

COMMUNITY WOODLANDS ASSOCIATION

MEMBERSHIP CONSULTATION

FINAL REPORT

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Thanks to CWA members who took the time to complete and return questionnaires.

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Task 1 & 2 data	Supplied in separate spreadsheet	

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Community Woodlands Association (CWA), the client, has a three year Business Plan covering 2007 -2010 which sets out its purpose, functions and member services.
- 1.2 CWA Directors and staff are developing a future strategy to take the association beyond 2010. This consultation report is part of the process of reviewing the existing Plan and with the intention of informing the future strategy.
- 1.3 With the future strategy in mind, the consultation aims are to provide the CWA with
 1. An assessment of member priorities regarding current CWA member services including a record of any suggestions regarding development of these services.
 2. An assessment of member satisfaction with current CWA member services including a record of any suggestions regarding development of these services.
 3. A consultation with a sample of CWA members, based on the draft future strategy and a record of any additional strategic ideas put forward by members.

2 Background

- 2.1 The CWA was established by its members in November 2002 to represent, promote, support and coordinate the community woodland sector in Scotland. The current Business Plan identifies direction for the CWA and implementation is supported by funding from Big Lottery Fund, Forestry Commission Scotland and the Community Land Unit-HIE plus a very modest membership income.
- 2.2 CWA is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. Membership has grown steadily from 46 to over 130 community woodland groups across Scotland. An amended membership list with 123 names of member groups and contacts was supplied for this survey.
- 2.3 Membership of the CWA is open to single or multiple community led groups plus interested organisations and individuals. Thus membership is in five categories
 - Full
 - Associate
 - Standard
 - Individual
 - Umbrella

3 Methodology

- 3.1 At the outset commissioning discussions with the client were held. Two methodologies, the first for current services the second for consultation on the future development strategy were discussed and agreed. Full details of the methodologies are contained in Appendix 1
- 3.2 As an organisation which exists to provide membership services, the CWA wished to assess current priorities and current satisfaction with member services and future direction. Three tasks were identified based on these elements.

Task 1 - member views on the priority they gave to CWA membership service.
- 3.3 Members were asked to rank member service elements in the questionnaire using the following simple five level Likert item to provide Ranking Scores:

- 1 Not at all important
- 2 Not important
- 3 Useful but not essential for me and my group
- 4 Important for me and my group
- 5 Very important or almost essential for me and my group

These were summed and then averaged to give a relative score

Task 2 - member satisfaction with the content and quality of CWA membership services.

- 3.4 The methodology for Task 2 assessed member perceptions and satisfaction with the CWA performance when delivering service elements. By identifying attributes common to each of the service elements a more detailed examination of what constitutes satisfaction can be made.
- 3.5 Statements designed to identify the following service attributes were used:
 - Reliability – ability to deliver the service dependably and accurately
 - Empathy – care and individualised attention to members
 - Presentation – information, guidance and advice is provided to members in an accessible and easily understood format
 - Knowledge/Skill quality – the knowledge, competence and skills of CWA staff
- 3.6 Concerning the statements members were asked if they
 1. Strongly disagree
 2. Disagree
 3. Neither agree nor disagree
 4. Agree
 5. Strongly agree
- 3.7 Common service attributes are, in part, derived from the SERVQUAL MODEL (established by Zeithami, Parasuraman and Berry) which is a technique used for performing a gap analysis of an organisation's service quality performance against customer service quality needs.
- 3.8 The methodology to assess priority and satisfaction with current services was based on a questionnaire format circulated by email to all members followed up by email reminders and some phone calls. The proposed target was 50% (@65) of members responding.
- 3.9 Secondly CWA wished to obtain some members views on the future direction of the organisation.

Task 3 - to consult with members on the draft future strategy and record their views.

- 3.10 Initially a structured telephone interview process was proposed, based on a random sample of members. The proposed random sample was of 15 - 20% of members selected from an alphabetically arranged list of CWA member groups with

proportions adjusted to reflect the different membership categories. (2 individual, 2 associate, 1 umbrella, 8 standard and 12 full)

- 3.11 To establish a context the random sample were emailed, in advance of a telephone call, a proforma questionnaire containing the interview questions. In reality, telephone interviews proved difficult to set up, messages were left but many chose not to respond. Of those that did respond, all chose to do so by email (some after a telephone discussion).
- 3.12 For all responses members were asked to provide their names, the names of their group and their membership status. However, members were advised that this is an independent survey and their comments would not be personally attributed.

4 Results

- 4.1 Questionnaires and reminders were sent to 121 CWA members. 50 returns were recorded along with 10 who acknowledged the questionnaire but were too busy, on holiday, experiencing ill health, transferred responsibilities to another or had technological problems in returning the questionnaire. A small number also considered their membership of the CWA was too recent to allow them to form any meaningful views on performance or future direction. However, with the acknowledgement of these nil returns it was considered that the Task 1 and Task 2 target of 50% of 'potential respondents' had been achieved.
- 4.2 Full members were significantly more likely to return the questionnaire than standard members (45% v 34%). A number of the recent members joining in 2008 – 2009 considered they did not know enough about the CWA to make informed comment on current performance and future priorities. One group at least had, as yet, no woodland site and considered CWA services something they might use only in the future. Progress for some groups is very slow and they have a limited current need for CWA services.
- 4.3 A common factor appeared to be pressure on most groups and on volunteers in particular to find the time to engage with and give meaningful thought to even the shortest questionnaire. A small number of returns trickled in after the deadline and these are not included in the analysis but are in the attached spreadsheet of results.
- 4.4 Achieving the Task 3 target proved more challenging and out of 25, 12 responded with ten submitting returns or views by telephone.
- 4.5 **Task 1 - member views on the priority they gave to CWA membership service.**

Table 1

Member service elements	Av Priority Score
1 Information dissemination:	1 Not at all important
	2 Not important
	3 Useful but not essential for me and my group
	4 Important for me and my group
	5 Very important or almost essential for me and my group

E-bulletins – issued monthly, building into a reference library for you to use.	Full 3.8 Standard 3.5
E-newsletters – issued quarterly with news on what projects other groups are doing, their successes and challenges.	Full 3.5 Standard 3.6
Woodland Voices Magazine – quarterly with in-depth articles on topics relevant to community woodland groups.	Full 3.4 Standard 3.5
Website – www.communitywoods.org and including the member only area	Full 3.4 Standard 3.4
Website links - If you don't have your own website you can link up through the CWA site.	Full 2.7 Standard 2.7
2 Direct Advice on:	
Woodland management – direct, on site advice from qualified foresters.	Full 3.8 Standard 3.8
3 Direct Assistance and Guidance on:	
Scotland Rural Development Programme – registration and grants advice and guidance – IACS, BRN, WIAT II and F4P	Full 3.9 Standard 3.6
Community Right To Buy - legislation and registration information and guidance	Full 3.1 Standard 3.5
National Forest Land Scheme - in-depth assistance with applications to Forestry Commission Scotland for purchase of national forest estate land.	Full 2.9 Standard 3.1
Project Development – guidance and advice on what you need to consider when taking projects forward.	Full 3.6 Standard 3.9
Fund Raising and applications – guidance on where to source funding and the best way to approach funders, also advice on developing social enterprise or a trading arm.	Full 3.9 Standard 3.9
Governance issues – advice and guidance on where to go for all governance issues.	Full 3.2 Standard 3.3
4 Training and Networking Events	
CWA arranged training events – focussed on	Full 3.5

topics member groups ask for	Standard 4
CWA annual conference – a subsidised, annual networking event (subsidies dependant on membership level)	Full 3.5 Standard 3.6
Networking you with other community groups who have “been there and done that”.	Full 3.9 Standard 3.9
Linking you to other support organisations able to assist in specialist areas	Full 3.8 Standard 3.7

