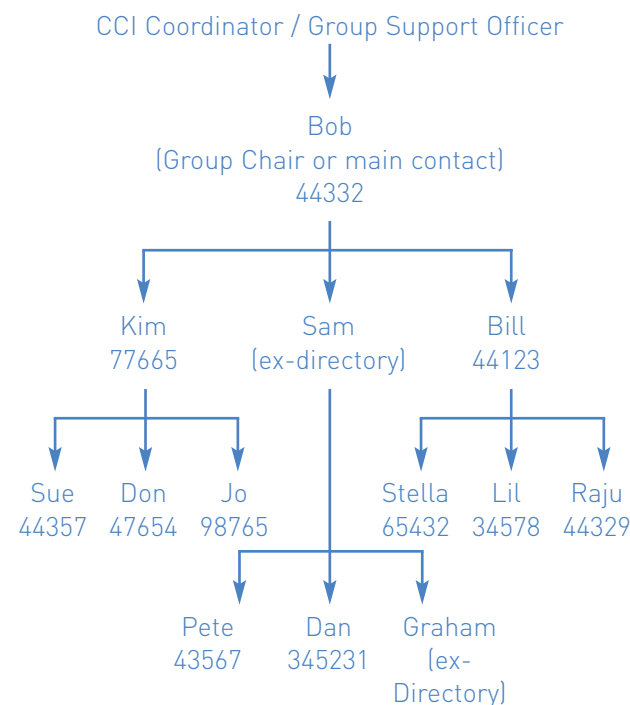
How often do you need to meet? Some groups meet monthly, others bimonthly, others quarterly. If you make a good action plan and also have group activities at intervals between meetings, you may not need to have meetings too frequently.

The disadvantage of not meeting often is that your members may not find out about initiatives that are sent to the group contact from outside organisations, so members may miss out on training and events.

It is also harder for new members to get involved.

A way around this is to organise a "telephone tree" to quickly relay information around the group.

It will look something like this.



A group can set up a system like this and add new members. No one has to make more than 3 calls and within a couple of days the entire group can know what is going on.

An established 'Telephone Tree' can be useful if the group should ever have to convene quickly, or to deal with an emergency.

Make sure that members of the group are happy with 'their' contacts. Before you give out or print out telephone numbers, make sure that you have the consent of everyone involved. Ex-directory members need only to give their number to trusted friends.



## 4. Running Events

**Groups should organise and publicise activities and events to encourage public participation**

Not everything that you do has to be related to woodland or wildlife. You could hold events at the woodland simply to get people to come to the woods, perhaps for the first time.

Ideally over time, the group could try a range of different events and activities, which would appeal to different people. Along with woodland management and educational activities, there should be some fun too!

- Consider the needs of all age groups and sections of the local community when planning events and activities.
- Some groups have a tee shirt or sweatshirt to identify and advertise the group and so that people know who to talk to about the woodland.
- The group could take part in local community events organised by other groups - and use them as an opportunity to promote the woodland group.
- When organising community events and activities, try to collect names and addresses of participants. They may like to be informed of future events
- Record the number of people taking part.
- Try to find out how local people feel about the woodland; talk to them or ask them to complete a short questionnaire.
- If you have space, put up a marquee or even some gazebos for shelter.

**Ideas for events with a wide appeal – not necessarily related to wildlife**

- Why not team up with another community group to plan a joint event (eg. Horticulture Club or women's organisation)

*see the next chapter for woodland and wildlife ideas which can easily be linked*

- Plant Sale
- Christmas Tree Sale
- Car Boot Sale
- Potato Days (Usually held in February)
- Apple Day (around 21st October)
- Firewood and Woodchip Sale
- Orienteering Challenge
- Cross Country Fun Run
- Sports Day (challenge another community group?)



The Clinkham 5-a-side 'Woodland Cup' made from wood felled in Clinkham Wood

- Parish Path Walk
- Treasure Hunt
- Easter Egg Hunt
- May Day Celebration (summer solstice, mid-winter)
- Halloween Horrors
- Bonfire Party
- Teddy Bears Picnic (or other theme, eg. 'Organic', 'bring a dish to share' 'red food')





- Barbeque
- Cookery Demonstration
- Food for Free – finding and eating from the woods and round about
- Sensory Experience Walk  
eg. with blindfold, using hand held mirrors, in the night, using magnifying glasses, fragrance
- Musical performance / Party in the Park
- Dog Show
- Pony Rides
- Craft and Woodland management Training Site
- Sculpture Gallery - for-a-day
- Fashion Show
- Story telling
- Drama
- Dance
- Art
- Willow weaving
- Sculpture
- Puppet making



Of course, not every woodland site is suitable for all these types of event, but you may be able to use an adjacent open space.

You can add a guided walk through the woods to any event.

Check with your Local Authority for any licence requirements, and that your insurance, and that of any paid contributors, has adequate public liability insurance cover for the event.

Be realistic about the work involved in organising an event. Your group will probably only be able to put on one major event each year.

## Organisations and local campaigns with funding for specific events:

- The Mersey Forest - Forest Fever (July - August)
- National Tree Week (November - December)
- The Mersey Basin Campaign - Mersey Basin Week (October)
- Tree Council - Tree Dressing Day (December)
- Tree Council - Walk in the Woods (May)
- Local Authority / Ranger Services - Healthy Walking / Festivals of Walking
- Seed Gathering Sunday (October)
- Apple Day (October)



You can get CCI funding to bring in artists



## Check list for planning an event

- **Start planning** for a big event, or one where outside agencies are involved, at least three months in advance, longer if possible.
- **Date:** Is it near to a bank holiday or in the school holidays? Is there a clash with other local events? Is it the right day of the week?
- **Time:** Set a start and **finish** time. Check that you have thought through your activities so that the start and finish time are realistic.
- **Sub committee:** members of the group involved in planning the event may wish to have more or separate meetings from the usual group meetings, otherwise you may spend too much time discussing the detail of the event at the group meetings.
- **Book any artists** or attractions well in advance. Confirm the arrangement and any fee in writing and keep copies. Contact again at least two weeks before the event to check their requirements and that they have directions to the site.
- **Check landowner and Local Authority permissions, licence requirements and insurance.** For pony rides, car boot sales, music or dance or performances, local by-laws may apply. This is not necessarily a problem - just a procedure to carry out.
- **For ALL EVENTS and activities, do carry out a risk assessment** and write it down, with your procedures for minimising the risks. Make sure that everyone knows the procedures. Your BTCV Officer can help with this. Arrange First Aid cover.
- **Publicity: You want people to come - you need to let them know about it!**

**Posters:** Make sure that you include the name of your group, what the event is, exactly where, when (date and time). Always include an eye-catching design or picture and/or use brightly coloured paper. Include a contact number for more information. Don't forget to promote your sponsors and include their logos on your publicity material.

