



Forestry and  
Land Scotland  
Coilltearachd agus  
Fearann Alba

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# Forestry and Land Scotland Corporate Plan 2022–2025



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot



# Forests and land that Scotland can be proud of



# Contents

1. Foreword/Facal-toisich	02
2. Introduction to the Corporate Plan	04
3. About Forestry and Land Scotland	06
4. National Policy Context	18
5. Our Vision and Mission	26
6. Our Priorities	28
7. Our Corporate Outcomes	30
8. Diversity and Inclusion	62
9. Monitoring Implementation	64
10. Resourcing Our Plan	66
11. Reporting Progress	68
A. Annex	70

1

# Foreword / Facal-toisich

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Hiking through the tall trees at Plodda Falls, Glen Affric

The Scottish Government is committed to tackling the impact of the Climate Emergency and the Biodiversity crisis and in 2021 we had the pleasure of welcoming world leaders to the Conference of Parties (COP) 26 in Glasgow. This provided the opportunity to showcase our achievements to date, share our future plans and take the opportunity to showcase some of our exceptional initiatives across Scotland that contribute to our climate mitigation journey.

We have set out ambitious plans to support a just transition to net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045 at the latest – earlier than any other UK nation. Forestry and Land Scotland/Scotland's national forests and land have a huge part to play in helping to meet this target, by locking in significant amounts of carbon within trees, soils and peatlands.

As the Minister for Environment and Land Reform I, and other ministerial colleagues across Scottish Government, recognise that Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS) has a key role to play in delivering the Scottish Government's ambitions and priorities both for forestry and land management, as well as climate

mitigation, biodiversity growth, sustainable economic development and community empowerment.

The agency and its talented and enterprising staff continue to care for the nation's forests. These forest, woodland and land assets, as well as being central to tackling the climate and nature emergencies, are supporting green jobs, businesses and livelihoods in our rural communities, and provide outdoor green spaces for communities and visitors to enjoy and benefit from.

Generating income and delivering financial sustainability is crucial if the ambitions and priorities in this corporate plan are to be realised. FLS will continue both now and in the future to work with the private, public and third sectors, as well as to engage closely with Scotland's communities.

I welcome this plan and look forward to working with Forestry and Land Scotland to help it deliver its role as custodian of Scotland's national forests and land.

**Màiri McAllan MSP**  
**Minister for Environment and Land Reform**  
**Scottish Government**

Tha Riaghaltas na h-Alba gu mòr airson dèiligeadh ri buaidh Èiginn na Gnàth-shìde agus èiginn Bith-iomadachd agus ann an 2021 bha e na thoileachas dhuinn fàilte a chur air ceannardan an t-saoghail gu Co-labhairt nam Pàrtaidhean (COP) 26 ann an Glaschu. Thug seo cothrom dhuinn na choilean sinn gu ruige seo a thaisbeanadh, na planaichean againn airson an àm ri teachd a cho-roinn agus an cothrom a ghabhail gus cuid de na h-iomairtean sònraichte againn air feadh na h-Alba a thaisbeanadh a tha a' cur ri slighe lasachaidh na gnàth-shìde againn.

Tha sinn a-nis air planaichean àrd-amasach a chur air adhart gus taic a chumail ri eadar-ghluasad cothromach do chothromachadh-carboin a thaobh eimiseanan ghasaichean an taigh-ghlainne ro 2045 aig a' char as fhaide - nas tràithe na nàisean sam bith eile san RA. Bidh Coilltearachd is Fearann Alba agus coilltean is fearann nàiseanta ro-chudromach ann an coileanadh na targaid seo, le bhith a' glasadh mòran carboin ann an craobhan, ùir agus talamh mònach.

Mar Mhinistear na h-Àrainneachd agus Ath-leasachadh an Fhearainn tha mi, agus co-oibrichean ministireil eile agam air feadh Riaghaltas na h-Alba ag aithneachadh gu bheil prìomh àite aig Coilltearachd agus Fearann Alba ann a bhith à libhrigeadh àrd-amasan is prìomhachasan Riaghaltas na h-Alba airson an dà chuid coilltearachd agus stiùireadh fearainn, cho math ri lasachadh buaidh na gnàth-shìde, fàs ann an bith-iomadachd, leasachadh eaconamach seasmach agus cumhachdachd coimhearsnachd.

Tha a' bhuidheann agus an luchd-obrach tàlantach is tionnsgalach aige a' cumail orra a' stiùireadh choilltean na dùthcha. A bharrachd air a bhith aig cridhe dèiligeadh ri èiginn gnàth-shìde agus nàdair, tha na stòrasan coille agus fearainn seo, a' cumail taic ri obraichean uaine, gnìomhachasan agus bith-beò sna coimhearsnachdan dùthchail againn, agus a' toirt dhuinn àiteachan uaine a-muigh airson coimhearsnachdan is luchd-tadhail gus am faigh iad tlachd agus buannachd bhuapa.

Tha a bhith a' dèanamh teachd-a-steach agus a' libhrigeadh seasmachd ionmhasail ro-chudromach ma tha na gealltanasan agus na prìomhachasan sa phlana chorporra seo gu bhith air an toirt gu buil. Cumaidh Coilltearachd is Fearann Alba air ag obair leis na roinnean prìobhaideach, poblach agus leis an treas roinn, a bharrachd air a bhith a' dèanamh com-pàirteachadh dlùth le coimhearsnachdan na h-Alba an dà chuid aig an àm seo agus san àm ri teachd.

Tha mi a' cur fàilte air a' phlana seo agus tha mi a' dèanamh fiughair ri bhith ag obair còmhla ri Coilltearachd agus Fearainn Alba gus a chuideachadh le bhith a' libhrigeadh a dhleastanas mar glèidheadair coilltean agus fearann nàiseanta na h-Alba.

**Màiri NicAilein BPA**  
**Ministear airson na h-Àrainneachd agus Ath-leasachadh**  
**Fearainn Riaghaltas na h-Alba**

# 2

## Introduction to the Corporate Plan

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Protected peatland area with white cotton-grass



## Welcome

This is the second Corporate Plan for Forestry and Land Scotland which sets out the direction of travel and priorities for our organisation over the next three years.

As an executive agency of the Scottish Government we have the important job of looking after something incredibly valuable to the people of Scotland and its visitors – Scotland’s national forests and land.

The team remain optimistic about the opportunities for Scotland, the organisation and the role we play alongside our Scottish Government colleagues in tackling the big issues such as the climate emergency, the biodiversity crisis and COVID-19 recovery/ economic growth, and wider international impacts.

Like all other organisations and businesses due to the pandemic we have faced many challenges over the past few years, but this has also helped us to explore and progress new opportunities bringing benefits to our staff, customers and stakeholders. This ranges from adopting new technologies to support and enable our staff and contractors to keep in touch and remain safe when working remotely from home or when in our forests; welcoming new visitors to our national forests and land for “staycations” or experiencing the positive benefits on mental health and wellbeing through accessing green spaces; and continuing to supply timber to support critical sectors and industries.

Our focus for this plan is to continue building on these opportunities as we contribute to Scotland’s recovery from economic, community and environmental perspectives. In addition, we will be doing more to contribute to addressing the climate and biodiversity emergencies through putting nature at the heart of our actions where we can truly make a difference. This includes expanding Scotland’s national forests and land;

peatland and habitat restoration/conservation; and other nature-based solutions through adapting how we work.

Although our agency was only established in April 2019, our plan is influenced by 100 years of experience of looking after the national forests and land. This has helped us to identify and develop a number of priorities for the next three years, all of which are directly aligned to the Scottish Government’s Purpose and National Outcomes demonstrating how our activity will contribute to the delivery of the wider National Performance framework.

The Forestry and Land Scotland Framework Document sets out how we will function as an executive agency of the Scottish Government and defines our relationship with Scottish Ministers. The Framework Document stipulates:

**“Plans will normally cover a period of three years. The Corporate Plan will set out Forestry and Land Scotland’s outcomes and targets; high level performance indicators; and give an overview of how it will deliver these over the Plan period in line with the Scottish Government’s Purpose and National Outcomes set out in the National Performance Framework.”**

Staff and stakeholders have been involved in the development of this Corporate Plan.

**Simon Hodgson,**  
Chief Executive, Forestry and Land Scotland.

**The national forests and land are owned by Scottish Ministers on behalf of the people of Scotland. We have identified a set of Corporate Outcomes which will shape our priorities and activities over the next three years, and help us move closer to our vision of ‘forests and land that Scotland can be proud of.**

# 3

## About Forestry and Land Scotland



A planter holding bundles of conifer seedlings, Clachan of Campsie



## Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS) was established as an executive agency of the Scottish Government on 1 April 2019, following completion of the devolution of forestry to the Scottish Parliament as a result of the Forestry and Land Management (Scotland) Act 2018.

FLS has responsibility for managing the national forests and land for multiple outcomes, a function previously undertaken by Forest Enterprise Scotland, an agency of the Forestry Commission. The land management provisions of the 2018 Act provide the potential for the expertise within FLS to be used, by agreement, to manage forested and non-forested land owned by other people. As a land manager, FLS is regulated by a number of regulatory bodies, including the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and in particular by Scottish Forestry for forestry activities. FLS also has particular responsibilities to help ensure Scottish Ministers meet their duties to manage forested land in a way that promotes sustainable forest management. As an operationally-focused organisation, commercial trading activities (e.g. the sale of timber, renewable energy schemes, recreation, and estate management) fund most of FLS's operations. FLS is therefore more at arms-length from the core Scottish Government than some other public bodies, retaining more independence in the delivery of its day-to-day operational objectives. FLS is classed as a Public Corporation under the definition set by the Office of National Statistics.

FLS will continue to contribute to the achievement of the Scottish Government's primary purpose of creating a more successful country with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish through increased wellbeing, and sustainable and inclusive economic growth. We will do so in a way that embodies the Scottish Government values of 'a society which treats all our people with kindness, dignity and compassion, respects the rule of law and acts in an open and transparent way'.

The purpose of FLS, in its unique position as both an executive agency and largest land manager in Scotland, is to manage forests and land owned by Scottish Ministers in a way that supports and enables economically sustainable forestry;

conserves and enhances the environment; and delivers benefits for people and nature. The primary focus of FLS, in delivering its purpose, is to support Scottish Ministers in their role as leaders of Sustainable Forest Management and Sustainable Development through their stewardship of the national forests and land.

Two executive agencies of the Scottish Government were created on 1 April 2019: Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS) and Scottish Forestry. The purpose of FLS is to manage forests and land owned by Scottish Ministers, while Scottish Forestry is responsible for forestry policy, support and regulations. FLS provides a range of corporate services to Scottish Forestry under a Service Level Agreement.



