



BUSINESS STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2010-2015



Small Woods Association
Charity number 1081874
Green Wood Centre
Station Road
Coalbrookdale
Telford, TF8 7DR
www.smallwoods.org.uk

BUSINESS STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2010-2015

The business strategy for SWA 2010-2015 demonstrates how SWA can show a steady growth, maintain safe and efficient management and work towards achieving its main charitable aim. The strategy sets out ways in which the objectives agreed for this period can be achieved, makes recommendations on targets and priorities for this period, and outlines an action plan to achieve them.

The document includes:

- A vision for small woodlands
- The overall purpose, and what makes SWA unique
- A restatement of the aim and objectives
- Targets and priorities for the next five years
- Activities of the organisation
- Recommendations for change
- Summary of actions
- An outline of future income

1 A vision for small woodlands in the UK

Nearly half of the UK's woods are small (0.1 – 100ha) and provide interest for their owners, profit for small woodland businesses, beauty in the landscape and homes for wildlife. Wood products help to reduce fossil fuel use and combat climate change.

'Our vision is to see small woods in the UK fully valued for the economic, environmental and social benefits they bring to a sustainable society, and to help achieve their better management to make the most of those benefits.'

2 The Purpose of the Small Woods Association

The Small Woods Association (Small Woods) is a UK wide charity with the main purpose of advancing education in the conservation of small woodlands. Small Woods is the only UK wide charity with this sole objective, and we work with partners to take on a wider role to achieve the vision set out above. We invite those who share our vision to join our membership, which provides a range of benefits and opportunities to share knowledge.

Strap lines for website, publication and promotional use

SUPPORTING THE SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF SMALL WOODLAND
ENHANCING OUR HERITAGE, GROWING OUR FUTURE

LINKING PEOPLE AND WOODS

3 Objectives and values

SWA defines conservation as the sustainable management of small woodlands. Sustainable management, in SWA terms, is management that respects the long term health of the woodland and its biodiversity, while ensuring that the woodland contributes products that help to offset climate change through substitution for products which have high outputs of CO₂ either from their manufacture, origin or transport.

The objectives in the past have centred mainly on woodland management and providing services to members. It is proposed to extend the objectives for the next five years to include the promotion of local timber and products, and a focus on training, with another new objective of the creation of new small woodlands. The revised objectives reflect the merger with the Green Wood Trust, the increasing demand for woodfuel, and a growing interest in the creation of new small woodlands, particularly for woodfuel.

Objectives: 2010-2015

1. To increase the sustainable management of small woodlands for timber and non timber benefits, working with all those with an interest in small woodlands, including owners, small woodland businesses, practitioners, community groups, woodland projects and statutory organisations
2. To promote the wider utilisation of local timber and wood products, including woodfuel
3. To guide the creation of new small woodlands
4. To increase access and availability of woodland education, training and apprenticeships

Values

A strong set of core values will help Small Woods to establish the respect of its members and partners:

We strive for environmental, economic and social sustainability in all our operations

We offer an open and friendly welcome for all and we are always willing to listen

We demonstrate honesty and integrity in all our operations

We treat everyone with respect and fairness

3 Priorities, Target Groups and Outcomes for 2010 - 2015

Proposed priorities are set out below for the next five years. Small Woods' progress will be measured against the proposed outcomes.

1. Membership
 - Improve services to members offering a wide range of services and activities
 - Increase membership to 4000 by 2015, targeting owners, small woodland businesses, farmers and practitioners as well as owners
2. Promotion of small woodlands and products
 - Develop a national small woodlands open day
 - Continue to promote National Bean Pole Week and other campaigns
3. Financial stability
 - Develop reserve fund of £70,000 from a project fees and bank interest
 - Maintain a balance in sources of income from grants, subscriptions, projects and trading
4. Develop new activities
 - Guide the creation of 100 new small woodlands, working with members and partners
 - Advise and support 100 small businesses in woodlands
 - Develop the concept of social forestry and ILMs in forestry nationally
 - Develop a role in England with woodland community groups
 - Develop a leading role in domestic and small scale woodfuel opportunities
5. Maintain current activities
 - Train 2500 people on accredited courses or apprenticeships
 - Maintain networking roles for initiatives and coppice industry
 - Maintain at least 6 active demonstration or delivery projects
 - Maintain and develop SWA's presence in Wales
 - Continue to develop GWC as a centre of excellence for training in sustainable woodland management
6. Develop services and projects to engage target groups:
 - Owners and managers of small woodlands
 - Coppice practitioners and small wood craft businesses
 - Woodland community groups
 - Woodland initiatives and projects
 - Those wishing to work in woodlands, including workless and alienated people

4 Activities to deliver outcomes

1) Training and education

GWC accredited courses, other courses;
coppice and forestry apprenticeships
Members' seminars and training;
Forest schools, GWC education programme
Wider dissemination of courses through other centres

2) Communication and membership

Memberships, Marketing and PR, Campaigns, Technical Advice, Enquiries
Networking and support: community groups, coppice workers, woodland initiatives,
members groups, members events, AGM and conferences
Annual Report, Smallwoods, Coppice Cuts, Members' handbook
GWC interpretation and events
Monitoring, research and statistics

3) Project Development and Delivery

Heartwoods in the West Midlands
Develop other regional initiatives focusing on woodland management and small
scale woodfuel
Social Forestry, social enterprises and intermediate labour market* projects
New planting projects – Ashes to Ashes, through WIN
Business support and creation, trading and commercial activities
Woodland management projects
GWC site management
Develop cross cutting themes to all projects, such as equality and diversity,
sustainability and innovation in line with Small Woods' values

4) Governance, policy and support activities

SWA Board and sub committees
Policy responses on behalf of members, influencing external policy development
Internal policy development, business planning
Partnerships, fundraising and grants
Office management and administration, databases;
Financial and project management
Strengthen policies and systems with a view to achieving accreditations required to
grow further, such as ISO 9001, LSC accreditation, Investors in People

* The most common definition of an ILM is a programme that provides a transition from unemployment back into the regular labour market, by providing a period of supported work and

training. The ILM is therefore a temporary support which enables (some) participants to move back into unsubsidised work.