**Put up posters and leave fliers** in local work places, newsagents, press offices, schools, shops, library, community



centre, information centre, cinema, theatres, swimming pool, gym, pubs, cafes ...

**Word of mouth:** Go to visit other local groups, eg. gardeners, church groups, Round Table and ask to speak for 2 minutes at their meeting to tell their members about your event. Visit local schools, ask to speak to the children in assembly or classroom and distribute fliers. Visit playgroups and youth clubs.

**Fliers:** Write to other community groups and ask them to give out your fliers, eg. Brownies and Scouts, churches, CVS etc. Hand-deliver fliers to houses near the site.

**Contact the local press:** Ask them to publicise your event and to attend it to take photographs. This will promote our group and please your sponsors, which will help with future funding.

## Planning the day

Work out all the costs. Make necessary applications for funding. As the event draws near, but while there is still time to change the details, go to the site and work out exactly **where** things will be sited or take place.

**Draw a plan** of where tents, stalls, straw bale seats, race track, etc will go. Measure and check if there is any doubt that things will fit! Think about car parking, nearest toilets if it is a day long event, special facilities required. Always try to keep it simple.

**Draw up a timetable or programme** where appropriate.







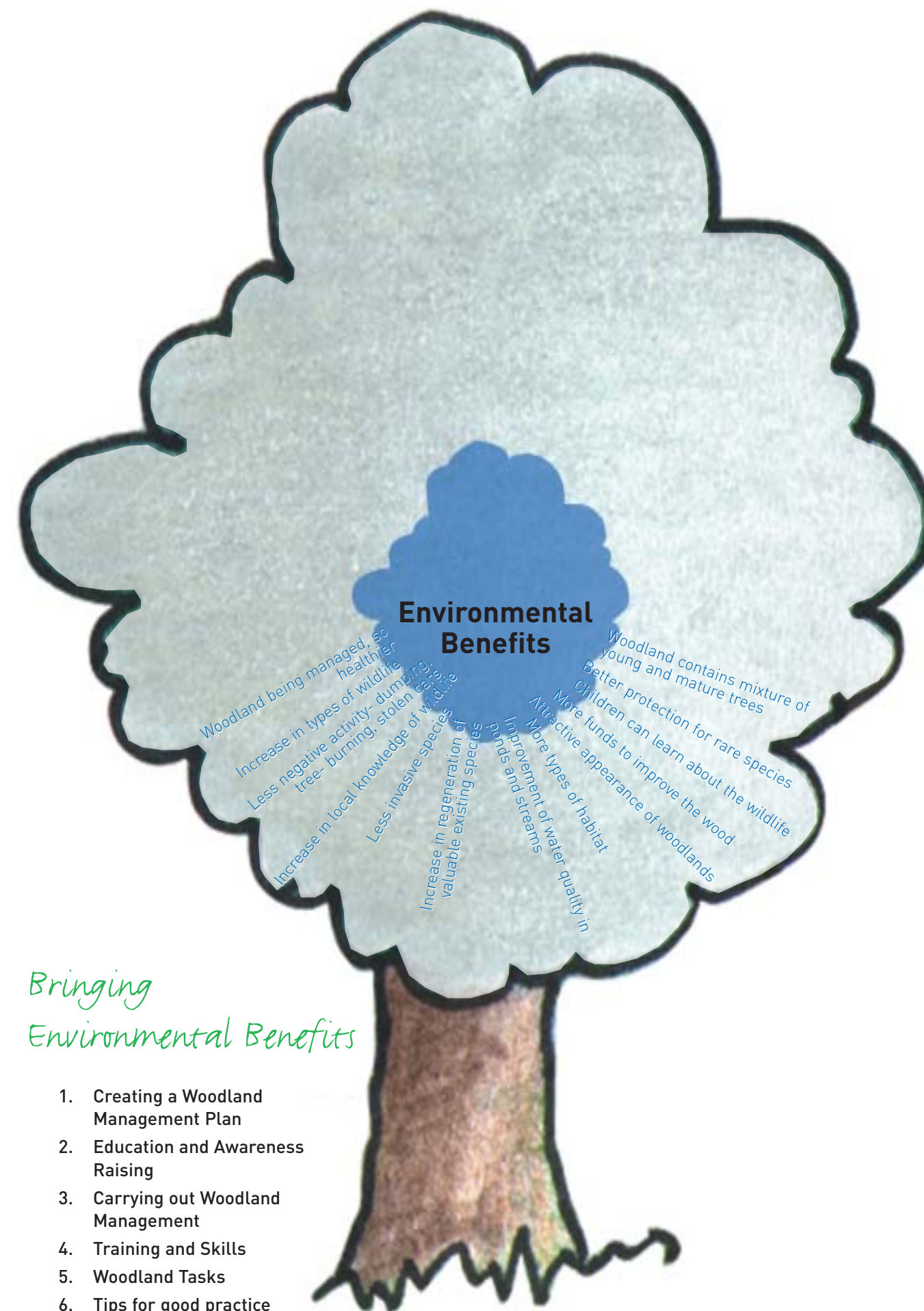
Think every aspect through and make sure that each person knows what their role will be on the day and how they will carry it out. Try to ensure that there will be at least one person free on the day to deal with the unexpected.

**Make lists** of everything that you will need to take on the day (don't forget First Aid Kit, scissors, string and blu-tak, a basket for the raffle tickets and a camera)

- **After the event:** Don't forget to say "Thank You" to everyone who helped to make the day a success. This is very important. A small card or letter will go a long way towards getting help at your next event.



## Bringing Environmental Benefits



## Bringing Environmental Benefits

1. Creating a Woodland Management Plan
2. Education and Awareness Raising
3. Carrying out Woodland Management
4. Training and Skills
5. Woodland Tasks
6. Tips for good practice





What sort of environmental benefits can a community group bring to a woodland?

Many people think that woodlands are natural places and that nature knows best how to manage a wood for wildlife. However, many of our woodlands were originally planted or replanted by people and intervention can bring improved wildlife value and increase the biodiversity.



What is biodiversity?

It's the range and variety of plants, animals and insects. So a plantation of nothing but pine trees all the same age does not have as much "biodiversity" as a woodland containing a mixture of oak, ash, hazel, and grassy glades.

In neglected or abused woodland, any important or **rare species** may be placed at risk by a lack of woodland management. Some species may require a specific **conservation strategy**; others may need control.

A woodland may consist only of the mature trees that were originally planted. If they are not locally common species that easily grow here, the wood's natural **regeneration** may not happen, because the trees' seeds may not be able to germinate in the local soil or climate.