**Forestry and Land Scotland**  
Manages Scotland's national forests and land on behalf of Scottish Ministers.



**Scottish Forestry**  
Responsible for forestry policy, support and regulations.

Further information on the role of Scottish Forestry can be found on the [Scottish Forestry website](#).

The Forestry and Land Management (Scotland) Act 2018, led to the creation of a new forestry agency, Forestry and Land Scotland, in 2019 to manage the national forests and land. This marked a tremendous change for the organisation with significant achievements since 2019, including the transfer of staff, moving to different ways of working and governance whilst continuing to manage the national forests and land in a way that delivers for the people of Scotland.

## The story of Scotland's national forests and land

The work of FLS builds upon 100 years of work undertaken by the Forestry Commission, the origins of which are in the First World War and the difficulties Britain had in meeting wartime demands on timber.

The Forestry Act of 1919 and the need to develop a strategic timber reserve coincided with post-war opportunities to acquire large areas of land, but even before this the government was recognising the need to develop Britain's forest resources. After the end of World War II in 1945, work began on restoring the national forests. Many newly acquired felled or neglected woodlands were planted, but the availability of land for new forests was mainly in areas unsuitable for food production, although some of these were not ideal for forestry either.

In the early years of the national forests and land, foresters turned to North America for productive trees that would suit our soils and climate. One in particular, Sitka spruce, became the cornerstone of the Scottish timber-processing industry, supporting thousands of jobs.

In 1935 the first National Forest Park opened in Argyll. This was the start of a long history of encouraging outdoor recreation and public access. In the post-war era, the public were given a 'right to roam' in state-owned forests and more Forest Parks were established.

From the 1970s, conservation and amenity issues grew in importance, with a new emphasis on woodland diversity, broadleaves, and creating a

sympathetic landscape. For the first time, forests were seen as important wildlife reserves. Also at this time, the value of Scotland's extensive bog habitats started to be recognised, bringing a halt to extensive woodland creation on peatlands.

The new century brought with it increased recognition of the role that the national forests and land can play in efforts to mitigate climate change and to tackle the biodiversity crisis. Recent years have seen increasing planting targets and work in areas such as peatland restoration to lock in carbon and enhance biodiversity.

Further information on the history of forestry in Scotland can be found at [forestcentenary.scot](https://www.forestcentenary.scot)



## Tim Cockrell on Peatland Restoration

Many peatland sites in the north of Scotland were acquired, drained and planted with commercial conifer crops in the second half of the 21st century. In several cases these crops haven't grown well and with growing awareness of the capacity of peatland ability to store carbon and their biodiversity importance, we are now trying to restore numerous sites back to a near natural condition.

Through our Land Management Planning process my colleagues in the local planning team identify suitable sites for restoration and its then up to me to programme and deliver the work needed to restore these back to functioning bogs. In some cases this entails organising tree clearance work,

however, most of the work required is rewetting the sites. This involves levelling and blocking up the old plough furrows and forest drains created to drain the bogs at the time the conifer plantations were established. I also work closely with a team of dedicated contractors equipped with specially adapted machinery designed to work in the wet and soft ground conditions found on peat bogs.

With the growing recognition of the importance of peatlands, both in terms of helping us fight climate change and reversing biodiversity loss, views and attitudes towards them have thankfully changed. Working with nature to reverse some of the mistakes of the past gives a real sense of purpose.

A close-up photograph of a flowering plant with several bright purple flowers on a green stem. The flowers have five petals and prominent stamens. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green. A dark green diagonal shape is overlaid on the top left corner of the image, containing the title text.

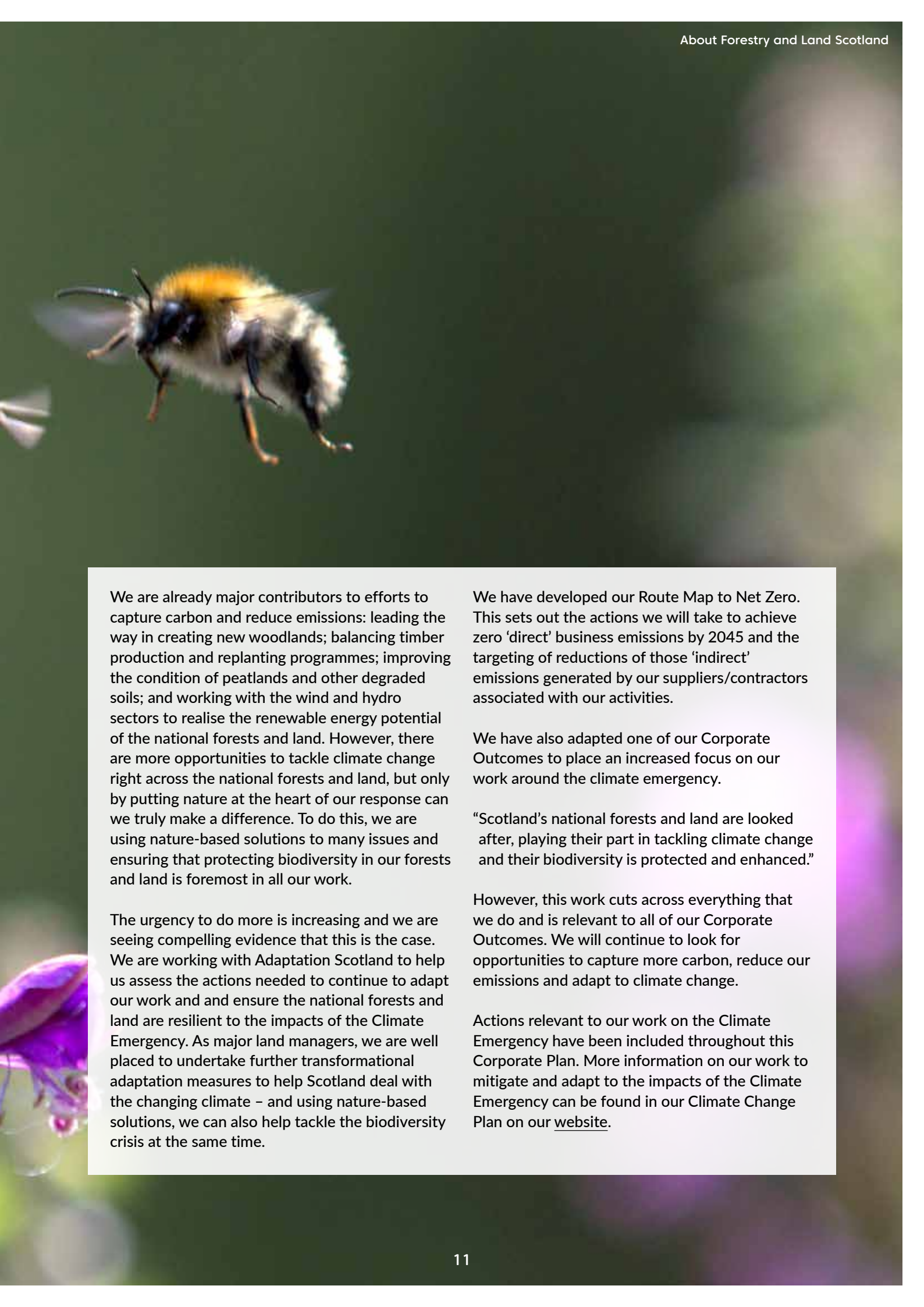
# Responding to the Climate Emergency and Biodiversity crisis

Climate science is telling us to expect warmer and wetter winters, hotter and drier summers, and more unpredictable and extreme weather events. We are already seeing these changes happen now and as they intensify they will have an increasing impact on the national forests and land and the biodiversity associated with it. We recognise also that biodiversity is key to tackling the climate crisis; we need functioning ecosystems that are able to lock up carbon and help protect us from the worst impacts of climate change.

Scotland's world-leading climate change legislation sets a target date for net-zero emissions of all greenhouse gases by 2045. Our environment and economy are intrinsically linked, and Scotland's transition to a net-zero emissions economy is already well underway.

By managing the national forests and land, FLS has a unique opportunity to act on a large scale to make a real difference. We are putting protecting biodiversity and development of nature-based solutions at the heart of our forward thinking approach to building a sustainable business. Our aim is to adapt how we manage our land, reduce our emissions and capture more carbon, leading the way for the land-based sector.

The need to future-proof isn't new to FLS. We recognise that the national forests and land will need to cope with wildfire, more frequent storms and flooding, and a greater threat from pests and diseases. As such we are developing resilient forests and open land habitats that are adapted to cope with these threats.



We are already major contributors to efforts to capture carbon and reduce emissions: leading the way in creating new woodlands; balancing timber production and replanting programmes; improving the condition of peatlands and other degraded soils; and working with the wind and hydro sectors to realise the renewable energy potential of the national forests and land. However, there are more opportunities to tackle climate change right across the national forests and land, but only by putting nature at the heart of our response can we truly make a difference. To do this, we are using nature-based solutions to many issues and ensuring that protecting biodiversity in our forests and land is foremost in all our work.

The urgency to do more is increasing and we are seeing compelling evidence that this is the case. We are working with Adaptation Scotland to help us assess the actions needed to continue to adapt our work and ensure the national forests and land are resilient to the impacts of the Climate Emergency. As major land managers, we are well placed to undertake further transformational adaptation measures to help Scotland deal with the changing climate – and using nature-based solutions, we can also help tackle the biodiversity crisis at the same time.

We have developed our Route Map to Net Zero. This sets out the actions we will take to achieve zero ‘direct’ business emissions by 2045 and the targeting of reductions of those ‘indirect’ emissions generated by our suppliers/contractors associated with our activities.

We have also adapted one of our Corporate Outcomes to place an increased focus on our work around the climate emergency.

“Scotland’s national forests and land are looked after, playing their part in tackling climate change and their biodiversity is protected and enhanced.”

However, this work cuts across everything that we do and is relevant to all of our Corporate Outcomes. We will continue to look for opportunities to capture more carbon, reduce our emissions and adapt to climate change.

Actions relevant to our work on the Climate Emergency have been included throughout this Corporate Plan. More information on our work to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of the Climate Emergency can be found in our Climate Change Plan on our [website](#).

### New Energy Offering

Following a revival of interest from renewable energy developers to take forward new opportunities, we launched the Energy Offering in September 2019.

This brought in 833 Expressions of Interest from 33 developers across 67 forest blocks, for wind, battery storage, solar, hydro and pumped storage across the whole of Scotland. These were reviewed with Regional staff and key agencies, producing a list of acceptable sites which were then offered for full tender applications.

The renewables team then had a big challenge to review, evaluate and score 81 applications from 28 developers for 26 sites.