4.6 Task 2 - member satisfaction with the content and quality of CWA membership services.

Table 2

Service	Statement		
Attribute	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neither agree nor disagree 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree 		
Reliability AV 4.18	CWA provides information that is dependable, regular, up to date and accurate.	Full 4.4	St 4.2
	CWA staff are willing to help and to provide prompt, reliable on site advice.	4.1	4.5
	CWA guidance is credible and competent giving the right financial or governance advice.	3.9	4
	CWA organised training, conference, and networking opportunities are high quality and good value.	4.2	4.1
Empathy AV 3.86	CWA information is disseminated in a form which is convenient and accessible.	4	3.8
	CWA staff understand my/our needs for practical advice for our local woodland.	4	3.9
	Guidance and advice provided by the CWA meets my/my group’s needs effectively.	3.8	3.8
	CWA organised training/conference relevant to my (or my group’s) needs is provided at suitable dates and venues.	3.9	3.7
Presentation	CWA provides information that is relevant to me and/or my group and tailored to our needs.	4.3	4.1

AV 4.05	CWA staff present advice to me/my group in a form that is useful and easily understood.	4	4.1
	The guidance and advice that is provided by the CWA is presented in ways that I and my group can understand.	4	4
	CWA organised training and conference is presented at the correct level for me or my group and others with similar interests.	4	3.9
Knowledge/ Skills AV 4.05	CWA information is selected with care and focused on community woodland topics.	4.1	3.8
	CWA staff have obvious professional knowledge and skills in woodland management.	4.2	4.4
	The CWA have real professional skills in advising on appropriate and successful governance and funding mechanisms.	4.1	4
	CWA trainers and conference presenters are good communicators and knowledgeable on their topic.	3.9	3.9

4.7 Some members made some general comments to justify or support their scoring. These are recorded in the spreadsheet. The comments were, in general, very positive and complementary about the CWA staff. Significant points arising from the comments are dealt with in the analysis section.

4.8 Task 3 - to consult with members on the draft future strategy and record their views.

Table 3

SERVICE PROPOSALS	PURPOSE & RESOURCES
(1) CWA member services: Connecting, Networking, Informing, Advising, Signposting, Promoting and Representing.	These are seen as core CWA member services and will get first call on available resources. Funding would be sought from Charitable Trusts. CWA Conference funding on a year by year basis.
(2) In-depth Forest / Land Management support	Anticipate earned income to come from consultancy fees. Hope regular retainer income would ease cash flow.
(3) Training & Knowledge Share	CWA anticipate increasing demand. SRDP grant rate support at 75%.
(4) Developing	Growing interest and policy support through climate change measures. Anticipate Climate Challenge Funding support with

Woodfuel Supply	most funding routed through member groups.
(5) Supporting Community Engagement with forestry	Potentially covers a wide spectrum of activities, support mechanisms, gap analysis, promoting good practice. FCS is anticipated as the key funder for this work.
Additional suggestions for work areas	
(1) Arts & Cultural Activity	Some success in Highland 2007 Year of Culture uncovered a latent demand – 12 CWA groups already engaged
(2) Forest Education	Hosting a Forest Education Coordinator post to work with FEI
(3) Housing	Supporting affordable housing
(4) Social Enterprise	A more proactive CWA role in developing social enterprise
(5) Urban Greenspace Management	A practical role working with local authorities and developers to implement community involvement in Greenspace design and management

Table 4

Service	PRIORITY 1 - Low 5 - High	STRENGTHS/pros (+++ major strength)
1	5,5,5,5,5,5, 5 Av 5	<p>Informing+++</p> <p>Advising+++</p> <p>Networking+</p> <p>Promoting+</p> <p>Representing</p> <p>Key activities which CWA was set up to provide. Very good track record in this area. Trust has been built up with groups.</p> <p>Presenting information to members in a concise, clear fashion.</p> <p>Providing easily accessible support and advise.</p> <p>CWA are very good at connecting, networking, informing and advising, these are the key services+++</p> <p>Definitely an enabler +++</p>

		<p>Delivery where possible and practical ++</p> <p>The CWA is an enabler. We value more than anything the networking, advice, and support that CWA give us. Would hate to lose this.</p> <p>+++ This is the core task for the CWA</p> <p>+++ CWA Annual Conference.</p> <p>Fantastic networking opportunity and also CWA Training Events</p>
2	<p>5,2,5,4,1,2,4</p> <p>AV 3.3</p>	<p>Reliable advice/assistance readily available+++.</p> <p>Benefiting managers less experienced in forestry related work+++</p> <p>Regular earned income ++</p> <p>Assistance with management & business plans++</p> <p>Some staff have in depth forest management skills.</p> <p>This should be a growth area and partnership working with members could enhance opportunities.</p> <p>CWA are in good position to take this forward, with the projected decrease in funding available to communities its important that they are able to become self sustaining and reduce their reliance on funding streams. CWA could help considerably with supporting groups with in depth forest and land management +++</p> <p>If CWA have these skills in house and have resources to use them they should be used to provide earned income.</p> <p>Could have staff on freelance retainer basis</p>
3	<p>4,4,3,3,2,3,5</p> <p>AV 3.4</p>	<p>Training will always be needed++</p> <p>Especially with 75% funding. Forestry training needed eg. Chainsaw use!</p> <p>CWA well placed to provide training through connections with both the potential trainers and groups requiring training. Other providers- colleges, BTCV, SNH & ATB (as was) no longer providing a comprehensive service.</p> <p>There are a lot of training providers out there perhaps CWA could concentrate on providing local training opportunities tailored to local needs.</p> <p>An important role for CWA +++</p> <p>CWA would be in a good position to offer more training relating to governance and funding issues ++</p> <p>Probably yes there is a demand but goal posts are likely to change. SRDP system is not good or easy to use so will not get used.</p> <p>Training is an essential part of community involvement/ empowerment.</p> <p>Needs legal and health and safety training – responsibilities if CWA</p>