Sometimes young trees cannot grow because of rabbit damage or dense undergrowth of species such as Rhododendron, which release toxins into the soil, stopping other plants from thriving. Good woodland management can **improve the woodland structure**, making sure that the site has trees of various ages and species and different habitats.

What is a conservation strategy?

It's a special plan to ensure the survival of a particular plant or animal and where it lives. For example, if there is a rare beetle in a wood that only eats the decaying bark of the beech tree, you need to make sure that there will always be a supply of decaying Beech wood bark for it to eat and that people do not trample on it on it by mistake. You could do this by steering paths away from where it is most active.

**Increase types of habitat.** Woodland management can give nature a helping hand by making new habitats, eg. making more places suitable for wildflowers (and their insects) by clearing rhododendrons and sowing wildflower seeds, making more nest and roost-sites by putting up bird and bat boxes.

Good management also **creates safer habitats** for wildlife by diverting intense human activity away from sensitive sites, creating areas for high use and footpaths to focus attention towards or away from specific features.

Good management can improve safety and change people's perception of the woodland from a sinister or threatening place to a pleasant environment and so increase the number of visitors. It can address **crime and misuse issues** by implementing strategies for prevention and the exposure and apprehension of wrongdoers.

What is a habitat?

It is a type of place where a particular set of types of plants or animals live. A pond is one type of habitat, A woodland is another, a grassy bank is another, a grassy bank by a stream is another, under a stone is another, etc, etc.

By carrying out woodland management the local community gains a deeper understanding of the need to manage woodlands and **develops the local skills** to do it.

Local children working under supervision in environmental education groups can undertake many woodland management tasks. A generation of children who have helped to create habitats and who understand the woodland are less likely to create environmental damage in the future.



## 1. Creating and working with a Woodland Management Plan

To properly manage a woodland, a group needs a woodland management plan. This is different from a group's action plan in as much as it only relates to the woodland and woodland tasks.

Many CCI Groups already have a management plan, which may have been professionally created for the landowner. Some groups' management plans are very old and need review and some are in the process of being developed. It is important for the group to have an understanding of the management plan if they wish to carry out practical tasks in the woodland and bring about the beneficial effects described on the previous page.

*The group may wish to modify or add to their plan and should only do this in consultation with the landowner and their support officers.*

### Understanding the Management Plan

The plan should include a large-scale map of the site. The map will be divided into different areas that may require different management techniques or have different characteristics. These are called **compartments**.

In order to create and develop a woodland management plan, considerable survey work, knowledge of conservation methods and species requirements is needed. Professional experience is valuable and advice should be sought, however community groups can make a contribution to the plan, eg. by carrying out survey work, setting the objectives, contributing to the proposals and drawing up the timetable.

A Woodland Management Plan will contain some or all of the following elements.

1. Vision - What could the woodland look like in 30 years' time
2. Objectives - what benefits can the woodland provide, for example:
  - Safe recreation on foot and for pushchair and people in wheelchairs
  - Conservation of rare plant or insect
  - Areas for school projects
  - Production of charcoal, firewood and poles for gardeners
3. General Description:
  - Size of site
  - Legal details of ownership, designations, eg. Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI or 'Triple SI'), Site of Biological Interest (SBI)
  - History
  - Location
  - Access
  - Topography and aspect, eg. steeply sloping, East/South East facing on valley sides of the River Weaver.
  - Climate
  - Soil type
  - Water courses and other non woodland habitats
  - Ground flora (plants) and shrub layer
  - Tree stands - what species? (Types, eg. Ash, Oak) How many of each? Age, height, diameter, quality, problems
4. Proposals:
 

A list of the activities which will achieve the objectives: usually for a five year period, (but sometimes further into the future).

For example (these should match the objectives listed at point 2 above):

  - Strim and clear line of path annually, level path and surface with grit stone. Install camouflaged CCTV cameras.
  - Block access to Compartment 4 with brushwood and create log piles.
  - Extension planting with native bulbs. Plant native whips in spiral guards.
  - Fell compartment 4, leaving stumps to regenerate for ash poles & firewood
  - Remove dangerous branches in all areas. Wood to be stacked for charcoal and firewood.
5. Budget
6. Timetable



# Bringing Environmental Benefits

The group and professional advisors should consider the range of environmental benefits listed on page 29 and seek to maximise them for their woodland.

The community group can bring valuable novel and unprejudiced ideas to woodland management with imaginative solutions to their specific local problems.

Woodland management to reduce damage to the environment and criminal activity.

## The Woolton Case Study

Woolton Woods were experiencing problems with drug and alcohol misuse in the woodland and gangs of youths who created dens in the dense rhododendron bushes. Dangerous litter, broken glass, used needles and syringes made the woods unsafe for people and wildlife. Vandalism, damage to trees and arson were common.

The Friends of Woolton Woods adopted a management strategy of rhododendron clearance coupled with an application to 'CitySafe' for funding to install miniature CCTV cameras hidden in bird nest boxes so that behaviour could be monitored and those responsible could be identified.

The Friends of Woolton Woods received funding to install a number of remote 3" battery operated CCTV cameras, linked, using a microwave signal similar to a mobile phone to a video receiver in a building nearby. The batteries, which last for four days, are rechargeable, and are changed by members of the Friends Group, who also monitor the video recordings. The cameras can also be used for bird watching, with an adjustable focus lens, providing close up pictures of birds attending to their nest and broods of chicks. The group have a formal protocol from the police that governs their use of the CCTV system.



The dual strategy of rhododendron clearance and CCTV Monitoring in close cooperation with the police led to a reduction in undesirable and criminal activity in Woolton Woods and an increase in the use and sense of security felt by law abiding woodland visitors.

The commitment of the Friends Group and its close cooperation with the police meant that Liverpool City Council responded very positively and promptly to a request from the Friends Group for permanent fencing and locking gates to completely close the park at night to prevent further problems. The Friends Group are key holders. They are looking at 'Defensive Planting', ie. planting with quick growing thorny shrubs as a future strategy to strengthen the fence.

*There are guidelines and protocols available from the Police, which must be followed by everyone wishing to use CCTV surveillance.*



## 2. Education and Awareness Raising

The more that the local community find out about the wildlife and beauty of the woodland, the more they may value it.

Involving the local community in carrying out practical woodland management tasks is an excellent way to educate and raise awareness of the woodlands. Specialist groups exist for many different species (bats, birds, butterflies, etc.) and their members will often be glad to visit your woodland to give information to your group or lead a walk for the local community with a talk about their species of interest.

Community groups could widely publicise their practical woodland task days to encourage members of the local community to come to join them.