Thanks to the team's commitment to deliver accurately and on time, we arrived at a set of potential sites with a range of companies, some of which we had not worked with before.

Although we did not receive innovative suggestions for development, such as use of surplus electricity to generate hydrogen for fuel, we did learn that there is a market for wind and battery storage. We have filled that demand for now, securing an ambitious but manageable pipeline of future projects.



Approximately **one third (470,000ha)** of Scotland's forests and woodland are on public land, owned by Scottish Ministers on behalf of the nation.

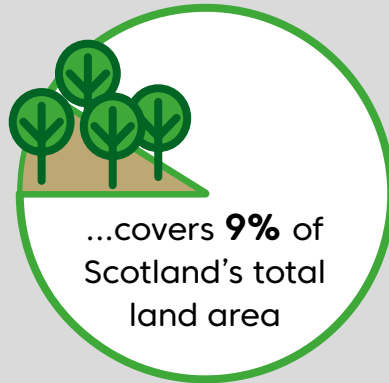


Taking action to restore over **910ha of habitat and species** through peatland restoration...

...and host **enough renewable energy** infrastructure to produce over one billion watts of energy and sufficient to power **600,000 homes**.



## Scotland's National Forests and Land...



...contributes over **£1million per day** Gross Value Added (GVA)



...supports **10,255 FTE jobs**

...hosts **90 community and partnership projects**



...welcomes **10.6 million visits**

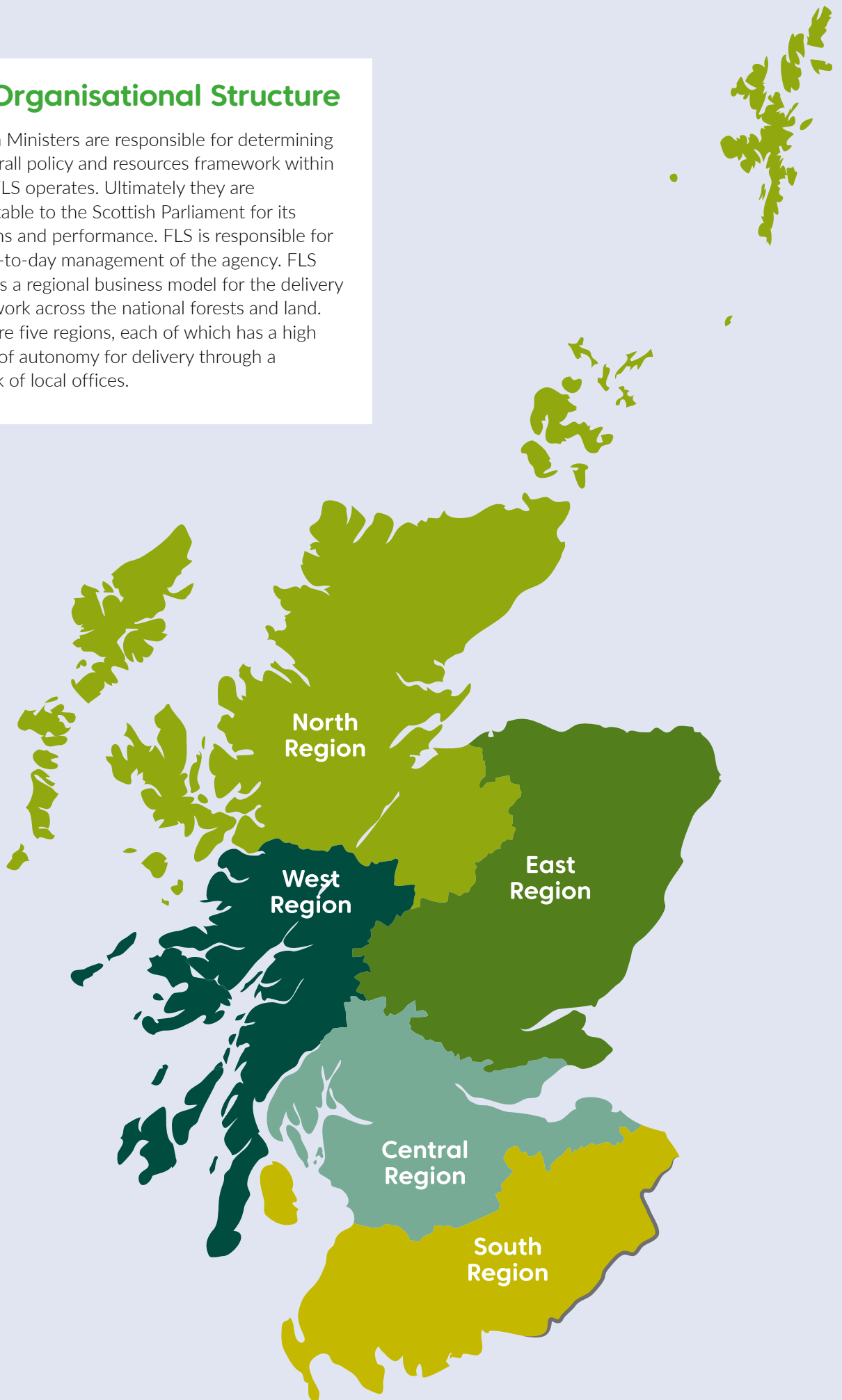
...are home to over **1000 species, 172 of which are protected species** including **lichen, moths, capercaillie** and **red squirrels**



...helps to improve the physical, emotional and mental well-being of residents and visitors.

### 3.1 Organisational Structure

Scottish Ministers are responsible for determining the overall policy and resources framework within which FLS operates. Ultimately they are accountable to the Scottish Parliament for its functions and performance. FLS is responsible for the day-to-day management of the agency. FLS operates a regional business model for the delivery of our work across the national forests and land. There are five regions, each of which has a high degree of autonomy for delivery through a network of local offices.





At a national level, FLS is organised under four Directorates: Land Management & Regions, Commercial Development, Net Zero and Corporate Services.

### Land Management & Regions

is responsible for national land management services including Planning and Environment; Technical Services; Marketing and Sales; and Visitor Attraction. The directorate is also accountable for operational delivery across the five regions.

### Commercial Development

is responsible for managing income and added value opportunities on Scotland's forests and land through: Acquisitions and Disposals; Renewables; Land Agency, including community elements; Procurement and Contract Management and Strategic Commercial Development, including partnerships and recreation opportunities

**Net Zero** is responsible for transforming our infrastructure, balancing our net zero and financial sustainability aspirations: reviewing our buildings, streamlining our fleet, harnessing technology and enabling business process re-engineering.

**Corporate Services** is responsible for Finance; People Team & Organisational Development; Corporate and Business Planning; Portfolio/ Project Management Office; Change Management; Communications, Brand and Media; Corporate Governance and Assurance.



Larch branches at Glen Nevis

## 3.2 Organisational Governance

The FLS Framework Document sets out the relationship with the Scottish Government, and the accountability structures, administrative and financial arrangements within which we operate.

The Chief Executive is supported by the FLS Strategic Board and the Executive Team. The Strategic Board is comprised of the Executive Directors and Non Executive Advisors.

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### FLS Strategic Board

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**Simon Hodgson**  
Chief Executive



**Graeme Hutton**  
Director of Net Zero



**Michael Hymers**  
Director of Corporate Services



**John Mair**  
Director of Commercial  
Development



**Mark Pountain**  
Non Executive Advisor



**Graeme Prest**  
Director of Land Management  
& Regions



**Lisa Tennant**  
Non Executive Advisor

As of April 2022, we are awaiting recruitment of a third Non Executive Advisor.

The Executive Team is comprised of the Executive Directors, Regional Managers, Head of People & Organisational Development and Head of Finance and Procurement.

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## FLS Executive Team

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**John Dougan**  
Regional Manager, South



**Rosetta Forbes**  
Head of People &  
Organisational Development



**Simon Hodgson**  
Chief Executive



**Andy Hunt**  
Regional Manager, West



**Graeme Hutton**  
Director of Net Zero



**Michael Hymers**  
Director of Corporate Services



**David Leven**  
Regional Manager, East



**John Mair**  
Director of Commercial  
Development



**Carol McGinnes**  
Regional Manager, Central



**Donna Mortimer**  
Head of Finance  
and Procurement



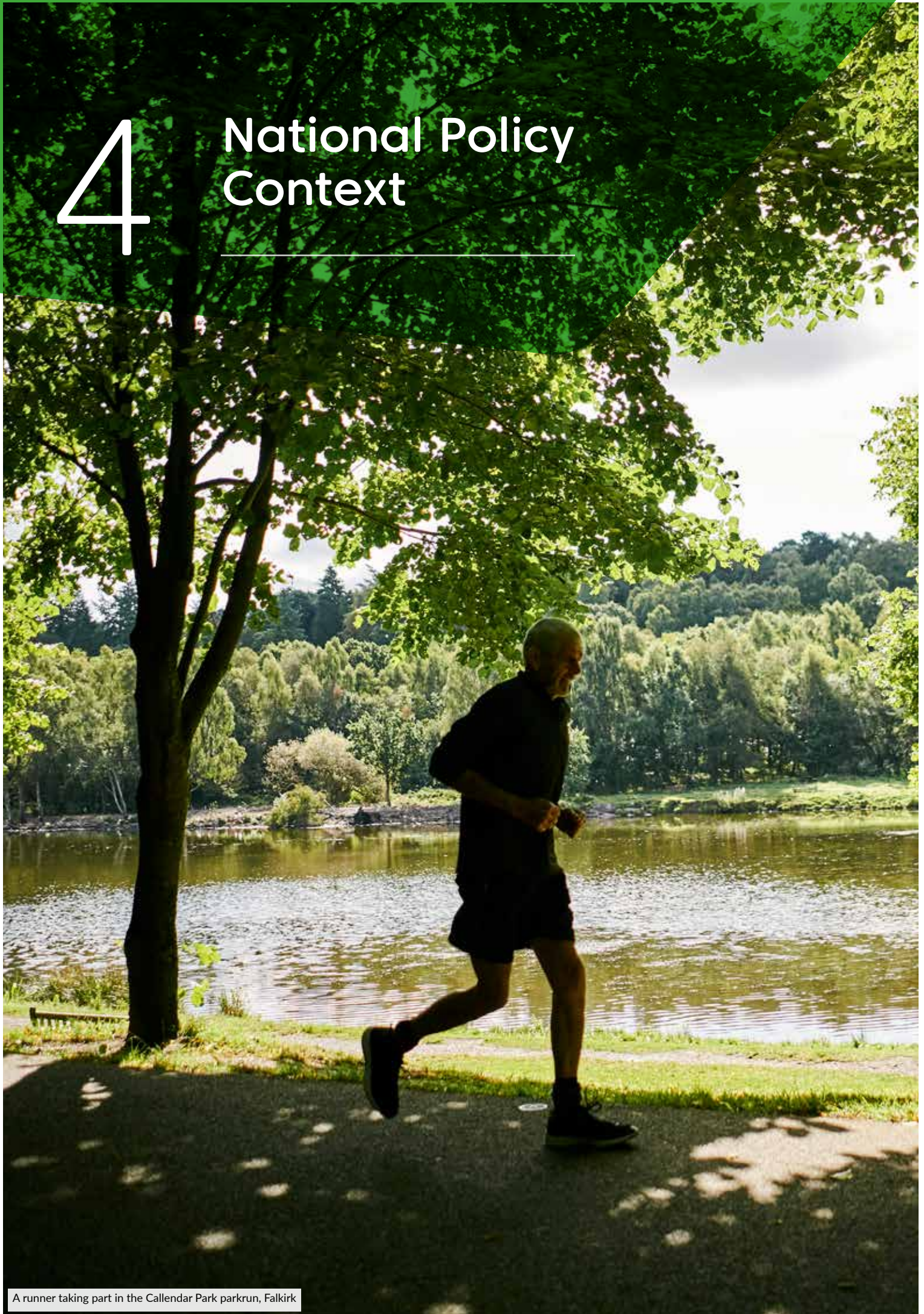
**Graeme Prest**  
Director of Land Management  
& Regions

As of April 2022, we are awaiting recruitment of the post of Regional Manager, North.