		member is injured or killed?
4	5,3,2,3,3,1, 4 AV 3	<p>Economically run woodfuel supplies a must+++</p> <p>Sustainable income allows choice+++ , promotes carbon free footprint etc.</p> <p>Expertise & experience could be shared between groups through the well established network & experienced CWOs.</p> <p>Again this should be a growth area and although perhaps not high priority for many yet, demand is set to rise.</p> <p>Appropriate because this could provide individual community groups with sustainable income and reduce their reliance on funding +</p> <p>Firewood supply chain. Low impact to woodland.</p> <p>Woodfuel needs to be promoted by impartial professionals who are able to talk to the community demonstrating clear pros and cons.</p>
5	2,2,5,2,4,4, 4 AV3.3	<p>Advice in these areas always needed.</p> <p>CWA can speak with authority for CW groups.</p> <p>The more involved the CWA is with communities the better. Its main strength could be its ability to work with a range of diverse communities at a local level.</p> <p>This fits well with the forest and land management support, CWA would be in a good position to establish where the gaps lie and promote good practice</p> <p>Expansion past member groups would also promote the CWA further and may increase its membership</p> <p>Also important with respect to showcasing CWA as an organisation</p> <p>Leave it to groups to engage their own communities (but encourage them to do so.)</p> <p>Can produce a very productive environment for the people of the wood, the woodland and the local economy.</p> <p>Any FCS experience gained by working with CWA and vice versa should be encouraged.</p>
Additional suggestions for work areas		
1	4,4,5,5,5,3, 3 AV 4.3	<p>2007 was a great success, all events enjoyed, result was more visits to forest+++</p> <p>As you say, good existing interest. Taps into new streams of funding such as Scottish Arts Council.</p> <p>This is a sector which had been marginalized but there is now a strong demand which has been growing out of a more inclusive approach to</p>

		<p>Arts & Culture.</p> <p>The need is proven through increase in interest since introduction, CWA in a very good position to continue taking this forward +++</p> <p>There is real potential here to bring arts/culture projects to the great outdoors. So much more could be done to engage the “townees”.</p> <p>Can work very well in all locations in Scotland rural and urban. Often an excellent way of crossing the initial divide between woodland owner/managers and communities/local users.</p>
2	<p>3,3,5,5,5,4,5</p> <p>AV 4.3</p>	<p>Advice for FEI/Forests would be a benefit+</p> <p>Funding seems available++.</p> <p>No FEI groups north of Inverness.</p> <p>Interest & skills in many groups</p> <p>There is a strong and growing market in this sector. Definitely an area in which the CWA can have major input and could provide a good source of income for the association</p> <p>Becoming increasingly important and even though there are a number of initiatives underway already, the CWA is in an ideal position to promote this and take it forward, connecting groups with Forest school teachers or training etc. ++</p> <p>Possibly. We’re all catching on to this. And it’s really important to work with younger people so that they carry on the good work. I’m worried that so many of our volunteers are retired or elderly.</p> <p>A good way to reach other customers who would benefit from the usual CWA resources.</p> <p>CWA could be an ideal way to promote FEI. As CWA and FEI could work in parallel.</p>
3	<p>1,1,1,1,1,2,4</p> <p>AV 1.6</p>	<p>Affordable housing always needed.</p> <p>High level knowledge & interest within CWA.</p> <p>Affordable housing, woodland crofts, cooperative housing, eco building are all often part of community woodland initiatives, CWA could be in a good position to point people in the right direction or for offering advice +</p> <p>Co-operatively rented out property may have a place in Community Woodlands in a low housing stock locality such as Fort William.</p> <p>Affordable housing is high on the objectives of many communities. If the relevant skills are already available within CWA then perhaps this should be supported and pursued? Promotion of timber buildings and sustainable development.</p>
4	4,3,4,5,3,1,	Woodfuel development and other green social enterprise need

4 AV 3.4		<p>support+++ , funding does seem available.</p> <p>Potential route for CW groups to become more self financing and sustainable.</p> <p>The CWA could provide more realistic and clear approach based on local knowledge.</p> <p>This is possibly a good way for many community groups to be moving as this is where a lot of the funding is moving. Some members already have good projects up and running, CWA are good at information provision and networking which makes them an ideal candidate to help groups +++</p> <p>Definitely yes. There is so much benefit to be got from being/working out of doors. I think that working in forest areas, and learning new skills, teaches respect for things green. It also fosters a new generation of much-needed volunteers.</p> <p>Probably yes although hard to measure or target work ++</p> <p>Social Enterprises could be encouraged by linking with Development Trust Association Scotland or local interests</p>
5	2,3,5,2,5,5,4 AV 3.7	<p>A good idea++, green spaces in new housing developments often looks lack lustre after several years. Wrong choice of trees often planted.</p> <p>A CWA 'chapter' of urban greenspace CW groups could be quite useful and attractive to members.</p> <p>Pressures on green spaces is high and support for communities in protecting them should not be undervalued.</p> <p>An important area as urban communities may be the last to be consulted when community greenspace is created ++</p> <p>CWA has much experience working with rural groups that can be readily transferred to the urban environment ++</p> <p>I'd say this is essential. We have to persuade planners to make room for green space and/or art projects in new areas right from the start. If the ideas designers etc are included at the beginning, it makes for a much better result.</p> <p>Yes a very current issue and area of work and concern with Local Authorities. How to get future developments right. The CWA should and could have a roll in this.</p> <p>Greenspace Scotland should be made aware of CWA and could come to CWA for consultancy work / support as needed.</p> <p>Huge potential to link woodlands with food production</p>
<p>General comments</p> <p>Danger of getting distracted from core functions & following the money trail. Also brings a</p>		

danger of competing with other organisations & consultants.

One area CWA could provide some support/ expertise on is cracking the perpetual problem of how to bring new, young blood into CW groups and stop them fossilising.

I believe that in getting to know the communities it supports and providing opportunities for community groups to interact the CWA is pursuing and achieving more each year. The association is professional whilst remaining friendly and approachable. My impression is also that whilst it keeps an eye on the big picture from a global and national perspective, local community needs remain at its heart.

CWA could also promote itself more widely at conferences, through academic institutions and inform a much broader proportion of the wider community – they could illustrate to other communities on a national and international basis how effective they are at networking and in provision of information and practical knowledge.

CWA has been an important presence throughout the life of many community woodland groups in a supportive and enabling role.

Concern over a too ‘folksy’ approach. Lottery and HIE have been very generous but will not continue and groups need sound business advice and a reality check. Macth funding will be difficult to raise even if public funds are available.

Concerns over lack of expertise in groups – sometime naïve. FCS got rid of woodland blocks because they were difficult to and costly to manage. Some of these costs not rest with communities eg new bridges, steep ground, no roading network.

Number of members may slow or reduce with reduction in public funding.