Setting up a Junior Rangers or Wildlife Watch Group is an excellent way for the whole community to learn more about woodland wildlife. The enthusiastic children who join the group will have parents, grandparents and family and friends who may come to other events organised by the group.

Help with ideas and training for running children's groups is available from The Wildlife Trusts, BTCV and Environmental Trainers Network, The Mersey Forest and the Ranger Services.



## 3. Carrying out woodland management - Be effective and stay safe

It is vital that groups always carry out a **Risk Assessment** before carrying out any activity. All members of the work party should be aware of all the precautions, how to use tools safely and to think about their proximity to fellow workers. Training in carrying out a risk assessment is available from the BTCV.

Operators of power tools and machinery must have insurance, training and be wearing the correct protective clothing for their task.

It is important that before work commences, the leader of the activity explains what the task is that the group has come to do and how they are expected to carry it out, including consideration for the disturbance they may create to wildlife in the vicinity.

Anyone arriving after the activity has started should also be properly briefed by the group leader.

Groups should always plan to carry out their work with regard to the **appropriate time of the year** to minimise disturbance and to maximise the effectiveness of their efforts. In the spring and early summer months groups must think about the impact of their work on nesting birds and breeding pond life. Generally, planting trees is carried out during the winter months; path clearing and cutting back overhanging vegetation will need to be carried out during the summer. Seed sowing and gathering requires very specific timing and varies with each species.



## 4. Training and skills

The enthusiasm and confidence of a group can increase tremendously if two or three members of a group attend a training course together. Members of the Friends Groups and the local community can receive training from the BTCV. These courses lead to nationally recognised qualifications accredited by Broxtowe College. Courses are available in:

- Identification:
  - Winter Tree
  - Summer Tree
  - Woodland Plant
  - Grassland Plant
- Woodland Crafts:
  - Charcoal Making
  - Living Willow Structures
  - Bodging and Pole Lathe Construction
  - Hurdle Making Using Coppiced Hazel And Willow
- Introduction to Ecology
- Introduction to Tree Felling With Hand Tools
- Creating New Woodlands
- Pond Creation and Management
- Creating and Managing Wildflower Grasslands
- Post and Wire Fencing
- Dry stone Walling
- Access & Boundary Management
- Footpath Construction
- Risk Assessment
- Emergency First Aid
- Working with Children
- Designing and Building Timber Structures in Conservation
- Care and Maintenance of Tools and Operation of Machinery

Training is also available to CCI groups from the Community Forest Partnerships and other national and regional organisations.

## 5. Woodland tasks

Ideas list for environmental activities which may improve the biodiversity of a woodland.



- Plant young trees in existing wood
- Extend woodland area
- Protect saplings with rabbit guards
- Check and remove old tree ties/rabbit guards
- Coppice damaged trees
- Clear dense undergrowth in some areas
- Thin densely planted trees
- Create log piles – for beetles and fungi
- Create 'dead hedges' of brushwood – for birds and mammals to nest and hide
- Create paths to divert from or lead walkers to specific areas





- Maintain paths by cutting back overhanging branches/nettles, etc.
- Put up nest-boxes for various species of bird, eg. owl, robin, kestrel, blue tit\*
- Put up roost boxes for bats \*
- Create homes for hedgehogs \*
- Create homes for insect hibernation \*
- \* Designs and plans for the above are available from BTCV
- Clear litter
- Sow woodland wildflower seeds
- Plant woodland wildflower plants grown in a nursery or at home from seeds
- Extend attractive areas, eg. bluebell, foxglove, stitchwort
- Create wildflower areas on adjoining land
- Plant wildflowers at entrances and boundaries
- Carry out surveys of
  - Trees
  - Spring/summer flowers
  - Autumn fruits
  - Fungi
  - Birds
  - Insects including butterflies

## 6. Tips for Good practice

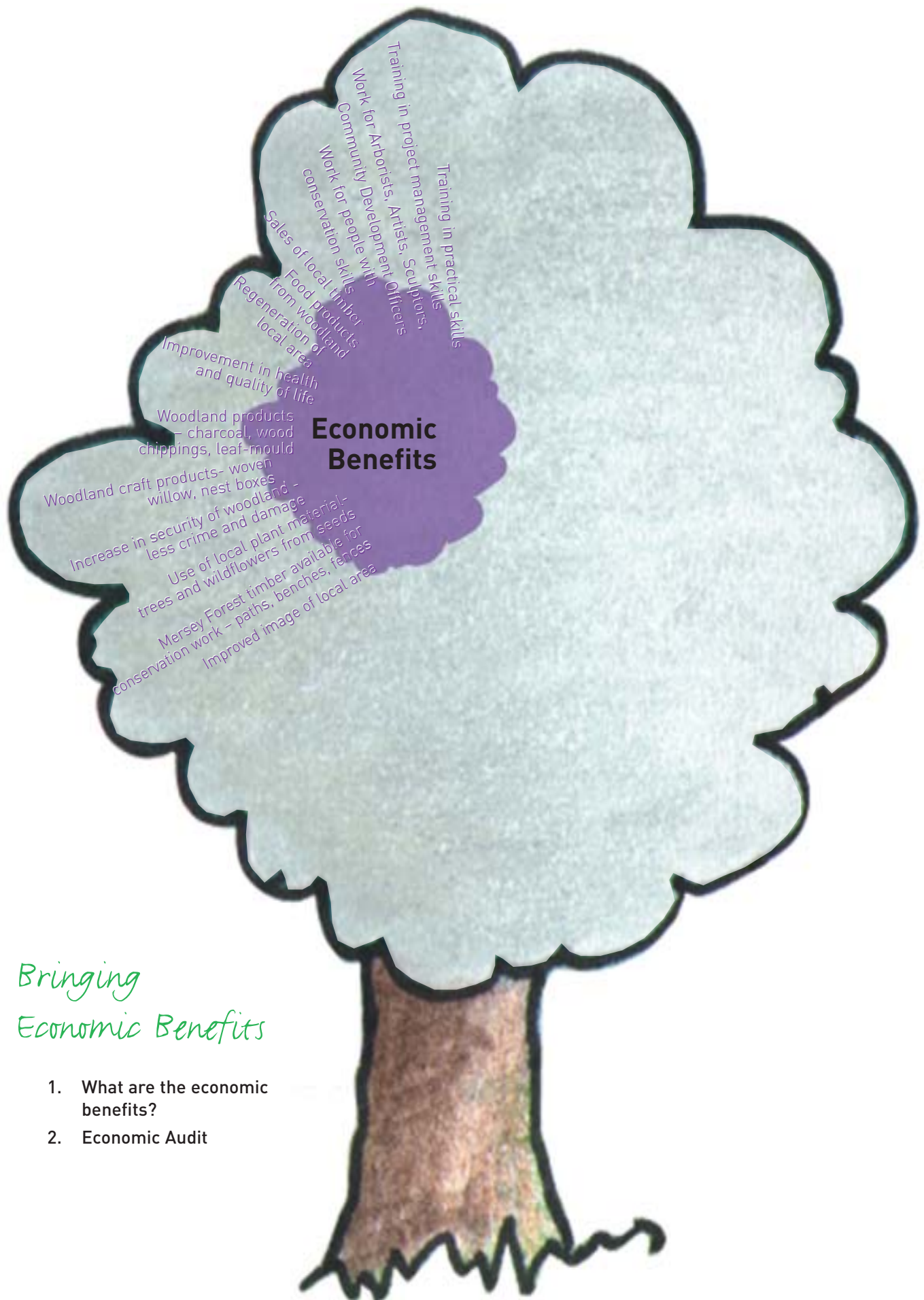
- Special features, characteristics, specimens and species of importance should be treasured and protected.
- Groups should always carry out their work with regard to the appropriate time of the year to minimise disturbance to nesting birds and breeding pond life and to maximise the effectiveness of their efforts. Planting, cutting and sowing during the optimum periods - just like gardening!
- Do provide some opportunities for the wider community to learn about the woodland and its wildlife. If the group does not have members with the knowledge and skills to lead walks, then contact your local BTCV, Community Forest, Wildlife Trust or appropriate conservation group.