5 Actions to support objectives

Summary (a detailed action plan is available from SWA)

- 1 Increase the sustainable management of small woodlands
 - Offer advice on woodland management
 - Identify and access grants for members, encourage networking
 - Networking and support for coppice businesses, projects, community groups and individuals delivering sustainable woodland management
 - Deliver demonstration projects
 - Promote the benefits of woodland management
 - Promote and demonstrate the use of woodlands for access, leisure pursuits and social forestry where these enhance the long term condition of small woodlands

- 2 Promote the wider utilisation of local timber and wood products
 - Promote wood products through campaigns and marketing
 - Develop sales outlets on line and at the Green Wood Centre
 - Support the development of the timber supply chain from small woodlands for wood products and woodfuel

- 3 Encourage the creation of new small woodlands
 - To support members, woodland businesses and projects with new planting
 - To offer advice to members on planting design and suppliers of trees
 - To input to the development of policy and grant development to promote the creation of new small woodlands
 - Develop projects to create new small woodlands in partnership with others
 - Influence policies on woodland creation
 - Work with initiatives to increase new planting

- 4 To increase access and availability of woodland education, training and apprenticeships
 - Develop Green Wood Centre as a centre of excellence in sustainable woodland management
 - Training and apprenticeships
 - Work with schools to develop eco schools, sustainable schools and similar projects
 - Social forestry projects
 - Social enterprises and intermediate labour market projects
 - Business support
 - Taster sessions for work in the woods
 - Develop employment opportunities and business start ups
 - Networking and advice

6 Outline of future income sources

6.1 Existing situation

Currently, core income derives from four main sources: project management fees, memberships, trading income and a core grant from the Forestry Commission. The balance tips heavily towards project management income and membership subscriptions.

The majority of the core team's time is spent in support of projects, and this is not fully reflected in what the projects deliver in terms of income to core. As the complexity and range of projects increases, more time is taken up in managing these, and less time becomes available for fund raising and membership support. Projects are a useful means of achieving objectives and raising the profile of Small Woods, but can only be sustained with adequate return to core to cover development, fundraising and input to management.

Trading is potentially a good source of core income, yet currently does not deliver to its full potential due to lack of marketing capacity in the team.

As membership grows it will become the major source of income to core, but currently membership delivers little support to core. Memberships must be extended to include those whom SWA supports through its projects, including practitioners, young people, community groups and initiatives, and the new membership strategy shows how this might be achieved.

6.2 Proposals for the future

The following changes are required to achieve a more securely funded core and a healthy reserve fund:

- Introduction of a full cost recovery system which returns a proportionate amount of core income for the time invested in projects
- Use of a fund raising consultant to identify and bid for sources of project funding as resources allow
- Use of a marketing consultant to support the team as resources allow, or offer a graduate placement to assist with rebranding and marketing
- The development of Heartwoods as a regional woodland initiative for the West Midlands
- Introduce a separate spreadsheet page for memberships to accurately monitor the cost and returns of membership
- The recruitment of project beneficiaries as members
- An increased focus on trading enterprises to increase core income from this source
- The development of ILMs or social enterprises in Hereford and Telford to deliver services and products using employees referred from health and social agencies
- Introduction of a small project levy to be placed in reserve funds where possible, to cover redundancy costs

- Change in the balance of funding sources to a more equal distribution between trading income, core grant and project management, with subscriptions in future making up the strongest source of funds to core.

Small Woods Association Board members

Graeme McVittie (chair)
Richard Williams (Finance Director)
Fiona Tooth (Company Secretary)
John Morris
Gary Battell
Rod Waterfield
Mary Lewis
John Blessington
Phil Burton

Staff list

Judy Walker, Executive Director
Phil Tidey, Membership Manager, Policy and Technical
Di Wood, Commercial manager
Angela Pollard, Woodland Initiatives Network Co-ordinator
Richard Thomason National Coppice Development Manager
Heartwoods Project Manager- recruiting
Katie Eastaugh, Herefordshire Sustain Project
Kate Tudge Wye Wood project Manager
Heartwoods Project Officer - recruiting
Stewart Scull, Heartwoods Development Officer
Jayne Biffen, Admin assistant
Fran Fowkes, OCN and apprenticeships officer
Kate Lawes, Wye Wood Project Officer
Katy Harris, Coed Lleol Partnership Co-ordinator
Zena Wilmot, Coed Lleol Partnership officer
Jo Cooper, Coed Lleol Partnership officer
Deb Wozencraft, Coed Lleol Partnership Co-ordinator (maternity cover)
Maurice Clothier, Wye Wood coppice tutor
Steve Kitchen, site assistant
Matt Beech, Venture Out Project Officer
Craig Wood, Social Forestry Project leader
Lorraine Murray Memberships officer
Rachel Meehan, courses administrator
Derek Norrey, Finance assistant
Chris Smith, student
Rob Engvikson, Courses technician
Jean Greenfield, Site assistant
Martin Dagger and Paul Teague, forestry apprentices