# 4

## National Policy Context

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A runner taking part in the Callendar Park parkrun, Falkirk

## 4.1 Our Contribution to the National Performance Framework and UN Sustainable Development Goals

FLS will continue to contribute to the Scottish Government's wider outcomes based approach, which is set out in the National Performance Framework. This means that our Corporate Outcomes are aligned with this larger national framework and will help the Scottish Government, overall, to deliver its outcomes.

### National Performance Framework



FLS will help deliver across all eleven National Outcomes and will make a particular contribution to the following:



### Economy

We have a globally competitive, entrepreneurial, inclusive and sustainable economy



### Environment

We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment



### Health

We are healthy and active



### Communities

We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe



### Fair Work and Business

We have thriving and innovative businesses, with quality jobs and fair work for everyone



### Education

We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society

## Sustainable Development Goals

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are 'global goals' and targets that are part of an internationally agreed performance framework. All countries are aiming to achieve these goals by 2030. The Scottish Government has linked the National Performance Framework (NPF) to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, as both share the same aims - the NPF is Scotland's way to localise and implement the SDGs. We have mapped our contribution to the SDGs under each of our Corporate Outcomes.



### Robbie Layden on Role and Nevis Masterplan Links

I am responsible for looking after the Visitor Service Team (VS) and the VS facilities in West Region's dramatic and exciting landscapes, from the wild coasts of Argyll including the Mull of Kintyre and the fabulous Isle of Mull all the way to Lochaber and Leanachan Forest in the shadow of Ben Nevis.

My role is really varied and challenging in a good way, and although I don't get out to our forests as often as I'd like, I am always speaking to communities and stakeholders and working with colleagues to understand the challenges and opportunities involved in making our offer the best it can be.

I get to meet interesting people from those starting small businesses on Scotland's national forests and land to major commercial recreation providers including Nevis Range Mountain Experience.

I spend a lot of time on larger projects such as the Nevis Forest Masterplan, a 20 year vision to develop and enhance Leanachan and its role in the Cycling World Championships 2023, a first-of-its-kind event that will see the world's greatest riders compete in over thirteen disciplines across the country.

I have an excellent team of colleagues who are endlessly passionate and knowledgeable about their subject area and we work together to provide and improve experiences that are valued by so many people from local communities to visitors from all over the world.

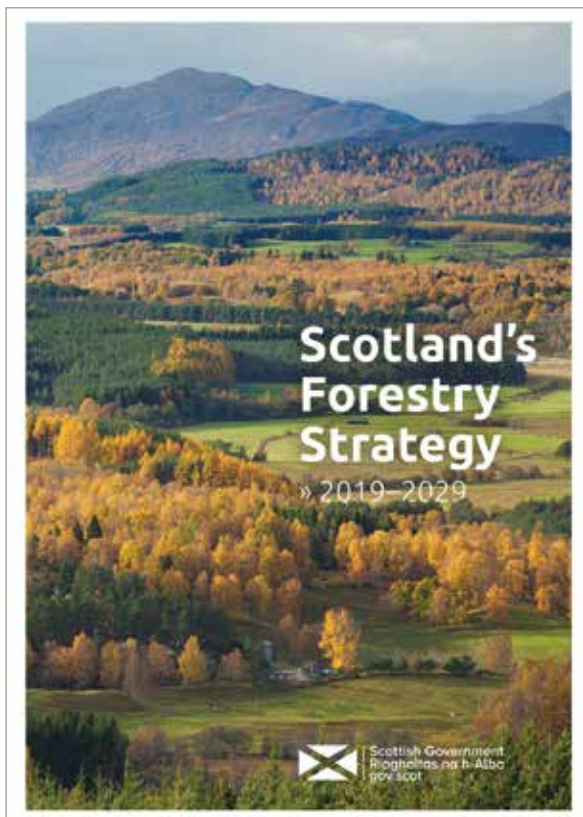
## 4.2 Our Contribution to the Delivery of Scotland's Forestry Strategy 2019-2029

Under the Forestry and Land Management (Scotland) Act 2018 (the Act), Scottish Ministers must have regard to the Forestry Strategy when managing forested land. The work of FLS is informed by the Scottish Government's Forestry Strategy.

Published in February 2019, the Forestry Strategy signalled the start of a new era for forestry in Scotland and was and remains a keystone of the new statutory and administrative arrangements under the Act. The Strategy sets out a 50 year vision for Scotland's forests and woodland:

**"In 2070, Scotland will have more forests and woodland, sustainably managed and better integrated with other land uses. These will provide a more resilient, adaptable resource, with greater natural capital value, that supports a strong economy, a thriving environment and healthy and flourishing communities."**

(Scotland's Forestry Strategy 2019-2029, p15)



To support the 50 year vision, the Scottish Government identified three objectives to deliver by 2029:

- Increase the contribution of forests and woodland to Scotland's sustainable and inclusive economic growth
- Improve the resilience of Scotland's forests and woodland and increase their contribution to a healthy and high quality environment
- Increase the use of Scotland's forest and woodland resources to enable more people to improve their health, wellbeing and life chances

The strategy sets out six priority areas of action over the period of the plan. These priority areas form the framework for coordination of Government action and partnership working. These are:

- Ensuring forests and woodland are sustainably managed
- Increasing the adaptabilities and resilience of forests and woodland
- Expanding the area of forests and woodland, recognising wider land-use objectives
- Enhancing the environmental benefits provided by forests and woodland
- Improving efficiency and productivity, and developing markets
- Engaging more people, communities and businesses in the creation, management and use of forests and woodland

FLS has also been involved in the development and delivery of the implementation plans associated with the strategy. Further details on the implementation of Scotland's Forestry Strategy can be found on the [Scottish Forestry website](#).

In order to demonstrate how we will have regard to Scotland's Forestry Strategy in our work, we have identified the relevant Forestry Strategy 'Priorities for Action' in our Corporate Outcomes section.



## Glenmore Visitor Experience

With summer offering warm sunny days on the beach at Loch Morlich and winter presenting snowy mountain roads among towering pines, it's no surprise that Glenmore Forest Park visitor numbers have tripled over the past five years. Such numbers give us new challenges when ensuring our visitors' continued enjoyment and safety.

We work closely with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to provide assurance and advice on fire safety. Promoting public safety is also behind the patrols that our rangers carry out with colleagues from the Cairngorms National Park Authority – with whom we joined the Highland Council in commissioning dedicated police patrols. In 2021, our collective efforts led to a 95% reduction in the number of inappropriate daytime fires in Glenmore alone.

A residents' and business' group allows all of our partners to share plans and achievements and is a great way to discuss ideas and challenges with the local community. Discussions on road safety concerns led directly to The Highland Council making traffic management improvements in Glenmore village in 2021.

Ongoing training for new and seasonal staff improves communication and teamwork and has led to better distribution of ranger staff across the area.

We will continue to work with our partners to ensure visitors and residents have the best opportunities to enjoy the Park and preserve its character for future generations.



## 4.3 Our Contribution to the Delivery of other National Policies and Strategies

The work we do is also informed by a wide range of national policies and strategies that reach beyond forestry. These include but are not limited to:

- National Strategy for Economic Transformation (to be developed in 2021 and run for 10 years)
- Land use – getting the best from our land: strategy 2021 to 2026
- Strategy for Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture Research 2022-2027
- Climate Ready Scotland: climate change adaptation programme 2019-2024
- Scottish Biodiversity Strategy (and post 2020 Statement of Intent)
- National Transport Strategy: Protecting our Climate and Improving Lives (2020)
- Our Place In Time: The Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland 2014-2024
- Scotland Outlook 2030: Responsible Tourism for a Sustainable Future
- Designation Net Zero: Scottish Tourism Journey
- A More Active Scotland: Scotland’s Physical Activity Delivery Plan (2018)
- A Culture Strategy for Scotland (2020)
- Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming: Report 2021
- The Fair Work Convention
- Fourth National Planning Framework: Position Statement

- Blue Economy Action Plan (in development)
- Energy Strategy: Position Statement (2021)
- National Gaelic Language Plan 2018-23
- Part 9 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

As well as policies and strategies, there are a range of government priorities that inform how we manage the national forests and land or how we deliver for the people of Scotland. These include:

- Targeting Child Poverty
- Addressing Climate Change
- Securing a Stronger, Fairer, Greener Economy

There are also various pieces of legislation that impact our work including the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2015; Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2016; The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011; Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974; The Equality Act 2020 (Specific Duties)(Scotland) Regulations 2021 and the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 to highlight just a few.

FLS wants to play a vital part in contributing to a modern, flourishing Scotland. Working to deliver on national policies and legislation alongside our partners, including public bodies, third sector and communities, we will ensure that the national forests and land can continue to provide a wide range of benefits for everyone, now and in the future.

## Andy Hunt on the role of Chair of National Health and Safety Committee

I have recently taken on the National Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee Chair role. It's a fantastic opportunity to support FLS's positive and committed approach to maintaining and improving our efforts through Health, Safety and Wellbeing (HS&W) activity and initiatives. Our aim is to :

- Eliminate work accidents for those working on Scotland's national forests and land.
- Sustain a healthy working environment that supports physical and mental health.
- Significantly reduce number of the public accidents resulting from recreational use of the Estate.
- Promulgate a strong health, safety and welfare culture amongst those we work with.