*There are specialist groups for Bats, Badgers, Butterflies, Mammals, Birds and Wildflowers.*

- Groups should carry out all their work with regard to the wider environmental effects, and should have a broad environmental policy, ie. Wherever possible use recycled paper, sustainable or local timber, locally produced food for events, re-use plastic cups and cutlery, use organic management methods as far as possible, give details of how to travel to your site by public transport, etc.
- Record details of all the practical conservation work that you do. Species survey work, any interesting sightings, any increase or decrease in desirable species numbers, the number and types of nest boxes you put up or observe being used.
- Attend training courses at every opportunity, to learn new skills and gain woodland and wildlife knowledge.



# Bringing Economic Benefits



## Bringing Economic Benefits

1. What are the economic benefits?
2. Economic Audit





## Bringing Economic Benefits

**There are many ways that groups can bring economic benefit to their area.**

- By maintaining and managing the woodland, groups are creating a local amenity, enhancing the economic status of an area (and this may increase nearby house values!)
- Many CCI groups provide a valuable security service to the landowner, some acting as key holders to access gates, locking up at night and opening each morning, or by alerting police or landowners to any developing problems.
- The use of CCI woodlands as training venues for New Deal teams, arborists, estate management and conservation students brings economic benefit to the locality. As a result of experience gained from training at CCI sites, permanent employment in arboriculture or landscape management may result.
- CCI groups are creating economic benefits by adopting a fully sustainable approach to management, reusing or growing their own materials, so that they do not need to buy.
- The most obvious way to gain economic benefit from a woodland is by selling its timber or timber products, but this is the one that causes groups the most anxiety.

*No group will be penalised for  
NOT making woodland products or  
NOT selling timber!*

*These are simply listed as possibilities for  
groups to explore, as for some, they add an  
interesting and rewarding dimension to  
their woodland management skills.*

The concept of felling trees has negative associations in many people's minds. However, to maintain the health of a woodland, it should contain trees of varying ages, spaced with room to grow. Some felling can be desirable, even essential. Creating small clearings can enhance the diversity of woodland wildlife.





With the consent of the landowner, a CCI group may maximise the economic benefit of thinning or felling to earn income for their group. It is essential that the landowner is in agreement with their proposals, though where a group has a close working relationship with the landowner, BTCV or the Officer, this should rarely present a problem.

One of the interesting developments that the CCI project has brought, is woodland passing from being the sole preserve of a landowner into community stewardship. Through CCI, the local people can have involvement and some economic gain from their local landscape's resources.

Providing that their woodland management work fits in with the woodland management plan, there is no reason why members of a CCI group cannot provide:

- Their own and their neighbours' households with firewood and barbeque charcoal
- Timber for woodwork projects
- Benches, handrails, path edging to furnish their woodlands and gardens

Recording of the transaction in terms of volunteer woodland management labour input and timber output and its use, would be a requirement, though of course cash contributions could be made to the group where no volunteer labour takes place.

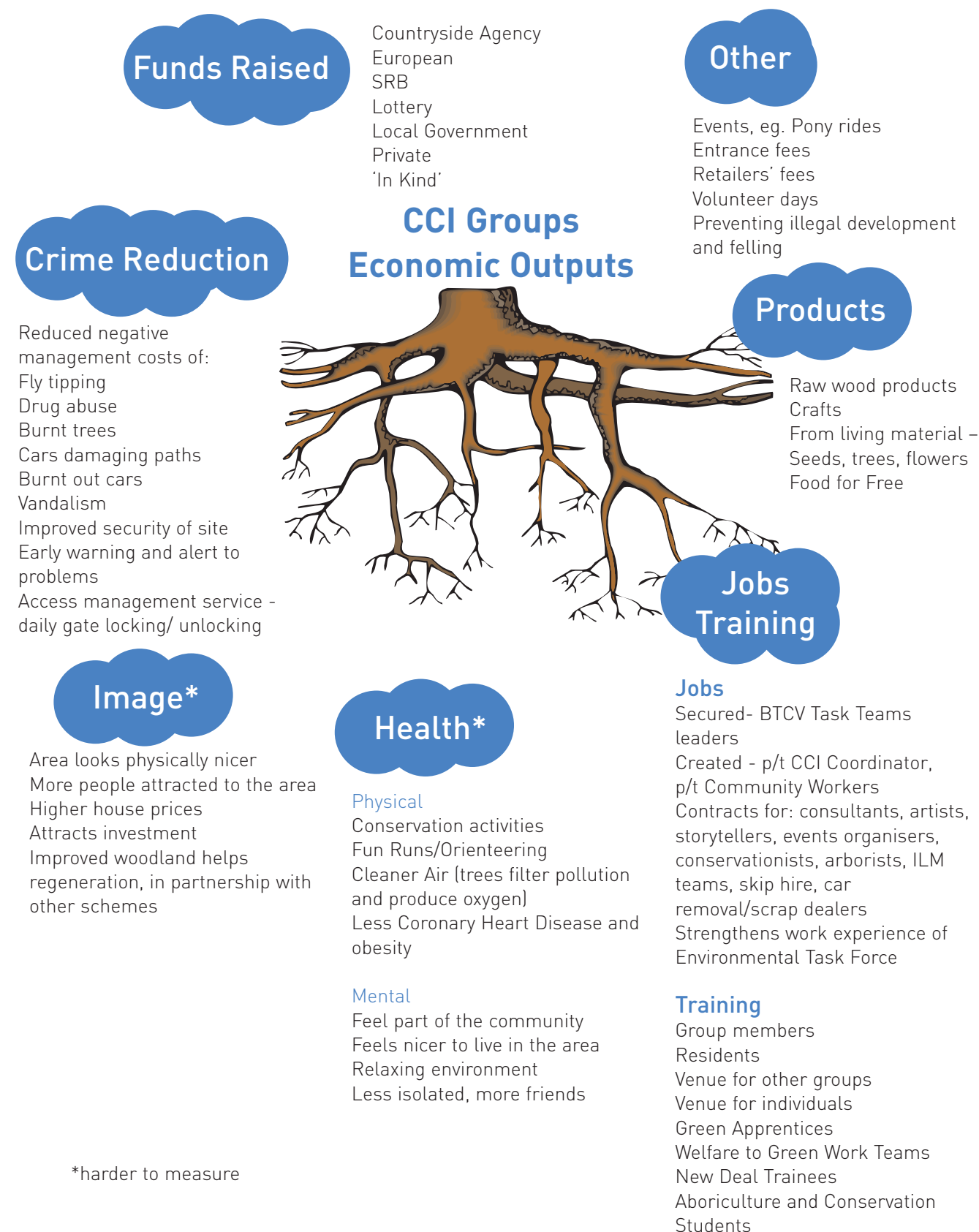
There are already the beginnings of co-operation and a sharing of resources between CCI groups. A young, newly planted woodland is set to receive very large logs for benches from a mature wood, post and rail fencing from one group's felling is to be used in another wood and nest-boxes from a CCI group's timber have been made up, sold and distributed around The Mersey Forest