Table 5

Service	PRIORITY 1 - Low 5 - High	WEAKNESSES/cons
		(- - - major weakness)
1		Both of equal importance. None Easy to get side tracked Location of workshops or conference doesn't suit everyone.
2		Competition in north from NHFT, perhaps less else where? Not everyone has in depth skills which come from years of experience. This advice is available from other sources, starting with FCS Woodland Officers. Could be seen as unfairly competitive. It could be difficult for communities to source the funding for consultation work Communities could approach consultants independently

		<p>Does CWA have sufficient capacity to handle this?</p> <p>--- There is a perfectly hungry private sector of consultants out there why compete?</p> <p>Cash flow from consultancy can be very variable.</p>
3		<p>Traveling time to training venues can be a problem from Forests on the peripheries, adding at least 2 extra days to course length ---</p> <p>The community woodland group network is quite small. Could CWA offer its training further afield? Individuals, conservation groups, small landowners, etc.?</p> <p>Often difficult for members to attend – time and distance constraints -</p> <p>There is always a demand and a need for training – the problem we have is paying for it. Grants do not often cover training, if at all.</p> <p>No point in investing in a grant system too complex to use.</p> <p>Need to train successors – most groups are driven by a small band of enthusiasts</p>
4		<p>Up to date harvesting machinery expensive---</p> <p>There seems a lack of funding available to help up grade equipment --</p> <p>- Wood fuel supply, by definition, has to be locally based so there is little scope to amalgamate or sub-divide orders.</p> <p>There are a growing number of other bodies that are dealing with this, could be spreading CWA staff and time too thin when this is being dealt with on a broader scale elsewhere</p> <p>It could be difficult for the CWA to source funding to achieve aims when so many other organisations are trying to do the same ---</p> <p>High impact to woodland biofuel chip production and whole tree use!</p> <p>Setting up a business that delivers £60 k per annum to give two workers a wage need to move a lot of timber – how realistic is it to expect community groups – unless volunteers to manage this – also high capital cost of equipment</p>
5		<p>This has traditionally been the territory of Reforesting Scotland with CWA partnering in terms of supporting CW groups.</p> <p>The CWA can only move into a community if they want it!</p>
Additional suggestions for work areas		
1		<p>Have been approached a lot re more Forest theatre, demand for forest activities not covered by Council Ranger service.</p> <p>Danger of getting distracted from core interests.</p> <p>A dedicated member of staff would be necessary to develop the work</p>

		<p>and help communities with funding, CWA doesn't have one at the minute –</p> <p>Hard to engage an audience.</p> <p>Is there sufficient human resource within CWA to cover this area? Is there an ability to generate earned income?</p>
2		<p>There seems to be quite a lot of info available online—but the pitfalls aren't pointed out.</p> <p>Could be superfluous with other groups eg FEI, Forest Schools, BFT, NHFT being available for advice/ support</p> <p>A dedicated member of staff would be necessary to develop the work and help communities with funding, CWA doesn't have one at the minute --</p> <p>And/or working in partnership with existing initiatives could be problematic</p> <p>In danger of repeating other peoples work roles</p>
3		<p>This may well be a political hot potato! Very complex area.</p> <p>Not a core role for CWA, rather an opportunity for CW groups to work within their own communities.</p> <p>Extremely work intensive with little real return in general terms financially, socially or environmentally.</p> <p>Very complex</p> <p>Lots of different issues to contend with</p> <p>Time consuming</p> <p>Can't see this as a priority.</p> <p>--- Too complex and too much private individual benefits to be had.</p>
4		<p>Specialised area but one where a great deal of help could be given to CW groups.</p> <p>Again does CWA have sufficient capacity in terms of bodies and time to develop this area?</p>
5		<p>I'm not sure if there is a niche for the CWA here or not</p> <p>Danger of stepping on GS toes. Better model would be to use the core CWA services (Connecting, Networking, Informing, Advising, Signposting, Promoting and Representing) to promote chapter's interests, working closely with GS</p>

4.9 Some members chose not to submit questionnaire returns but made some general comments. For tasks 1 and 2 these are included in the spreadsheet and for task 3

these are included in tables 4 and 5. Both sets of comments are referred to in the analysis section below.

5 Analysis

Task 1 - member views on the priority they gave to CWA membership service.

Information Dissemination

- 5.1 All members clearly value the information dissemination service provided by the CWA, the e bulletins, in particular, are seen as a priority service. Some groups are apparently better placed to make use of the information with perhaps longer standing full members gaining more direct value from information like e bulletins because they have more experience and confidence. Similar scores relating to the e newsletters were seen in the August 2008 membership survey.
- 5.2 The Woodland Voices magazine provided a wider range of comment with some people being inspired while others felt it was rather woolly with limited relevance. Interesting rather than essential was one view. The mixed results for Woodland Voices suggest it might be useful to review its purpose. A similar result arose from the August 2008 membership survey.
- 5.3 For those that used it, the web site was seen as a valuable resource. The limited use of the discussion forums by members was seen as frustrating by some. This may be due to technological barriers or even a psychological barrier for those not yet fully comfortable with accessing the web.
- 5.4 The other web challenge members face is the sheer volume of available material and the time spent sifting out the relevant information. This is especially daunting for aspirant groups, volunteers and non specialist woodland/community enthusiasts.
- 5.5 The extensive volume of material available from the CWA alone was mentioned by one respondent as being both good and 'off putting'. Greater recognition (empathy) with group needs could perhaps be by ensuring information is presented in some form of 'decision tree' or at least labelled with a particular group of CWA members in mind.
- 5.6 The concept of linking group and/or their web sites through the CWA site was not considered a priority by many members, scoring between not important and useful. However established woodland groups and their sites, utilised by visitors, noted that users like schools could readily find their location and details through searching the CWA web site. The lower score may be more a function of limited understanding by groups of web sites capabilities in reaching a range of audiences from local schools to potential funding sources.
- 5.7 Knowledge of the web site appears to be variable. Some work might be useful to extend links and navigation tabs to allow new member groups especially to quickly navigate to their required information. The discussion forums appear little used and further thought is required to encourage engagement.

Direct advice on woodland management

- 5.8 For those that received face to face advice on woodland management, scores were generally high and comments very positive with staff being singled out for praise. Some long established groups or those with larger more extensive woodlands often

had in house access to advice and so were less inclined to use the CWA staff. For them the service was less of a priority although a second opinion was valued.

- 5.9 A number of newer members were intending to use this service when the time was right. A possible capacity issue was flagged up by one respondent who felt issues had not been followed up after an initial visit. Others also mentioned the role of other more local organisations and FCS in giving management advice and felt they could be caught between two providers.
- 5.10 Facilitating the shared use of equipment for woodland management between groups was suggested by one member.