Amongst the many demands of the role, I specifically enjoy assisting FLS' Executive Team and the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Team in raising awareness, promoting, achieving and sustaining a culture of attitudes and behaviours that will improve health and safety across FLS. This includes learning from the wider sector and the Forest Industry Safety Accord (FISA).

It is also rewarding to be involved in ensuring that at National, Regional and Local levels all staff have the knowledge and confidence to improve their own health, safety and wellbeing environment. It's great to be part of a team that tries to improve the effective and inclusive mechanism for two-way communication that can contribute to joined up delivery of HS&W objectives.

# 5

## Our Vision and Mission

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Fun at the adventure play park near Tentsmuir

## Scotland's Forestry Strategy 2019-2029 sets out the vision for forestry in Scotland:

"In 2070, Scotland will have more forests and woodlands, sustainably managed and better integrated with other land uses. These will provide a more resilient, adaptable resource, with greater natural capital value, that supports a strong economy, a thriving environment, and healthy and flourishing communities."

FLS will continue to help deliver the vision for forestry in Scotland. In so doing, the vision for FLS is as follows:

**"Forests and land that Scotland can be proud of."**

FLS will work towards this vision by delivering its mission, which is:

**"To look after Scotland's forests and land, for the benefit of all, now and for the future."**

We will achieve our vision and mission by making a positive contribution to the economy, environment and people of Scotland by:

- Protecting our forests and land;
- Growing the value of our business; and
- Investing in our people and communities.



Wood anemone growing in profusion on the woodland floor. Copyright: Mark Hamblin/2020VISION

# 6

## Our Priorities

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Splashing around at Tralee Bay, Benderloch, near Oban with Beinn Lora in the background

As well as undertaking the day to day actions to look after and manage the national forests and land, we have established a set of priorities to help inform our work, ensure financial sustainability and deliver our Corporate Outcomes over the next three years. The following priorities have been mapped out against each of our Corporate Outcomes.

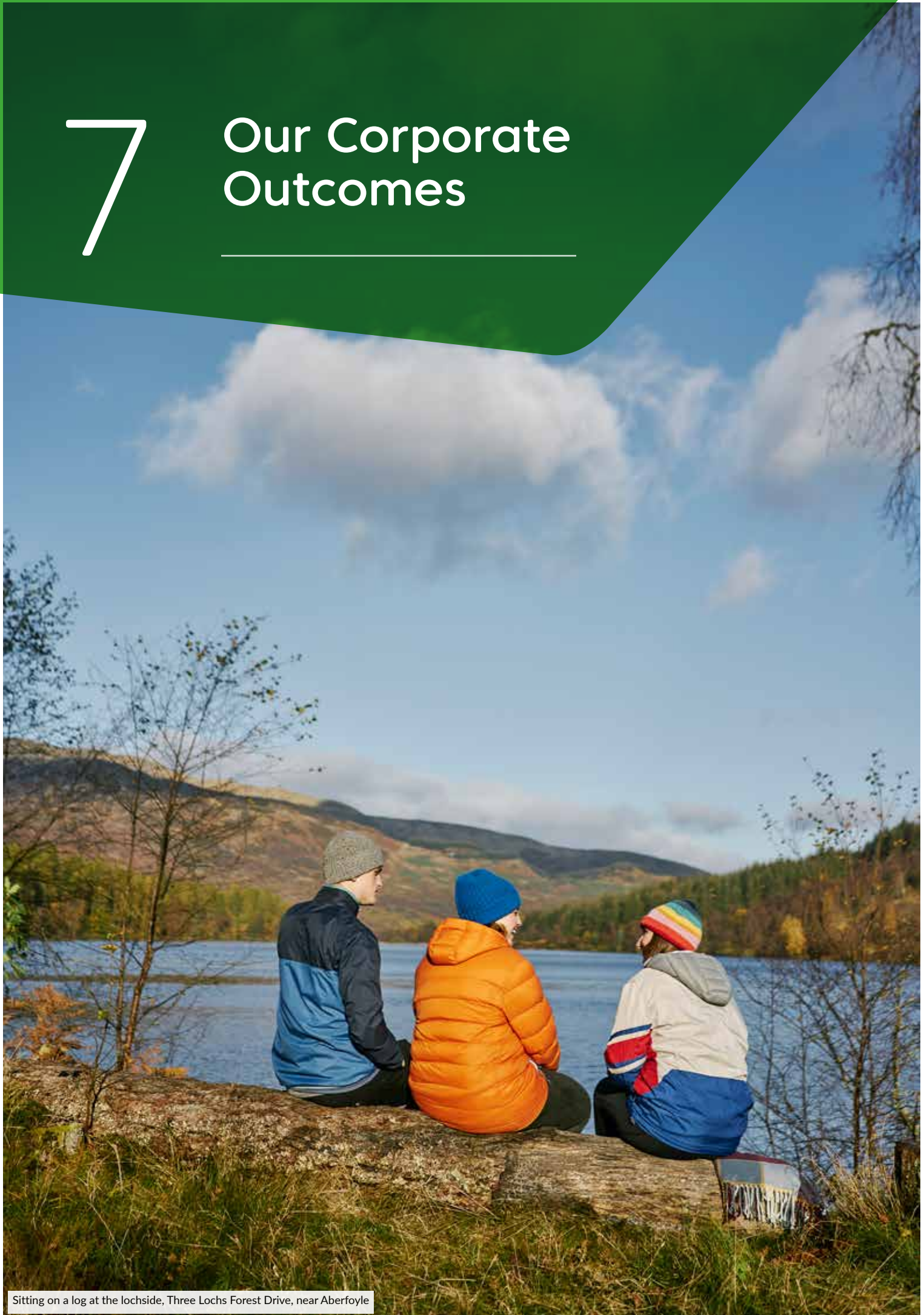
Corporate Outcome	Priorities
<b>Supporting a Sustainable Economy</b>	Investing in long-term, sustainable timber production and developing other, wider contributions to the Scottish economy
	Increasing land-based commercial opportunities to ensure the financial sustainability of FLS
<b>Looking after Scotland's national forests and land</b>	Tackling the twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss
	Protecting our forests and land from other threats
	Working at the landscape scale and in partnership, to make a bigger difference
<b>Scotland's national forests and land for visitors and communities</b>	Adapting to changing visitor and tourism requirements to ensure a responsible approach utilizing partnership working where appropriate
	Increasing opportunities for communities to benefit from the national forests and land
<b>A Supportive, Safe and Inclusive Organisation</b>	Ensuring our workforce is equipped and supported
	Continuously developing a workforce for now and for the future
	Ensuring continuous learning, development and improvement in relation to Health, Safety and Wellbeing
<b>A High Performing Organisation</b>	Improving our business systems and processes
	Appraising and investing in our infrastructure to support financial sustainability
	Working towards net zero by developing a more environmentally sustainable business

More information on each of the priorities is provided within the Corporate Outcomes section next in the document.

# 7

## Our Corporate Outcomes

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Sitting on a log at the lochside, Three Lochs Forest Drive, near Aberfoyle



Forestry and Land Scotland has developed five Corporate Outcomes which will guide all of our work over the next three years, each of which sets out a position statement of where we want to be by 2025. All of the outcomes are interdependent and support the delivery of our priorities, vision and mission, and ultimately the Scottish Government’s outcomes and purpose.



The following section sets out details of each of the Corporate Outcomes, related strategies and links to Scotland’s National Outcomes and the Sustainable Development Goals. Information on our priorities and actions for delivery are also set out under each Corporate Outcome to ensure that we continue to embed an outcomes-based approach to our work.



## Outcome 1: Supporting a Sustainable Economy

FLS supports a sustainable, low-carbon economy by managing the national forests and land in a way that encourages sustainable business growth, development opportunities, jobs, tourism and investments.

### Forestry Strategy Priorities for Action

Improving efficiency and productivity and developing markets.

Engaging more people, communities and businesses in the creation, management and use of forests and woodland.

### Other Key National Strategies And Documents

- National Strategy for Economic Transformation
- Fourth National Planning Framework: Position Statement
- Climate Ready Scotland: climate change adaptation programme 2019-2024
- Energy Strategy: Position Statement (2021)
- Scotland Outlook 2030: Responsible Tourism for a Sustainable Future
- Blue Economy Action Plan (in development)

### Scotland's National Outcomes

We have a globally competitive, entrepreneurial, inclusive and sustainable economy.

We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment.

### Sustainable Development Goals

- SDG 07: Affordable and Clean Energy
- SDG 08: Decent work and economic growth
- SDG 09: Industry, innovation and infrastructure

## Organisational Priorities:

- Investing in long-term, sustainable timber production and developing other, wider contributions to the Scottish economy.
- Increasing land-based commercial opportunities to ensure the financial sustainability of FLS.

The timber industry is vital to the Scottish economy – and maintaining supplies of sustainably produced domestic timber will make a key contribution to the green economy of the future. Forestry and timber processing accounts for £771 million of Gross Value Added (GVA) every year. It also provides more than 30,000 jobs across the wood production, forest management, haulage and processing sectors. Timber from Scotland's national forests is used for house building, fencing, paper and bio-fuel.

FLS is a major supplier to the wood-panel, pulp, paper and saw-milling industries, as well as to wood-energy markets. We are proud to contribute to the continuing success of forestry in Scotland. Work on our national forests and land contributes £1 million to the Scottish economy each day supporting 11,000 jobs.

Improving efficiency and productivity, and developing sustainable markets, are priorities for action within Scotland's Forestry Strategy and relate to our Economy Outcome and delivery of best value. We will help deliver on these priorities by:

- Ensuring wood fibre availability from the national forests is sustainable and predictable, even as the climate changes and we face threats from pests and diseases; and
- Supporting efforts to enable the sustainable transport of timber.

Beyond timber, FLS will continue to contribute to developing the wider Scottish economy, by providing sustainable economic benefits from the national forests and land. These include:

- An increase in stocks of natural capital (i.e. the extent and condition of natural resources such as carbon and biodiversity);
- A reduction in economic threats to Scotland's infrastructure from flooding, landslips, etc;
- The generation of energy through the facilitation of renewable energy schemes;
- The provision for recreational facilities and tourism; and
- Sustainable estate management, development and improvement.

As an organisation we will continue to look at ways where we can grow our income and generate surplus for reinvestment, be that timber, renewables, leasing land and developing other more commercial services in relation to our visitor and tourism offer. As we do this, we will continue to ensure that we deliver on our responsibilities and reinvest in the national forests and land for the people of Scotland – becoming a more sustainable business that can continue to thrive in a changing environment.