## 1. What are the economic benefits?

All groups bring some economic benefits, though they may be hard to measure.

In many of these, money does not actually change hands.







## 2. Economic Audit

How can you assess the economic potential of your local woodland?

The following guide will explain how your group can find out more about the economic potential of your wood. We have called it the **Economic Audit**.

### Training and Employment

- What tasks are regularly undertaken in the wood?
- How skilled are these tasks?
- How could the group or other groups be involved?
- Within your group, what training is required and by whom?
- Could your group run training or environmental education courses - generating income through holding courses?
- Who will provide expertise (the trainer)?



- How could training potentially lead to job creation?
- How could you involve young people in the management of the wood to help them gain of new skills, training or education and help in career choice? (Or to reduce their negative activities?)
- Intermediate Labour Market (ILM) Projects, how can the woodland be a focus for these groups?
- What areas of the group's activities could be stepped up to increase the amount of 'work' taking place locally? eg. more fun day events = more work for caterers and more work for clowns!
- Could a small business be started through events or woodland activity?
- How many employed people have been involved with your woodland? Will this increase in future? eg. contractors felling, sawmills, timber holding stations, wood processors, marketing, craft workers, artists, trainers, voluntary organizations, neighbourhood workers, community development workers, local authority officers, education staff, youth workers, rangers, police, forestry management staff.

### Other economic activities potentially creating sources of income

- Could your group charge for:
  - Trees grown from seeds collected in the wood
  - Membership fees/affiliation to group
  - Social events - dance, tabletop sale fee, raffles
  - Admission to Halloween event, bat walk, fetes?
- Health events/physical activity:
  - Orienteering course
  - 'Green gym'
  - 'Healthy walking'
- Scrap metal from the wood!
- Sale of picture postcards, CDs, bookmarks etc
- Any Other???

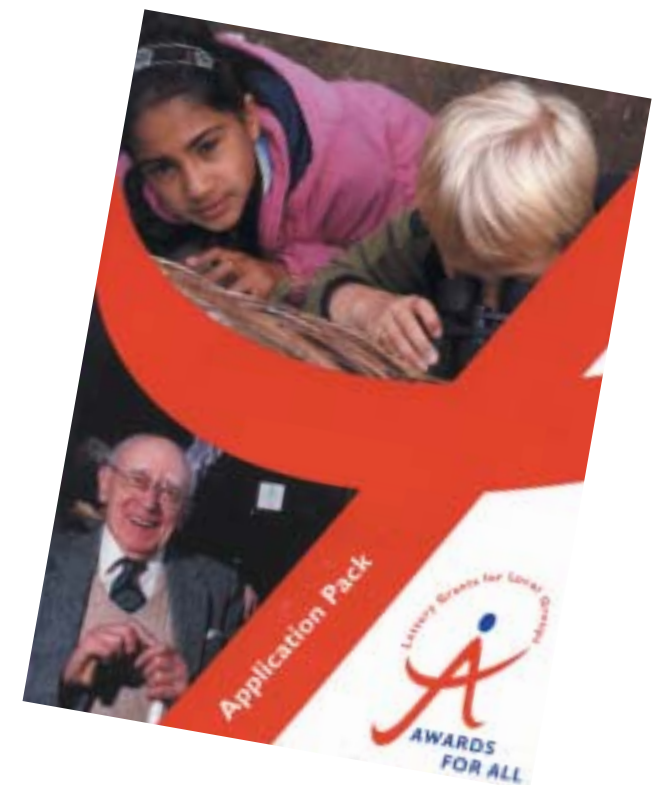


### Has your group changed the local image and reduced negative activities?

- Reduced tipping/rubbish/cars?
- Increased crime convictions through CCTV systems run by community?
- Reduced landowner's costs of management through increased community involvement?
- Reduced vandalism, eg. burning trees?
- Improved visual element of wood and image of area?

### Other Measurements and Income

- Fundraising through new sources - income generation
- Private sponsorship
- 'In Kind' support
- Volunteer days
- European/Lottery/Public Sector income
- Grants and awards.



Assessment of Timber Stock

In order to understand the value of the trees as a renewable resource, it may be necessary to undertake a survey of the trees present. The following questionnaire will enable the group to do this. This information does not imply the intention of felling trees and any work would need landowner approval, eg. in some case a felling licence may be required.

1.

How long has the woodland been present?  
E.g. newly planted 10 yrs ago

-----
2.

Area of woodland (The Mersey Forest has access computer systems which will calculate the area of land covered)

----- ha
3.

No of compartments (see page 30)

-----

For Tree Identification see FSC (Forestry Stewardship Council) Leaflet in Appendix

4.

Tree types

----- %

----- %

----- %

----- %

or No of trees

----- Oak

----- Sycamore

----- Ash

----- Various

Total No of trees

-----
5.

Count how many trees are bigger than 160 cms on girth

-----
6.

Are the trees all of a similar age?