Direct Assistance and Guidance

- 5.11 This section showed a variation in scores, much of which was down to the different requirements of groups seeking advice on community right to buy and the National Forest Land Scheme. The variation in assistance being sought on the SRDP reflects the most established groups moving to take advantage of the scheme with the newer groups struggling harder to understand the scheme complexities. Providing advice in this area is seen as one of the most important priorities for the CWA.
- 5.12 Under project management development advice there appears again to be a greater priority placed on this service from the newer groups in the standard membership class. Fund raising advice is seen as a priority by all members.
- 5.13 Interestingly, despite the potential range of group structures and possible future problems associated with an in appropriate structure, governance advice from the CWA does not score particularly highly. What is not clear if this advice is being sought elsewhere or if the advice is not deemed important or necessary by the groups. Governance advice may be unpalatable to some groups or individuals but good governance is an important factor in winning scarce public funds.
- 5.14 Two members did raise the issues of legal advice and one made the significant point that if a trust structure or community company failed, there was the risk of the community losing their local wood. Facilitating access to legal advice on issues such as funding, governance, health and safety and access were also proposed by two members. Umbrella insurance for groups was one service proposed by a member.
- 5.15 Group dependence on a small cadre of people was mentioned as a potential weakness. Encouraging wider involvement and dealing with succession planning of (new/younger?) members taking over responsibilities appears to be a training need.

Training and Networking Events

- 5.16 Several respondents comment on the value and worth of training although this is also qualified by a comment on the difficulty of getting group directors, volunteers and members to attend training events with cost and time being major factors. Dependence, in many community woodland groups, on a small number of activists was mentioned as a potential weakness which needed to be addressed by ensuring the group had a wide range of skills.
- 5.17 The CWA networking role scores consistently highly as a priority for members. Members value the opportunity to hear the experiences of others, successes in addition to trials and tribulations.

Summary of member service priorities

- 5.18 Highest priority activities arising from the scoring
- E Bulletins information dissemination
 - Direct advice on forestry matters
 - SRDP assistance and guidance
 - Project development advice and guidance
 - Fundraising and applications advice and guidance
 - Networking and linking

5.19 Questions were raised over the purpose of some of the membership classifications. In particular the umbrella category to some appears anomalous as constituent groups are often members in their own right. Comment was also made that umbrella groups did not always pass on information to constituent groups as fast or as effectively as might be desirable. The extent of associate membership, four councils out of 32 for example, appears low and at least one of the associates considers they are a full member, suggesting some confusion. The individual members are small in number but they hold strong personal views.

Task 2 - member satisfaction with the content and quality of CWA membership services.

5.20 To provide consistent satisfaction to members is a major challenge. Quality to those who provide a service may be perceived differently by those who utilise the service. Since the success of a membership organisation like the CWA is largely dependent on the support of its members understanding their expectations and desires is important.

5.21 Interest in service satisfaction and quality is generic across all service industries. Four dimensions were identified and members were asked to rate satisfaction against an ordinal scale of 1 – 5, in which 5 is perceived to be excellent. The four dimensions of satisfaction, defined in a series of statements, were

- Reliability – ability to deliver member service dependably and accurately
- Empathy – care and individualised attention to members
- Presentation – information, guidance and advice is provided to members in an accessible and easily understood format
- Knowledge/Skill quality – the knowledge, competence and skills of CWA staff

5.22 Overall, averaged scores in all dimensions appear to indicate members are well satisfied with CWA performance to date. There is some variability in the individual scores much of which appears to be related to the level of contact with the CWA and length of time groups have been members.

Reliability

5.23 Reliability scored an average of 4.18 out of 5. Recorded satisfaction levels were highest in terms of reliability. Members appeared content with advice that was delivered promptly and accurately. *“They (CWA) are a competent bunch”* was the opinion of one new (2008) standard member.

- 5.24 Standard members representing newer groups or those with less in house experience, for example in the peri urban areas valued prompt reliable advice, especially in the early stages of setting up their group and site. More experienced members perhaps needed less direct advice on a face to face basis but valued the information dissemination role played by the CWA.
- 5.25 Over all full members scored reliability marginally better than standard members. The length of time groups had been members appeared to have a bearing on perceptions of reliability suggesting trust and understanding in the dealings with staff were important factors. Many of the newer members had not yet used CWA services.

Empathy

- 5.26 Empathy scored an average of 3.86 out of 5. This element scored (relatively) the lowest of the four dimensions, although it was still essentially positive. However, the lower scoring does perhaps highlight the heterogeneity of the members and their individual relationship with the CWA specifically
- The length of time the group have been CWA members and the length of time they have been engaged in their project. At different stages in their development they have different needs.
 - The range of in house skills and knowledge is very varied. Some groups have salaried staff, most are run by volunteers with varying levels of enthusiasm.
 - Urban fringe, accessible countryside and remote rural member locations have different needs. The longer established groups are more likely to be located in the Highlands or the Borders. The more recent members tend to be in locations closer to settlements. As one member noted,

“Perhaps further differentiate/target certain types of information and training. For example there has been a lot of email communication regarding rural land issues. We are urban based, but with some rural coverage. We’d be interested in hearing of what other urban groups – especially in deprived central belt communities – have been doing, any specific opportunities available to us etc”
 - Associate and individual members do not utilise the range of member services and concentrate on those providing information.
 - Content of the annual conference and training events almost by definition will not suit all groups. One member felt there was a ‘commercial’ woodland bias, one believed there was too much emphasis on policy and another considered there was a move away from ‘small scale community woodland’.
 - On the other hand one member considered some content too ‘folksy’ and groups needed to realise the hard commercial facts, especially as public funding was declining. A presentation allegedly showing a complete disregard for health and safety (no scaffolding, PPE etc) during a woodland construction project was mentioned.
 - Locations and dates did not suit everyone either. One member was less inclined to attend if held in an ‘urban’ location and one member cited a regular clash with Remembrance Sunday as preventing attendance at the annual conference.
- 5.27 *“You cannot please everyone all of the time!”* was one comment that perhaps sums up the CWA challenge.

Presentation

5.28 Presentation scored an average of 4.05 out of 5. Groups appeared to consider the information and services presented to them were in an accessible format. However it is clear there is not universal use made of the services and some groups are more effective at utilising services than others.

- *“Members area and forum [on web site] not used much. Would be good to see more activity or posting on the site by other members of events etc.”*
- *“Forum never used, maybe that’s an indication of the timid nature of CWA members to blogs etc. Website itself ok, could do with a lift but that’s a maintenance issue and could possibly be an administrative task needing to be addressed or contracted out.”*

Skills and Knowledge

5.29 Skills and Knowledge also scored an average of 4.05 out of 5. The skills and knowledge of the CWA were seen to be a positive strength and members were well satisfied with the ‘professionalism’ of the advice they received. However, there is perhaps a capacity (or priority) issue for CWA staff to consider with some members groups not yet having had a visit. Furthermore, those that ask or are clear what advice they need seem to be more satisfied with the skills on offer than those groups in their early stages.