### Josh Roberts on Tree Planting Innovation

We plant around 25 million trees every year, around a third of which are grown from seed at our own nursery at Newton near Elgin.

One of the most labour-intensive parts of the process comes when the one-year-old seedlings are planted out in the field for another year of growth. A six-strong team of our nursery staff would be able to plant up to 60,000 seedlings in one day.

As Innovation Manager, I worked with the Scottish Government's innovation team, 'CivTech', to invite ideas on how to improve on that system. One suggestion – TreeTape – a modification of an agricultural idea, promises to revolutionise forestry.

The system works by sowing tree seed into a continuous, biodegradable paper ribbon of compost-filled pockets. After germination, the ribbon is loaded on to a machine that can cut and plant each pocket separately – over 1 million cells in a single day. The work that would have taken several teams weeks to complete was achieved by the TreeTape system in just four days!

We're certainly not all the way there yet, it's an idea – one of several – that is still in development but it's a technology that promises to revolutionise forestry.

My role gives me a great opportunity to meet with a wide range of creative innovators and work with them to bring new approaches to traditional forestry practices. Helping to modernise how we work is both satisfying and rewarding.

**Actions we will deliver under this Corporate Outcome over the period 2022-2025 include:**

### **1. Investing in long-term, sustainable timber production and developing other, wider contributions to the Scottish economy**

- Investing in the long term sustainable productivity and resilience of the national forests and land, in the face of a changing climate.
- Developing our forest planning processes to ensure long-term sustainable productivity of the national forests and land.
- Bringing a sustainable supply of timber to market through the Timber Marketing Framework.
- Continuing the implementation of the new plant and seed supply strategy.
- Investing in slope stabilisation at key points on the transport network such as the A82 and the A83, and in reducing flood risk in key catchments identified by SEPA.
- Supporting Scottish tourism and the visitor economy through the provision of visitor attractions and quality recreation sites.
- Delivering an increased contribution towards the Scottish Government's renewable energy targets.
- Continuing to work with Registers of Scotland to ensure the extent of the national forests and land are properly registered in the Land Register.

### **2. Increasing land-based commercial opportunities to ensure the financial sustainability of FLS**

- Enabling organised events and opportunities that support the national and/or local economy and deliver a positive financial return to reinvest in the national forests and land.
- Creating opportunities for income generation through woodland carbon code projects and other income streams related to the provision of nature-based solutions.
- Bringing opportunities for further renewable energy projects to the market and helping to facilitate the development of projects which achieved planning consent.
- Marketing venison to offset some of the high costs of deer management.
- Working to release value from rural development opportunities in areas of Scotland where this is needed, for reinvestment in the national forests and land e.g. rural housing.
- Realising the economic contribution and opportunities that Scotland's national forests and land can make towards tourism.
- Continuing to operate mineral leases, providing important minerals to the industry such as Barytes and Silica sand.
- Working proactively with our tenants and stakeholders to identify potential added value opportunities.
- Engaging commercially with network operators to facilitate the delivery of priority power grid infrastructure and digital and mobile connectivity projects.

### Karen Francis on the Land Registration project

I am responsible for the Land Registration Project, which in response to a Scottish Government request for all public land to be registered by the end of 2019, saw us submit registration applications of Scotland's national forests and land to the Land Register. As the largest public landholder in Scotland it was a great achievement to have submitted our applications – covering 9% of Scotland's land mass ahead of the given deadline.

Having a clear understanding of our legal ownership is key to carrying out day to day land management so my current focus is on checking the registered titles that have been returned to us to ensure accuracy. This requires working closely with colleagues in Commercial Development and our Regional teams, as well as with Forest Research's Forest and Geodata team, Harper Macleod and Registers of Scotland. I also work closely with the Land Agents and other Regional colleagues to address issues raised locally, either internally or from our stakeholders and neighbours.

Throughout my career I have always been interested in change management and process improvement so I was excited to be involved in the Silvan House Accommodation Project as a member of the working group looking at the redesign of our office space and the implementation of Smarter Working. Following on from that I am now one of a number of Smarter Working Advocates for Silvan House who will be responsible for promoting, reviewing and improving Smarter Working in FLS. I'm looking forward to introducing colleagues to the new workspace and ways of working.



## Outcome 2: Looking after Scotland’s national forests and land

Scotland’s national forests and land are looked after, playing their part in tackling climate change, and their biodiversity is protected and enhanced.

### Forestry Strategy Priorities for Action

Ensuring forests and woodland are sustainably managed.

Expanding the area of forests and woodland, recognising wider land use objectives.

Increasing the adaptability and resilience of forests and woodland to changing climates.

Enhancing the environmental benefits provided by forests and woodland.

### Other Key National Strategies And Documents

- Land use – getting the best from our land: strategy 2021 to 2026
- Strategy for Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture Research 2022-2027
- Climate Ready Scotland: climate change adaptation programme 2019-2024
- Scottish Biodiversity Strategy (and post 2020 Statement of Intent) Environment Strategy for Scotland 2014-2024
- National Transport Strategy: Protecting our Climate and Improving Lives (2020)
- Our Place In Time: The Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland 2014-2024

### Scotland’s National Outcomes

We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment.

We are healthy and active.

### Sustainable Development Goals

- SDG 03: Good health and wellbeing
- SDG 12: Responsible consumption and production
- SDG 13: Climate Action
- SDG 15: Life on Land

## Organisational Priorities:

- Tackling the twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss.
- Protecting our forests and land from other threats.
- Working at the landscape scale and in partnership, to make a bigger difference.

Our environment underpins everything we do; we could not deliver community and economic outcomes without a healthy environment. In a time when we recognise that we are facing twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss, we aim to demonstrate leadership in the way that we deploy the national forests and land to support the Scottish Government's response.

The scale and diversity of Scotland's national forests and land allows us to manage whole landscapes; restoring, enhancing and linking habitats. We look after a range of native habitats such as lowland raised bog and Scots Pine woodlands which are home to some rare and threatened species like wildcats, water voles, great crested newts, pine hoverflies and juniper. We also look after significant historic assets including Neolithic ceremonial rock art at Ormaig in Argyll and the Iron Age Castle O'er Hill Fort in Dumfries and Galloway. We will continue to safeguard places, both large and small; undertaking land management in a way that benefits people and communities; enhancing biodiversity and natural capital through landscape-scale management and working with neighbours and partners where possible. We will directly assist in meeting Scottish Government carbon capture objectives through

forest and woodland creation<sup>1</sup> and peatland restoration. We will also seek to play a leading role in delivering on targets relating to halting and reversing the loss of biodiversity, including through creating and restoring native woodlands<sup>2</sup> and protecting designated sites, and priority species, habitats and landscapes.

In the face of climate change, we need to take particular care to increase the resilience of the national forests and land, while protecting and enhancing our natural assets so that they can continue to provide their many benefits for us. FLS can make a particular contribution in this area by tackling tree disease and pests; carefully managing deer numbers to non-damaging levels; and removing invasive non-native species such as *Rhododendron ponticum*.

Scotland's Forestry Strategy has the principles of Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) at its core. As well as managing all of our forests in accordance with the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (see box) and seeking to increase the ecosystem services that we provide, we are enhancing the environmental benefits provided by our forests and land through restoring plantation on ancient woodland restoration sites (PAWS); increasing natural habitats and increasing minimum intervention/natural reserves.

## Independent Certification of Sustainable Forest Management

The UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) is the independent certification standard and audit protocol for verifying sustainable woodland management in Scotland and the rest of the UK. UKWAS combines the government requirements set out in the UK Forestry Standard with those of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC), the two independent internationally recognised voluntary certification schemes operating in the UK.

Our forests and land are managed to these standards and requirements meaning that the timber we sell can be badged with these internationally recognised marks of sustainability.

All of our forest management is carried out to the standards and requirements of the UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) – the UK's reference standard for managing forests sustainably.

<sup>1</sup> Increasing woodland creation from the current level of 12,000 hectares in 2020/21 up to 18,000 hectares in 2024/25 (Update to the Climate Change Plan 2018-2038, 2020)

<sup>2</sup> Increasing the amount of native woodland in good condition; creating 3,000-5,000 ha of new native woodland per year; and restoring approximately 10,000 ha of new native woodland into satisfactory condition. (<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-forestry-strategy-20192029>)



## Re-greening Vacant and Derelict Land

The Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS) Vacant and Derelict Land (VDL) Programme was initiated in 2016 to bring together Scottish Government's ambitions to plant more trees with the continued need to restore vacant and derelict land, especially from the legacy of opencast mining.

This programme built on work that had already been undertaken by FLS to create over 500 ha of new woodland on legacy mining and brownfield land. The initial work of the VDL Programme focused on identifying sites with the greatest opportunities and identifying appropriate restoration methodologies.

The principal challenges were lack of sufficient bond monies to restore sites and the poor nutrient status of soils or soil forming materials. While some sites had sufficient natural soils that could be recovered others had very little soil and effectively required the creation of new soils from available materials and the addition of organic supplements.

A key objective of FLS woodland creation is to protect and enhance the biodiversity value of sites through the provision of diverse and well-connected habitats including open space, water features and various native woodland types.

Blair House lies between Oakley and Saline in West Fife and is a great example of restoration. Over the last 130 years the area has gone from woodland, to mining, to abandonment and has now completed the circle to become woodland again.

## Actions we will deliver under this Corporate Outcome over the period 2022-2025 include:

### 1. Tackling the twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss

- Helping the Scottish Government to meet forest and woodland creation targets.
- Working in partnership to restore vacant and derelict land for woodland planting and wider beneficial use.
- Increasing our contribution to the Peatland Action programme.
- Managing the national forests and land to further the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity.
- Taking targeted action to maintain and bring designated sites into favourable condition – and working beyond designated sites at the landscape scale with partners where we can – for example in Scotland’s rainforests.
- Taking targeted action for vulnerable priority species (e.g. red squirrel, capercaillie, and black grouse).
- Implementing the asset management approach to the historic environment within Scotland’s forests and land.
- Increasing ancient woodland restoration.

### 2. Protecting our forests and land from other threats

- Implementing a programme to improve the resilience of the national forests and land to the impacts of climate change and tree health threats.
- Continuing to implement the FLS Deer Management strategy while working in partnership with others to support the Scottish Government’s response to the Independent Panel’s recommendations on deer management in Scotland.
- Working with neighbouring land managers to undertake landscape-scale control of *Rhododendron ponticum* to conserve ground flora and improve habitats.
- Continuing to implement the Larch Strategy in order to reduce the rate of expansion of *Phytophthora ramorum*.<sup>3</sup>
- Continuing to respond to and pre-empt Statutory Plant Health Notices by taking action to monitor, contain and slowdown outbreaks of pests/diseases.
- Maintaining healthy forests by applying biosecurity procedures and monitoring tree and plant health.