Looking at the woodland as a whole, what percentage of trees are:

(a) young

----- %

ie. whips

----- feathered trees

(b) medium

----- %

ie. bigger than 25cms girth  
(too big to replant elsewhere)

(c) old

----- %

ie. fellable size

(d) ancient

----- %

ie. wide/hollow trunks/gnarled timber



Bringing Economic Benefits

Timber quantities and value

7.

Does the woodland have a management plan?

YES / NO
8.

Does the woodland management plan mention trees that must or could be felled?  
(This could be for either safety reasons or wildlife value, as a good, balanced woodland should have young and old trees).

YES / NO
9.

If so, how many need to be or could be felled?

No. of trees to be felled ----- in total
10.

Size of trees to be felled  
With a tape, measure the tree's girth 1 metre from its base

Girth of Tree	Tree Type
← 25cms	eg. 25 Oak, 3 Beech
150 - 250cms	
→ 250 cms	

11.

Does the woodland have any trees with multiple stems from the base coppiced trees

YES / NO
- Trees with multiple stems from head height  
pollarded trees?

YES / NO



12.

Timber Quality  
Assessing the quality of timber from trees and suggested products



Good Quality	No.
Broadleaf trees	----
Oak	----
Sycamore	----
Holly	----
Cherry	----



Not so good	No.
Pine trees	----
Birch	----
Willow	----
Hawthorn	----
Rowan	----

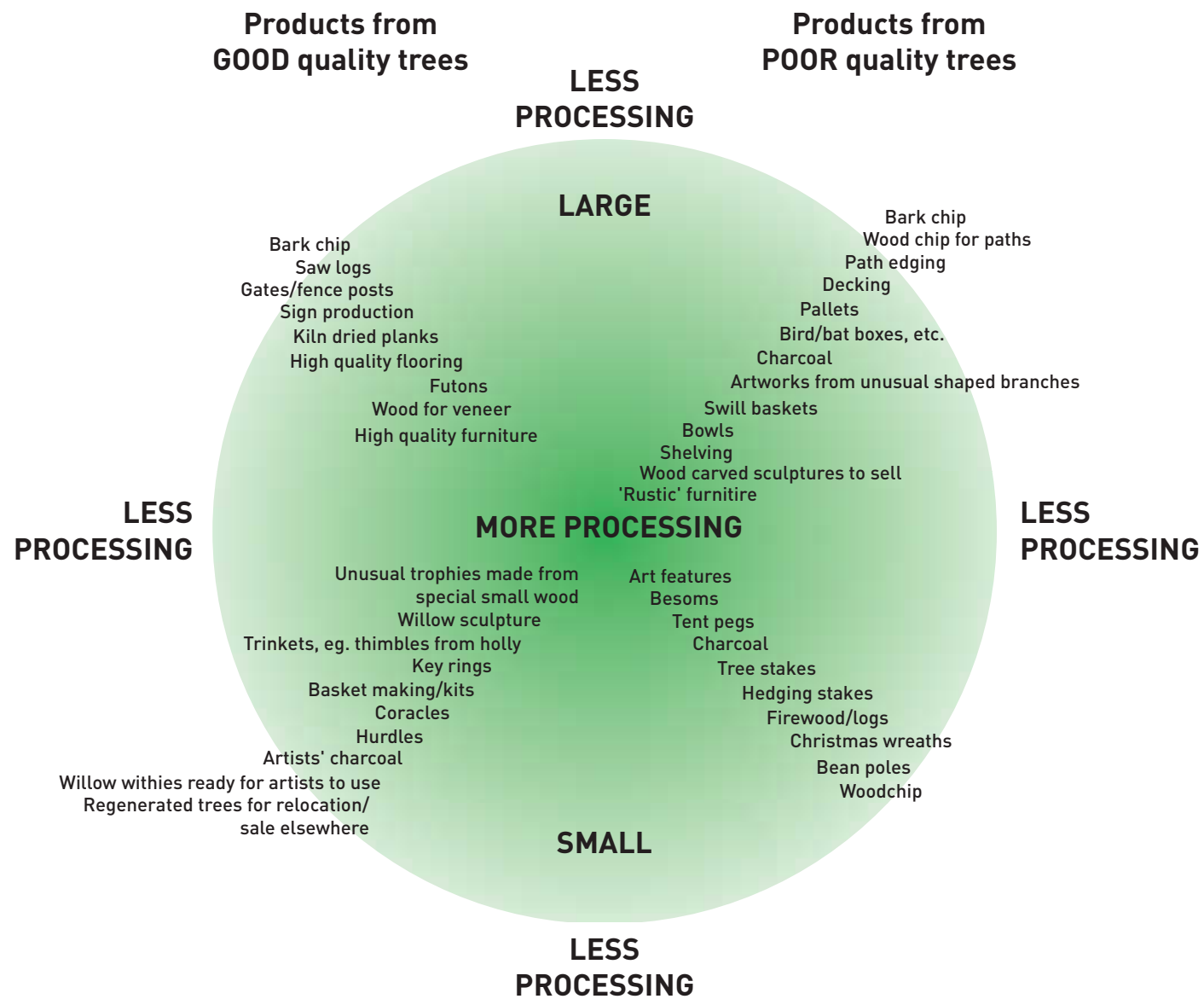
13.

From the trees to be felled, how many are:

	Good Quality	Poor Quality
Large		
Small		



14. According to the type of tree and quality you have in the woodland CIRCLE those items which you could arrange to produce.



## Skills

15. What skills does the group have?

Name of person and skill (this could include people you know outside your group who would be willing to make things for you).

[illegible]

16. What training would you need and who could be trained to produce these items?

[illegible]

17. Who would you sell these items to?

[illegible]

18. Who would help to sell the items? How would you sell them?

Who to Sell	What	How	When
eg. Jim & Jane	Charcoal	Sell to barbeque owners	Cheshire Show - Summer RHS Show - July
eg. Fred	Charcoal	Approach B&Q local garage stores to see if they will help	Once packaging has been produced - spring (ready for summer)
eg. Sally	Charcoal	Ask brother who has Indian Restaurant	(once produced and packaged) Spring

Timescales

19. Go back to question 14 and decide on your priority - mark against each product as:

- Now
- (from now up to 12 months)
- Soon
- (12 months up to 3 years)
- One day
- (if training/conditions allow it)

20. List your 'now' products. How would you package these to prepare them for sale?

21. Where will you store goods to sell?

22. How will you advertise your products (website, newsletters, press, etc)?

23. What impact will activities have on social events and wildlife?

24. What permissions will be required?

25. Where is expertise needed and what is the cost of achieving this?

26. What are your targets? How will you measure your success?

Example Targets:

- Produce 20 bags of charcoal and sell it all by next July
- 6 group members trained in techniques of wood turning
- 9 unemployed people trained in techniques of tree felling
- Break even the cost of producing woodchip (hire of chipper) - recouped by selling woodchip to BTCV
- Get a company to sponsor the charcoal and woodchip bags



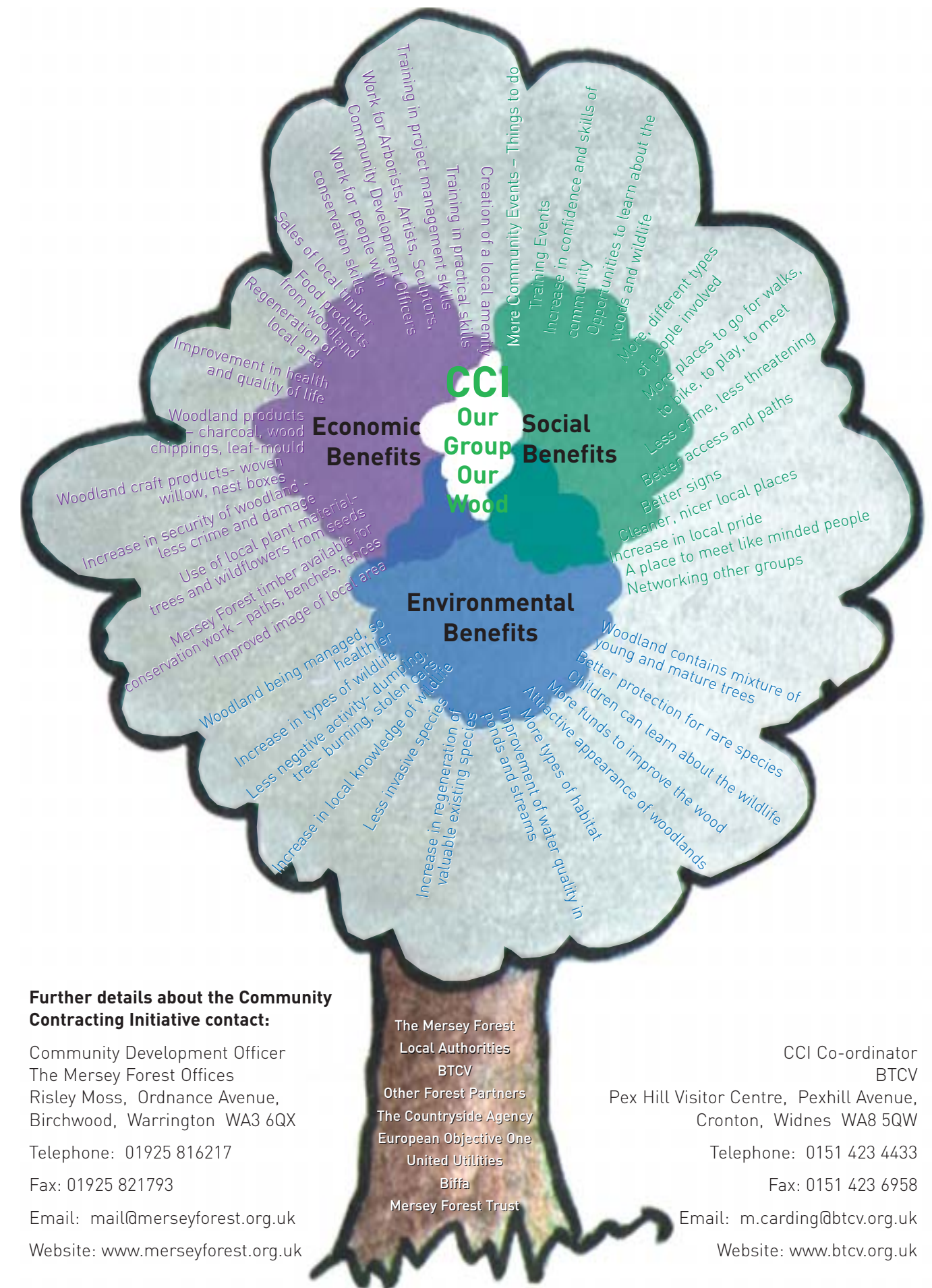
A List Of Ideas For Things For Groups to Make and Sell

Ideas generated by the CCI Groups at the spring Networking Day 2002

- Willow withies for weaving
  - Baskets
  - Woven bird nest-boxes
  - Pea and bean supports
  - Willow/Hazel hurdles
  - Ash bean poles
  - Brooms and besoms
  - Hay rakes
  - Wood for turning - green
  - Turned wood products:
    - Candle sticks
    - Rolling pins
    - House name plates
    - Walking sticks
  - Tree trunk seating
  - Tree trunk tables
  - Sculpture
  - Carvings of animals
  - Charcoal
  - Firewood
  - Woodchip
  - Biomass fuel
  - Leaf mould
  - Wood ash (fertiliser for gardeners)
  - Community composting
  - From sawn planks:
    - Timber
    - Planting boxes (or kits)
    - Bird tables
    - Window boxes
    - Bird boxes (or kits)
    - Bat boxes (or kits)
    - Hedgehog boxes (or kits)
    - Insect hibernation chambers
  - Benches
  - Bunk beds
  - Pergolas
  - Tables
  - Coffins
- Flooring
  - Beams
  - Fence posts
  - Hedging stakes
  - Path edging
  - Whistles
  - Charcoal pencils
  - Expensive rustic birthday cards
  - Leaf bowls
  - Wreaths
  - Christmas decorations
  - Window dressings
  - Living small trees
  - Wildflower seeds and bulbs
  - Willow for structures
  - Honey
  - Preserves from woodland berries
  - Recipes for woodland fruit – preserves, pies and wine







**Further details about the Community Contracting Initiative contact:**

Community Development Officer  
The Mersey Forest Offices  
Risley Moss, Ordnance Avenue,  
Birchwood, Warrington WA3 6QX  
Telephone: 01925 816217  
Fax: 01925 821793  
Email: [mail@merseyforest.org.uk](mailto:mail@merseyforest.org.uk)  
Website: [www.merseyforest.org.uk](http://www.merseyforest.org.uk)

The Mersey Forest  
Local Authorities  
BTCV  
Other Forest Partners  
The Countryside Agency  
European Objective One  
United Utilities  
Biffa  
Mersey Forest Trust

CCI Co-ordinator  
BTCV  
Pex Hill Visitor Centre, Pexhill Avenue,  
Cronton, Widnes WA8 5QW  
Telephone: 0151 423 4433  
Fax: 0151 423 6958  
Email: [m.carding@btcv.org.uk](mailto:m.carding@btcv.org.uk)  
Website: [www.btcv.org.uk](http://www.btcv.org.uk)