- *“All these categories we would score very highly – we have had visits to the woodland from Jake the Woodland Officer and also from Diane. They have been keen to see where we are coming from – what our agenda is and what are needs are for support. Their help – particularly with respect of Jake has been practical and always relevant and credible. We feel amazingly privileged to have had this support and hope it will continue*
- *“We have been members for about a year. Initial telephone advice was very helpful but we have not had any follow up meeting as yet due to unavailable staff. It would have been helpful if this had happened more quickly.”*

Task 3 - to consult with members on the draft future strategy and record their views.

5.30 The results of this consultation are set out in tables four and five. Whilst the results from the small sample are not statistically significant there is evidence of some trends emerging.

5.31 First amongst these is the high level of support for CWA core services of information dissemination, networking and advice.

5.32 Above average enthusiasm is shown for the other service four proposals, management advice, training, wood fuel and community engagement.

5.33 The greatest concern is shown for singling out a role for the CWA in developing a wood fuel supply perhaps reflecting the multi objective role of many woodland groups. Weaknesses identified included the high capital cost of equipment and investment in expertise by others including FCS making CWA’s role unclear. Members noted community woods operating with some voluntary labour input could perhaps gain income; but to fund a reliable source of employment from a wood fuel venture required harvesting a volume of wood which was beyond the capacity of most woodland groups. Caution was expressed on the basis that moving

successfully from simple log production for local house holds to more advanced bio mass production is seen as being very challenging.

- 5.34 Of the potential additional work areas, Arts and Cultural Activity plus Forest Education received the greatest support. These were considered as having the greatest potential to attract new audiences to use woodlands. The CWA is about to commission a suitably experienced and motivated person to research and develop a proposal for a co-ordinated programme of arts and cultural activity with its members.
- 5.35 Least attractive by a large margin was an affordable housing work stream with complexity of issues surrounding housing cited as the greatest weakness.
- 5.36 Working with Greenspace to inject community woodland expertise was seen as a positive route for collaboration, provided the CWA role was clearly established. This would allow CWA to align itself more closely with peri urban priorities.

6 Conclusions

- 6.1 Even accounting for people's natural tendencies to favour a positive statement about those they know and trust, satisfaction scores were overwhelmingly positive which should be taken as a vote of confidence by members in the CWA. The scores reinforce the generally positive outcomes from the August 2008 membership survey.
- 6.2 Running a community woodland project requires commitment and optimism so perhaps it is unsurprising most members are positive in their views on a body so closely allied to their own aims. Additionally, members could choose to leave the CWA at any time, wind up their group or not renew membership were they unsatisfied with the services provided.
- 6.3 However, as one very informed member noted
"In terms of the CWA I am very positive over the need for it and remain a supporter. We however live in difficult times and it will be increasingly challenging for community groups and the support and lobbying of the CWA will perhaps become even more important. As always it will come down to a definition and focus on key strategic aims."
- 6.4 The growth of the community woodland movement benefited from major public sector investment and new legislation over the last decade. This level of investment is unlikely to be readily available in the future and already the public sector has seen major budget cuts with more to follow in late 2009/2010. This reduction in financial support may cause existing groups to scale back plans and will impact on the number of new community groups taking on woodland and subsequently joining the CWA.
- 6.5 Community groups have a range of woodland properties including some which FCS considered difficult to manage using conventional forestry practices. In past years communities could access additional funding to help overcome challenges relating to harvesting and infrastructure. This public funding and associated matching funding to deal with silvicultural challenges also may be less available in the future making woodland properties with these types of burdens less attractive to communities.
- 6.6 Silvicultural challenges apart, policy change is appearing to favour sites closer to larger settlements with multi objectives of health and social well being. Two members cited the growing interest in allotments and 'growing your own' and questioned why

‘just community woodland what about community farms – can the two not be combined, especially in peri urban areas?’

- 6.7 Multi objectives bring opportunities but they also bring a more complex set of aims and stakeholders coupled with a greater range of skills required. Many of the longer established rural projects had good early access to professional foresters allowing long term plans to be prepared. One member questioned if the range of skills in some of the more recently established groups was sufficient for their long term sustainability. Queries were also raised about the skill levels available to the CWA, in particular commercial, financial and legal skills in light of the current pressures arising from the economic recession and the squeeze on public spending. Some considered these as important, if not more so, than conventional woodland management skills. This need for an expanded skill set is one the CWA might usefully consider.
- 6.8 One person mentioned good value for money in terms of the CWA services they received in return for their membership fee. Were services provided by the CWA to be sought at commercial rates the cost to groups would of course be many time higher and in effect unaffordable. Most groups recognise this and that the CWA provides (to them) a very cheap and generally well received source of support, advice and guidance. How much members understand about CWA funding streams and cost control is unclear.
- 6.9 Worryingly there still appears to be some confusion over the appropriate bodies providing advice and representing communities. A tension between ‘regional’ organisations and a national body like the CWA was detected in some comments. The public sector will have less and less tolerance to what could be perceived as duplication, if it involves public funds. Equally if there is too much ‘noise’ from the community land sector clear messages are not communicated to policy makers and politicians.
- 6.10 On the other hand it was noted, other organisations can deliver some of the services that the CWA provides, but not normally in a community woodland context. One member did mention benchmarking CWA performance against other related organisations.
- 6.11 Members clearly rate CWA core services of information dissemination, networking and advice as a priority but better targeting and cost effect delivery are areas where improvements could be sought. Cost effective delivery was raised in respect of employing staff versus using freelance advisors on a retainer basis – perhaps from within the membership if the necessary skills were available.
- 6.12 The views expressed in the survey point towards better tailoring of CWA services to enable aspirant community woodland groups to progress faster and for existing groups to meet their changing needs. Any essential gaps, in services delivered by others, should be filled with a suitably ‘professional’ product facilitated but not necessarily delivered by CWA.
- 6.13 Strategic partnerships, collaboration and alliances will be important future delivery mechanisms. CWA may need to look at shared systems and back office functions, joint projects, shared staff, staff secondments from the public sector and other collaborative arrangements. Equally, there are areas like affordable housing which many members consider it unwise for the CWA to get significantly involved.
- 6.14 To protect and nurture the original and ongoing investment of public funds the enhancement of public benefit and local community value has to be a key purpose for the CWA into the future.

- 6.15 Analysis suggests the key challenges facing CWA in the future are expressing and presenting these benefits and value to potential funders, lobby decision makers, establishing strategic partnerships and effectively, efficiently and crucially, equitably meeting the needs of an increasingly diverse membership.

Appendix 1 Detailed Methodology

1.1 Task 1 – Priority Ranking

The methodology assessed member perceptions of the relative importance of CWA service elements. This will allow the CWA to better prioritise and to use its resources to improve the most critical service elements.