### 3. Working at the landscape scale and in partnership, to make a bigger difference

- Analysing the cumulative impacts of current plans for managing the national forests and land and testing whether our management is on the right track given the potential impact of future scenarios (e.g. climate change).
- Collaborating with partners on integrated landscape-scale approaches to habitat management and restoration, using our capabilities to complement and support the work of others.
- Supporting policy development and research, and acting as a testbed for new and innovative approaches to forestry and land management.

<sup>3</sup> *Phytophthora ramorum* is an algae-like organism called a water mould. It causes extensive damage and death to more than 150 plant species, including some forest species. Larch trees are particularly susceptible, and large numbers have been affected. ([Forest Research: Ramorum disease \(Phytophthora ramorum\) - Forest Research](#))

## Commendation at Scotland's Finest Woods

The commended woodlands at Balgownie have been established on Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS), and on former agricultural and post-industrial landscapes.

The PAWS are being restored to native woodland with a focus on surveying and protecting important remnant features of the original ancient woodland. These restored areas are being linked into a robust woodland habitat network by a series of woodland creation projects enabled through land acquisition by FLS over the past 15 years.

The woodland creation on former agricultural sites has been planted at close spacing to promote quality timber production, with remarkable growth rates and a range of native species.

The early establishment of Ash in 2009 subsequently failed due to Chalara. This necessitated replacement planting with alternative native species, completed in 2015. A mainly Birch-Oak woodland has now been established. Brown hare, deer and Willow management has been required to foster these stands. Some Birch respacing and Oak formative pruning has also been undertaken.

### Long term contracts and plant health

Over the past two years the Cowal peninsula has been hit hard by *Phytophthora ramorum* infection on our larch. We have had to completely change our planned felling and restocking work to meet the requirements of the Statutory Plant Health Notices (SPHN) issued by Scottish Forestry – to fell all of the symptomatic larch trees and a surrounding buffer. The scale of felling required has meant that all teams (Planning, Civil Engineering, Environment, Visitor Services and Harvesting) have had to put extra resources and personal effort into this area.

Much of the ground in Cowal is steep and requires winch equipment to remove the felled trees, however, all of the equipment and skilled teams were already working on other larch sites.

We needed to find a way to increase capacity and allow contractors to invest in new equipment and build skilled teams. We did this by drawing up, with support from the national Sales and Marketing team, a Long Term Contract for harvesting larch in Cowal – 25,000 cubic meters of felling every year for 10 years. When it was advertised the contract generated a lot of interest and strong bids from a number of timber merchants.

The contract is now in operation and is improving our ability to respond successfully to the SPHNs. We work with the contractors on a day to day basis to prioritise the work ensuring legal compliance with SPHNs but also to maximise the value of timber that is recovered and ensure the sites are safe ready for replanting.



## Outcome 3: Scotland's national forests and land for visitors and communities

Everyone can visit and enjoy Scotland's national forests and land to connect with nature, have fun, benefit their health and wellbeing and have the opportunity to engage in our community decision making.

### Forestry Strategy Priorities for Action

Engaging more people, communities and businesses in the creation, management and use of forests and woodland.

### Other Key National Strategies And Documents

- Scotland Outlook 2030: Responsible Tourism for a Sustainable Future
- Scottish Tourism Emergency Response Group National Action Plan (2021)
- Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming: Report 2021
- Scottish Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement
- National Standards for Community Engagement
- A More Active Scotland: Scotland's Physical Activity Delivery Plan (2018)
- A Culture Strategy for Scotland (2020)

### Scotland's National Outcomes

We are healthy and active.

We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe.

We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society.

### Sustainable Development Goals

- SDG 03: Good health and wellbeing
- SDG 04: Quality education
- SDG 05: Gender equality
- SDG 10: Reduced inequalities
- SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities

## Organisational Priorities:

- Adapting to changing visitor and tourism requirements to ensure a responsible approach utilizing partnership working where appropriate.
- Increasing opportunities for communities to benefit from the national forests and land.

As the single largest provider of outdoor recreation in Scotland, FLS manages some of the best places to visit in the country, with over 300 destinations including six Forest Parks, mountains, riversides, lochs, waterfalls, beaches and 750 miles of waymarked trails. We look after iconic views, from Queen's View in Perthshire to Glen Affric in the west Highlands and host and manage adventure sports, from tree-top experiences, to our 7stanes mountain biking centres.

We also maintain lots of urban woodlands, including Cuningar Loop Woodland Park in the heart of Glasgow, meaning that many communities and visitors are never far away from a gentle stroll or woodland adventure.

Visits to both urban greenspace and our more rural visitor sites soared during the COVID-19 global pandemic. This demonstrated the importance and value that people place on being able to visit their local forests, woodlands and green open spaces. The national forests and land host around ten million visits each year. We need to adapt to changing visitor and tourism requirements; rationalising, investing and improving our visitor and recreation facilities.

FLS manages the national forests and land in an inclusive and open way, involving communities in our decisions, strengthening the connection with

the people of Scotland and ensuring we all make best use of the land. Our work such as enabling school visits, events and engagement with local groups encourages people from all backgrounds and communities to enjoy and benefit from the national forests and land. We want to remove barriers to and actively encourage broader participation with the national forests and land, so that all communities can benefit including those who are care experienced, from protected characteristic groups, and/or from different socioeconomic backgrounds.

As Scotland's largest land manager we are in a unique position with regard to the Scottish Government's land reform commitments. We have a particular role in encouraging local communities to consider opportunities to own, lease or use land. We work actively with communities that want to get more involved in their local forest or woodland. There are a wide range of options and models for greater involvement, from consultation and partnership, through to community-led projects. Communities also have the right under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 to use or buy land through our Community Asset Transfer Scheme. We want to increase opportunities for communities to benefit from the national forests and land, ensuring that more people benefit directly or indirectly.



Climbing up the log frame at the play area, Cuningar Loop Woodland Park, Glasgow

**Actions we will deliver under this Corporate Outcome over the period 2022-2025 include:**

### **1. Adapting to changing visitor and tourism requirements to ensure a responsible approach utilizing partnership working where appropriate**

- Developing and implementing a new Communities Strategy.
- Implementing the Visitor Services Strategy.
- Developing a strategic approach to wider participation in the management of the national forests and land.
- Work with partners to such as VisitScotland understand visitor profile and changing trends to ensure a responsible approach to visitor management.

### **2. Increasing opportunities for communities to benefit from the national forests and land**

- Removing barriers to and actively encouraging broader participation with visits to the national forests and land by people who are care experienced, of low socioeconomic status and/or from protected characteristic groups.
- Maintaining safe walking and biking trails and improving entry level experiences for everyone to enjoy and gain health benefits.
- Enabling outdoor learning and encouraging educational and community groups to make use of the national forests and land.
- Facilitating renewable energy opportunities in order to encourage community benefits/wealth building.
- Engaging with communities to identify benefits in decision making relating to the management of the national forests and land.
- Empower communities to make innovative use of the national forests and land including for social and economic recovery after the Covid-19 pandemic, contributing to a just transition to a new green economy.
- Working with partners such as Transport Scotland, LL&TNP and Cairngorms National Park to support the development of improved and expanded active travel infrastructure and services.

### Adapting to Visitor Pressure in the Central Region

The Central Region team have shown resilience and continued to deliver a quality visitor service throughout the Covid-19 Pandemic. Due to restrictions the outdoors was the only place for people to visit and with restrictions on travel there was an increase in staycations. This saw an increase in volume of visitors, litter, camping, dangerous parking, human waste and congestion to 'honey pot' sites.

Visitor services quickly adapted to put the following measures in place to deal with the increased visitor pressure:

**Partnership working** – Visitor Services worked in partnership with Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park, Police Scotland, Transport Scotland and Local Authorities to welcome visitors back to the outdoors following the lifting of Covid restrictions.

**Seasonal Rangers/ Patrols** – Central Region recruited eight seasonal rangers covering Greater Glasgow, Cowal, East Loch Lomond and the Trossachs. An additional Area Visitor Services Manager was put in place on a temporary promotion to deliver and manage the seasonal rangers. Existing regional staff undertook overtime to fill gaps in seasonal staff starting, to cover holidays and pass on local knowledge. The extra resource helped to alleviate pressure with rangers welcoming visitors, monitoring litter, any social behaviour as well as car park management.

**Infrastructure planning** – Popular hot spots like Ben A'an and Ben Lomond had an overwhelming amount of visitors and increased pressure on traffic management for FLS, local authorities and Police Scotland. To address congestion and safety issues we developed car park infrastructure plans for Ben Lomond overflow, Ben A'an and the Kilpatricks. The region has also secured funding through the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund to extend the Ben A'an car park and increase its capacity by December 2021. To help alleviate congestion and safety concerns at this popular site an additional 26 spaces will be added. Works are progressing well.



## Cairngorms Connect

Established in 2014, Cairngorms Connect is a partnership of neighbouring land managers working together to restore habitats across 600 square kilometres of the Cairngorms National Park – including Forestry and Land Scotland-owned Glenmore Forest Park, Rothiemurchus Forest and Inscrach.

The partners – including Wildland Ltd., RSPB Scotland, Forestry and Land Scotland and NatureScot – have a 200-year vision that is unparalleled in its scope, scale and timeframe in the UK. They are working to restore native woodlands to their natural limits, including high-altitude montane woodland; restore peatlands, wetlands and rivers; and build support and understanding locally, nationally and internationally.

Linking all of these sites in this way allowed the partners to work together to develop a habitat restoration programme at a landscape scale.

Cairngorms Connect has received funding from the Endangered Landscape Programme (2018), which is backed by Arcadia, a charitable fund of Lisbet Rausing and Peter Baldwin, and is managed by the Cambridge Conservation Initiative.

Monthly meetings of the Cairngorms Connect Board provide a brilliant opportunity to build relationships and identify further opportunities to share resources and challenge each other. The partnership is an example of effective partnership working at a time when we need to be looking at the bigger picture and working at scale to fight the biodiversity and climate emergencies.

Regenerating Scots pines poking through flowering heather along the River Feshie in the Cairngorms National Park.

Image courtesy of scotlandbigpicture.com

### Stay the Night

Stay the Night is an initiative conceived in response to the continually growing numbers of motorhomes and campervans overnighting in FLS car parks, despite our policy of no overnighting permitted, and the increasing demand for informal one night stop-over capacity across Scotland.

