

Summary of the contribution community ownership of Gamescleuch Forest will make to the 16 National Outcomes.

1. We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing [business](#) in Europe.

Community ownership of the forest will make this part of Scotland a more attractive place for doing business by improving the tourism offer in this area and thus creating opportunities for new and expanding tourist businesses.

In terms of timber production, we will sell timber in smaller lots than those proposed by FES thus providing more entry opportunities for small and medium enterprises.

Retaining income generated from forest operations within the community will provide a springboard for other new community enterprises that will generate jobs, visitor attractions and productive capacity going forward for existing population as well as attracting new people to live and work in the valleys.

2. We realise our full economic potential with more and better [employment opportunities](#) for our people.

We will directly create 3 part-time posts with the potential for extending these in future.

Indirectly we will support 7 local jobs.

We will extend the range of employment opportunities available locally by providing training and developing timber and tourism related business opportunities.

3. We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our [research and innovation](#).

Community ownership will create opportunities for innovation in added value activities related to the forest. Establishing a base in Ettrick School opens up the possibility of developing a range of initiatives including an electric bike hire business utilising the surrounding forests. There is also ample space for a community polytunnel and native tree nursery.

4. Our [young people](#) are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

Community ownership will give our young people confidence that community action can bring about change. It will create opportunities for education and practical training in a range of rural skills as well as volunteering opportunities.

5. Our [children](#) have the best start in life and are ready to succeed.

Community ownership and the employment of a ranger will allow us to offer outdoor, nature based activities to local schools and clubs. This will provide education and learning opportunities and encourage interest in outdoor activities.

6. We live longer, [healthier lives](#).

Restoring and promoting the board walk opens up attractive and easy walking routes for the less physically fit improving their health and wellbeing.

By opening up the higher forest trails for bikes, horses and walking we will extend the opportunities for physical recreation in the area and provide opportunities for sport and outdoor adventure promoting healthy exercise. Creating links to forest roads in surrounding forests and providing mapped routes will encourage more physical activity more often.

Creating a volunteering group will provide companionship and healthy activity for local members helping mental as well as physical wellbeing. Reopening the closed school building and basing the forest management staff there will also create a community hub and another focus for volunteering and companionship.

Providing more opportunities to engage with the natural world through ranger led activities will promote health and wellbeing.

7. We have tackled the significant [inequalities](#) in Scottish society.

Community ownership will allow the income from the forest to be recycled almost completely within a local area which has suffered from changing demographics and the on-going loss of hill farms to commercial forestry. This change has removed some established support networks, reduced the working age population and families and led to an increase in isolation as the population gets older and there are reduced opportunities for the remaining young people.

Owning the forest will mean that older residents without transport can be supplied with wood fuel and offered more opportunities for socialising. A small amount of spare income could keep the lunch club going when its funding runs out this year.

Younger members of the community will be offered training and help to develop their own businesses or employment prospects.

Bringing more people into the area will help to keep the small local shop in business as well as the newly reopened Tushielaw Inn – both vital services when it is a 40 mile round trip to town.

8. We have improved the life chances for [children, young people and families](#) at risk.

Rural isolation will be lessened by the increased community activity and focus around the forest and by bringing the school building back into use.

9. We live our lives safe from [crime, disorder and danger](#).

There may be possibilities for the community justice team at Scottish Borders Council to undertake maintenance tasks on the path network within the forest thereby allowing people undertaking community service orders the opportunity to learn new skills.

10. We live in well-designed, [sustainable places](#) where we are able to access the amenities and services we need.

Re-opening the board walk and creating new forest walks with improved visitor facilities will improve the recreational amenity available locally for both residents and visitors alike.

Bringing the former primary school back into daily use will create a community hub and access to photocopying and broadband for local residents.

Income from the forest will help local businesses directly and the income from increased numbers of visitors will help to sustain the local caravan park shop, pub and village hall in the immediate area of upper Ettrick. The increased promotion of the forest and the Marshes will also help to sustain the other local amenities up and down both valleys.

The development of a local wood fuel enterprise will help elderly residents and income from the forest will also help to subsidise transport to the weekly lunch club for those residents who don't drive.

11. We have strong, resilient and supportive [communities](#) where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others.

Community ownership means that local people will be taking the decisions locally about their own environment and how the area is managed. Income from the forest will allow the community to develop beneficial ideas and initiatives from working together which will benefit the valley economy. Anyone in the local area can become a member of the community development company, a board member, a volunteer or contribute to any of the many projects that will happen. The whole point is to provide opportunities through community ownership for people of all ages to be able to live and work in the Ettrick and Yarrow valleys now and in the future.

12. We value and enjoy our built and natural [environment](#) and protect it and enhance it for future generations.

This is the best chance the local community has to preserve the unique environment of the Ettrick Marshes while maintaining community access into this area. We intend to protect and enhance the natural habitat for both people and wildlife. The local community can work alongside such groups as RSPB, the local Red Squirrel Protection Partnership and the Scottish Wildlife Trust for guidance. We will encourage environmental awareness and stimulate an

interest in nature by employing a ranger who will develop educational materials, interpretation boards, nature tourism facilities and lead guided walks for both visitors and local residents. Both the forest manager and the ranger will work together to protect and enhance the valuable habitat and look after the wildlife.

With the forest in local community ownership there is an opportunity to manage the commercial forest more sensitively with less impact on the environment than FES might achieve.

13. We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive [national identity](#).

The community ownership of assets and the Scottish Land Fund is a distinctively Scottish innovation that can provide a way for communities to exercise control over their local environment, assets and find their own way in helping themselves create a sustainable future.

14. We reduce the local and global [environmental impact](#) of our consumption and production.

Community ownership will reduce CO2 emissions by allowing more services to be delivered locally like wood fuel and helping to sustain the local shop. Community management will allow for a more nuanced and careful approach to felling and replanting. Employing a ranger will make sure that local wildlife is protected and habitat enhanced where possible.

The sale will generate £875,000 income for FES which it can invest in creating new forests elsewhere.

15. Our people are able to maintain their [independence as they get older](#) and are able to access appropriate support when they need it.

Community ownership will allow a wood-fuel service to be developed to help elderly residents, it will help to keep the community lunch club funded, it will help to sustain the village shop by bringing more visitors into the area and it will help in the future to tackle depopulation and rebalance the population in the valley. It will create more opportunities for inclusive community activities and more opportunities for engagement between the generations.

16. Our [public services](#) are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.

The Community Development Company is able to provide some services in partnership with the local council in a more efficient and locally responsive manner given the rurality of the area than the council is able to provide on its own. Community ownership of the forest will be enhanced by being able to access the redundant council asset of the closed school as an office and educational base.