Members were asked to rank member service elements in the questionnaire (Table1) using the following simple five level Likert item to provide Ranking Scores:

- 1 Not at all important
- 2 Not important
- 3 Useful but not essential for me and my group
- 4 Important for me and my group
- 5 Very important or almost essential for me and my group

Table 1 - Questionnaire

Member service elements	Priority Score
1 Information dissemination:	
E-bulletins – issued monthly, building into a reference library for you to use.	1 2 3 4 5
E-newsletters – issued quarterly with news on what projects other groups are doing, their successes and challenges.	
Woodland Voices Magazine – quarterly with in-depth articles on topics relevant to community woodland groups.	
Website – www.communitywoods.org and including the member only area	
Website links - If you don't have your own website you can link up through the CWA site.	
2 Direct Advice on:	
Woodland management – direct, on site advice from qualified foresters.	
3 Direct Assistance and Guidance on:	
Scotland Rural Development Programme – registration and grants advice and guidance – IACS, BRN, WIAT II and F4P	
Community Right To Buy - legislation and registration information and guidance	

National Forest Land Scheme - in-depth assistance with applications to Forestry Commission Scotland for purchase of national forest estate land.	
Project Development – guidance and advice on what you need to consider when taking projects forward.	
Fund Raising and applications – guidance on where to source funding and the best way to approach funders, also advice on developing social enterprise or a trading arm.	
Governance issues –advice and guidance on where to go for all governance issues.	
4 Training and Networking Events	
CWA arranged training events – focussed on topics member groups ask for	
CWA annual conference – a subsidised, annual networking event (subsidies dependant on membership level)	
Networking you with other community groups who have “been there and done that”.	
Linking you to other support organisations able to assist in specialist areas	

In the final questionnaire members will be encouraged to comment on why they have allocated a particular score.

1.2 Task 2 – Service element assessment

The methodology will assess member perceptions and satisfaction of the CWA performance when delivering service elements. By identifying attributes common to each of the service elements a more detailed examination of what constitutes satisfaction can be made.

The following service attributes were used:

- Reliability – ability to deliver the service dependably and accurately
- Empathy – care and individualised attention to members
- Presentation – information, guidance and advice is provided to members in an accessible and easily understood format
- Knowledge/Skill quality – the knowledge, competence and skills of CWA staff

Common service attributes are, in part, derived from the SERVQUAL MODEL (established by Zeithami, Parasuraman and Berry) which is a technique used for performing a gap analysis of an organisation’s service quality performance against customer service quality needs.

Then members were asked to indicate their satisfaction by scoring (again using a five level Likert item) their agreement level on statements in the questionnaire (Table 2) benchmarking performance.

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Agree
5. Strongly agree

For each element the item score was added up and then averaged using the total number of respondents. This gave a combined average score for each of the attributes and an overall score for each of the member services.

Table 2 Questionnaire content to gather overall review of member satisfaction with services provided

Reliability	Empathy	Presentation	Knowledge/ Skills
Member Service 1 Disseminate information on community woodlands			
<i>E Newsletters – magazine – web site</i>			
CW Information is dependable, regular, up to date and accurate Score 1,2,3,4,5	CW Information provision is relevant and tailored to my needs	CW Information is disseminated in a form which is convenient and accessible	CW Information is selected with care and focused on community woodland topics
Member Service 2 Practical on site advice on woodland management			
<i>Site visits by CWA staff</i>			
CW staff are willing to help and to provide prompt, reliable on site advice	CW staff understand my needs for practical advice	CW staff present advice to my group in a form that is useful and easily understood	CW have obvious professional knowledge and skills
Member Service 3 Provide guidance on set up support and funding for community woodland groups			
<i>SRDP - Community Right to Buy - NFLS - Fund raising – Governance - Project Management</i>			
CWA guidance is credible and competent giving the right financial or governance advice	Guidance and advice provided by the CWA meets my needs effectively	The guidance and advice that is provided by the CWA is presented in ways that I and my group can understand	The CWA have real professional skills in advising on appropriate and successful governance and funding mechanisms

Member Service 4 Provide training, networking & linking

Training events - Annual conference- networking with other community woodland groups

CWA organised training, conference, and networking opportunities are high quality and good value	CWA organised training/conference relevant to my (or my group's) needs is provided at suitable dates and venues	CWA organised training and conference is presented at the correct level for me or my group with others with similar interests	CWA trainers and conference presenters are good communicators and knowledgeable on their topic
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Members were encouraged to add their own comments onto the questionnaire. Members were asked to consider the feedback mechanisms which allow them to communicate their views to staff and Directors.

COMMUNITY WOODLANDS ASSOCIATION MEMBER SURVEY – JULY 2009

HOW ARE WE DOING?

The survey is an independent assessment and individual responses will not be attributable in the report submitted to the CWA but the following details are necessary to record the spread of member contributions.

Your Name:

Group Name:

Membership Status: (Please mark with a X)

Full	
Umbrella	
Individual	
Standard	
Associate	
Not sure??	

Email Contact:

A What is important to you and your group?

Members are asked to rank the services provided by the Community Woodlands Association

1 Not at all important **2** Not important **3** Useful but not essential for me and my group **4** Important for me and my group **5** Very important or almost essential for me and my group (n/a or don't know if your are not sure)

	Score from 1 2 3 4 5	Any additional comments:
Member service1 Information dissemination:		
E-bulletins – issued monthly, building into a reference library for you to use.		
E-newsletters – issued quarterly with news on what projects other groups are doing, their successes and challenges		
Woodland Voices Magazine – quarterly with in-depth articles on topics relevant to community woodland groups		

Website – www.communitywoods.org and including the member only area		
Website links - If you don't have your own website you can link up through the CWA site.		
Member Service 2 Direct Advice on:	Score from 1 2 3 4 5	Any additional comments:
Woodland management – direct, on site advice from CWA staff who are qualified foresters.		
Member Service 3 Direct Assistance and Guidance on:	Score from 1 2 3 4 5	Any additional comments:
Scotland Rural Development Programme – registration and grants advice and guidance – IACS, BRN, WIAT II and F4P		
Community Right To Buy - legislation and registration information and guidance		
National Forest Land Scheme - in-depth assistance with applications to Forestry Commission Scotland for purchase of national forest estate land		
Project Development – guidance and advice on what you need to consider when taking projects forward		
Fund Raising and applications – guidance on where to source funding funders, also advice on developing social enterprise or a trading arm and the best way to approach		
Governance issues –advice and guidance on where to go for all governance issues.		
Member Service 4 Training and Networking Events:	Score from 1 2 3 4 5	Any additional comments:
CWA arranged training events – focussed on topics member groups ask for		

CWA annual conference – a subsidised, annual networking event (subsidies dependant on membership level)		
Networking you with other community groups who have “been there and done that”.		
Linking you to other support organisations able to assist in specialist areas.		
Any Additional comments E.g. Are there other things you think the CWA should do?		

B Now, how satisfied are you?

Members are asked to record their satisfaction with the services provided by the Community Woodlands Association by scoring the following statements.

It would be most helpful if you could provide any reasons or examples to back up your scoring decisions.

Member Service 1 Information dissemination on community woodlands <i>E Newsletters – magazine – web site</i>	Score 1 Disagree strongly 2 Disagree 3 Neutral 4 Agree 5 Agree strongly	Any comments, reasons or examples to justify your score?
CWA provides information that is dependable, regular, up to date and accurate.		
CWA provides information that is relevant to me and/or my group and tailored to our needs.		
CWA information is disseminated in a form which is convenient and accessible.		
CWA information is selected with care and focused on community woodland topics.		
Member Service 2 Practical ‘on site’ advice on woodland management <i>Site visits by CWA staff</i>	Score 1 Disagree strongly 2 Disagree 3 Neutral 4 Agree 5 Agree strongly	Any comments, reasons or examples to justify your score?

CWA staff are willing to help and to provide prompt, reliable on site advice.		
CWA staff understand my/our needs for practical advice for our local woodland.		
CWA staff present advice to me/my group in a form that is useful and easily understood.		
CWA staff have obvious professional knowledge and skills in woodland management.		
Member Service 3 Provide guidance on set up support and funding for community woodland groups <i>SRDP - Community Right to Buy - NFLS - Fund raising – Governance - Project Management</i>	Score 1 Disagree strongly 2 Disagree 3 Neutral 4 Agree 5 Agree strongly	Any comments, reasons or examples to justify your score?
CWA guidance is credible and competent giving the right financial or governance advice.		
Guidance and advice provided by the CWA meets my/my group's needs effectively.		
The guidance and advice that is provided by the CWA is presented in ways that I and my group can understand.		
The CWA have real professional skills in advising on appropriate and successful governance and funding mechanisms.		
Member Service 4 Provide training, networking & linking <i>Training events - Annual conference-networking with other community woodland groups</i>	Score 1 Disagree strongly 2 Disagree 3 Neutral 4 Agree 5 Agree strongly	Any comments, reasons or examples to justify your score?
CWA organised training, conference, and networking opportunities are high quality and good value.		
CWA organised training/conference relevant to my (or my group's) needs is provided at suitable dates and venues.		
CWA organised training and conference is presented at the correct level for me or		

my group and others with similar interests.		
CWA trainers and conference presenters are good communicators and knowledgeable on their topic.		

C Any further remarks or comments?

1.3 Task 3 Consultation on the future CWA Strategy

The draft future CWA strategy was agreed by the Directors in June 2008.

The consultation was carried out with

1. A representative sample of members and using a structured interview format, mainly done via email.

The representative sample of members was selected giving a mix of the three membership types with voting rights and of geographical locations. A sample size of approximately 10 – 15% was established

Those selected to be sampled were sent, by email, a summary of the key points contained in the draft future CWA strategy and a set of more detailed questions. A Strengths and Weaknesses approach was employed to record the commentary from respondents at a strategic level.

Task 3 Questionnaire/Briefing

WHERE IS THE CWA GOING AND HOW IS IT GOING TO GET THERE?

1. **As an informed CWA member, we would be pleased to get your critique on the proposed future action to move the CWA forward.**
2. The CWA Business Plan is three year old. The CWA Board believes it is still providing the right direction and the mission is still correct.
3. *“to promote, represent, co-ordinate and support community-led interests in woodland issues throughout Scotland”*, with two core business aims:
 - (1) *Promote the benefits of community woodlands and represent the interests of community woodland groups within the political arena and to the wider world.*
 - (2) *Support established and new community woodland groups in achieving their aspirations and full potential through provision of information, training and other services.*
4. However, the world has changed significantly over the past three years – e.g.
 - The SNP administration at Holyrood has introduced a national performance framework and single outcome agreements.
 - The SRDP is up and running – after a fashion!
 - The recession is ever present and public sector spending is being cut.
5. The CWA is acutely aware that it is highly unlikely the Lottery, its majority funder, will continue to provide funding. Similarly, HIE another funder, and indeed FCS, is likely to have fewer resources in the future.
6. **The CWA must prioritise actions and find ways to re- financing member’s services.**
7. With this in mind a sample of members is being consulted to gather their views on the proposed future priorities, direction and resources for the CWA.
8. The proposed CWA member services, their purpose and where future funding might come from are set out in Table 1.
9. By way of examples you may wish to consider the thoughts set down in Table 1 column 3. You may also have your own questions!!
10. **Your critique of the CWA proposals set down in Table 2 (ideally in a few bullet points for each proposal) should be on the basis of**
 - **Importance of each proposal (priority) 1 low priority to 5 high priority**

- Strengths (pros) of each proposal
- Weaknesses (cons) of each proposal
- You may wish to put down No comment/ don't know

TABLE 1 - PROPOSALS

SERVICE PROPOSALS	PURPOSE & RESOURCES	THOUGHTS
(1) CWA member services: Connecting, Networking, Informing, Advising, Signposting, Promoting and Representing.	These are seen as core CWA member services and will get first call on available resources. Funding would be sought from Charitable Trusts. CWA Conference funding on a year by year basis.	Are these key member services? Is the CWA an enabler or a deliverer? Which is the greatest priority?
(2) In-depth Forest / Land Management support	Anticipate earned income to come from consultancy fees. Hope regular retainer income would ease cash flow.	Is there sufficient consultancy work? Competition? Cash flow?
(3) Training & Knowledge Share	CWA anticipate increasing demand. SRDP grant rate support at 75%.	Is there a demand for training?
(4) Developing Woodfuel Supply	Growing interest and policy support through climate change measures. Anticipate Climate Challenge Funding support with most funding routed through member groups.	What value can CWA add?
(5) Supporting Community Engagement with forestry	Potentially covers a wide spectrum of activities, support mechanisms, gap analysis, promoting good practice. FCS is anticipated as the key funder for this work.	How far should CWA move into the community beyond supporting member groups?
It has been suggested that the CWA might get involved in five additional work areas		
(1) Arts & Cultural Heritage	Some success in Highland 2007 Year of Culture uncovered a latent demand – 12 CWA groups already engaged	Evidence on extent of demand across Scotland?
(2) Forest Education	Hosting a Forest Education Coordinator post to work with FEI	FEI in place and other private and public sector initiatives under way. Role for CWA?

(3) Housing	Supporting affordable housing	Complex area with many stakeholders? Adding value?
(4) Social Enterprise	A more proactive CWA role in developing social enterprise	Is there a sufficient niche here for CWA to genuinely add value?
(5) Urban Greenspace Management	A practical role working with local authorities and developers to implement community involvement in Greenspace design and management	Is this Greenspace Scotland's role or can the CWA provide a different service?

TABLE 2 - YOUR CRITIQUE

Please use Priority scale 1,2,3,4 or 5 where 1 is low priority and 5 is high priority.

Up to +++ (major strength) or up to --- (major weakness) may be added for emphasis after the bullet point if you wish.

Name:

	PRIORITY 1 - Low 5 - High	STRENGTHS (+++ major strength)	WEAKNESSES (- - - major weakness)
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
Additional suggestions for work areas			
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
Any other insights you wish to make:			

Please return to Duncan Bryden email: duncan@brydenassociates.co.uk by the 31st of July