The initiative was due to trial in April 2020 however due to Covid-19 it was re-launched in mid-July 2020 with the added objectives of helping meet the anticipated 'staycation' demand as lockdown ended; relieve pressure on visitor 'hot spots'; help meet concerns of local communities and to support the restart of the Scottish Tourism market. It ran through to 31 Dec 2020 and again from 26 April 2021 until 31 Oct 2021.

In 2021 there were 32 participating car parks spread across Scotland.

We've had a considerable response to the initiative and have received a lot of feedback covering a range of views, the majority of which has been positive and constructive. This feedback, together with our experience of managing the initiative, will be factored in to our discussions as we consider future options for 2022 and beyond.

The positive feedback and appreciation for the effort from FLS, the tourism industry and Scottish Government invokes the feeling that the initiative is one of many leading the way in helping solve a growing issue and contributing to the tourism industry in Scotland.



## Otter Pool Rejuvenation

The Raiders' Road Forest Drive in the Galloway Forest Park is a rare opportunity for everyone, irrespective of mobility or access issues, to visit one of the wildest parts of South West Scotland – located in the core of the Galloway & Southern Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere.

The highlight of the scenic ten-mile drive is the 'Otter Pool' site, where the neighbouring Blackwater of Dee widens into an attractive series of shallow pools, a popular attraction both for residents and visitors to the area. The number of people visiting the Otter Pool has increased tenfold since it was established, currently more than 30,000 visitors per year – making it one of the most popular attractions in South West Scotland.

Facilities at the site had struggled to cope with this high level of popularity with the toilet facilities and paths on site requiring upgrades to make them more accessible to accommodate the growing numbers. To address these issues, we embarked on a collaborative project funded through the VisitScotland administered 'Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund' and the National Lottery funded Galloway Glens Scheme. Improvements included:

- Complete refurbishment of the toilet block to leave a brand new, accessible facility;
- A new, accessible circular footpath around the Otter Pool site; and
- Installation of new picnic benches.

The success of the project is demonstrated in the ever increasing visitor numbers. The visitor experience has been very much enhanced and it is a site that shows the area at its best.



## Outcome 4: A Supportive, Safe and Inclusive Organisation

Forestry and Land Scotland is a supportive, safe and inclusive organisation that provides exciting careers, professional development and strives to be an employer of choice.

### Forestry Strategy Priorities for Action

Engaging more people, communities and businesses in the creation, management and use of forests and woodland.

Improving efficiency and productivity and developing markets.

### Other Key National Strategies And Documents

- Scottish Government People Strategy
- Forestry Industry Safety Accord (FISA)
- Fair Work Convention
- Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming: Report 2021 (Scottish Government)

### Scotland's National Outcomes

We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society.

We have thriving and innovative businesses, with quality jobs and fair work for everyone.

### Sustainable Development Goals

- SDG 03: Good health and wellbeing
- SDG 04: Quality education
- SDG 05: Gender equality
- SDG 08: Decent work and economic growth
- SDG 10: Reduced inequalities

## Organisational Priorities:

- Ensuring our workforce is equipped and supported.
- Continuously developing a workforce for now and for the future.
- Ensuring continuous learning, development and improvement in relation to Health, Safety and Wellbeing.

We are extremely fortunate to have a proud and committed workforce, so it is vital that we ensure that our workplaces are supportive, safe and inclusive. We have a wide range of occupations across FLS including:

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**Administrators, archaeologists, bridge engineers, civil engineers, community and education rangers, community and rural development coordinators, data specialists, ecologists, environment and heritage managers, foresters, forestry machine operators, graphic designers, human resource specialists, IT specialists, landscape architects, marketing managers, media specialists, programme and project specialists, surveyors, tree nursery operatives, visitor assistants, wildlife rangers and lots more...**

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We recognise the importance of developing our workforce to ensure their knowledge and skills continue to develop and provide rich and exciting careers. We are working on identifying and addressing skills gaps; improving learning and development; supporting career aspirations; and providing opportunities for staff to innovate; and promoting a healthy work-life balance. We are developing resilience in our workforce; nurturing leadership skills; ensuring continuity; and attracting, rewarding and retaining great talent to meet the evolving needs of the business.

Our People Strategy sets out the steps we are taking to develop our culture and be deliberate in creating an environment to attract and retain the best people. We aim to have an inclusive, diverse workforce, representative of the communities of Scotland. Historically employment in forestry has been male-dominated and our current workforce continues to be reflective of this. We are striving to be more inclusive by improving our data, insight and analysis to ensure our actions are evidence-based and having a positive impact; driving workforce diversity through recruitment, retention and promotion to enable under-represented groups to be represented at all levels of the organisation; and, by developing policies and interventions such as flexible working to ensure inclusion is at the heart of our changing culture.

We are working with partners in education such as Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) and the University of Highlands and Islands (UHI) to develop the next generation of foresters and land managers with our Apprenticeship Programme. In the last year we have significantly increased our Work Based Learning opportunities in both forestry and non-forestry roles

and established dedicated support for this within our Learning and Development team. This is in direct support of Scottish Government's commitments to target future skills and capacity requirements in nature and land-based jobs by expanding existing apprenticeship and undergraduate schemes in public agencies.

Forestry can be dangerous work and we are committed to making it safe and responsible. To us, that means looking after our employees' health, safety and wellbeing. It also means caring for those we work with, our visitors and the communities we work in. We want to be an example of good health and safety practice to all organisations working in the forest environment. FLS is a member of the Forest Industry Safety Accord (FISA) working with others to significantly improve the health and safety performance in the forest industry.

We treat the risks to our mental health and wellbeing with the same importance as we give to risks to our physical safety. We proactively support wellbeing and have over 100 Mental Health First Aiders who champion good mental health, as well as support colleagues who may be experiencing poor mental health. We also encourage a culture of openness, where employees feel confident to raise concerns about potential wrongdoing and this is supported by our Whistleblowing policy. We have recently piloted and will now be taking forward 'Engaging the Bystander' training which will help colleagues to identify and challenge inappropriate behaviours. We are driving forward an ambitious improvement programme that puts health, safety and wellbeing at the heart of our organisation working in partnership with staff and trade unions through a network of Scottish safety committees.

**Actions we will deliver under this Corporate Outcome over the period 2022-2025 include:**

**1. Ensuring our workforce is equipped and supported**

- Reviewing and updating our People Strategy.
- Rolling out the 'Engaging the Bystander' training to identify and challenge inappropriate behaviours.
- Continuing to use technology more effectively to communicate, limit the need for staff to travel and reduce our resource consumption and waste footprint.
- Expanding our flexible working arrangements to build on the experience from COVID-19 working.

**2. Continuously developing a workforce for now and for the future**

- Using targeted positive action measures to try to increase the diversity of our workforce.
- Working with Chief Forester on the development of skills and training in the forestry sector.
- Considering where we can adapt our processes to meet and exceed our Corporate Parenting obligations.<sup>4</sup>
- Workforce planning to support effective matching of priorities and resources now and in the future.
- Supporting the Apprenticeship and Student Programme in all parts of the business.
- Strengthening the professionalism of our staff through increasing their membership of accredited institutions and providing new opportunities for continued professional development.

**3. Ensuring continuous improvement in relation to Health, Safety and Wellbeing**

- Continuing to treat risks to our mental health and wellbeing with the same priority as physical risks.
- Providing ongoing support on health, safety and wellbeing across FLS including reactive support, site visits, meetings and webinars.
- Implementing the new Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Management Framework.

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<sup>4</sup> FLS is a Corporate Parent and has legal obligations under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

## Murray Bowen on FLS career and mental health first aider role

As a senior programme manager within the Region, I have a responsibility for a small group of people who develop work programmes for our teams. Most of my work is office based but I do get to escape to the forest from time to time.

I have been blessed with a variety of challenging and rewarding roles in that time and still enjoy my work. Some of the more notable projects I've been involved with include; restoring oak woodlands, Big Tree Country, redeveloping the Queen's View Visitor Centre and chairing the hugely successful Enchanted Forest.

However, for me it is the people who make the job worthwhile, sharing the successes and helping you through the tough times. I've been extremely lucky to have worked in some of the most beautiful parts of the country and have worked with some great people over my 29-year career, both inside and outside the organisation.

One really important aspect of my work is being a trained Mental Health First Aider (MHFA) and one of the MHFA co-ordinators for the region. Forestry can be a difficult job – working sometimes alone and being out in all weathers and at all hours – and in the past, anyone who was finding any aspect of this affecting their mental health would keep their troubles to themselves. My role as an MHFA allows me to promote and discuss wellbeing and mental health issues, as well as being there to help and support colleagues who may need someone to talk to.

### Justina Pliuskeviciute on her student apprenticeship with FLS

I am currently undertaking a mid-year student placement with Forestry and Land Scotland. I have found the programme to be very comprehensive – it lets me get an insight into all of the different aspects of forestry.

Overall, the placement is very practical and hands on. The whole year consists of working closely with and assisting managers, supervisors and craftspeople from a range of teams, including the harvesting, planning, environment and civil engineering teams, as well as the staff who look after our Visitor Centres.

Most of the days are spent outdoors but no two days or weeks are the same. One week I could be preparing maps, visiting harvesting sites, supervising contract work, or conducting a stock-take, while the next week will see me completing different type of surveys, spending time with environment rangers, or even doing a recreational area inspection!

The best thing about the role is that no matter what the job, I get to work with colleagues and learn from them before I am assigned similar tasks to complete on my own.

The majority of the time I spend outdoors. Not only do I get to explore the most beautiful part of Scotland, but I get to work with people who are very passionate about what they do!

The support that the staff give is enormous. I am very grateful for opportunities that FLS provided me with and I am very proud to be able to represent the organisation.



## Rebecca Carr on her role in the Community Asset Transfer Scheme (CATS) and other Community Engagement

As a community asset transfer manager my role is mainly to manage the CATS process and advise communities – whether their request is to acquire a derelict barn to turn into a community hub, or to acquire a whole woodland for community projects such as paths, Forest Schools or woodland crofts.

I also support our Regional staff who engage on a daily basis with communities, particularly helping to find solutions to challenging cases. Our approach to asset transfer is recognised as an example of best practice, and I share our way of working with other Scottish Government bodies both through an asset transfer working group and the National Asset Transfer Action Group.

I also work closely with my colleagues to improve our internal processes, provide better information

on all the work FLS does with communities, support our staff through workshops and keep up to date on emerging guidance and legislation.

Working with all the Regional teams has highlighted the many great examples of how FLS works with communities, from consultations on Land Management Plans, to events and projects that take place in the forest, and right through to asset transfer.

I enjoy the variety and helping find solutions to the occasional difficult case but the thing I enjoy most is getting out all over the country to meet communities, hearing about their plans and helping them through the process. Returning at a later date to see what they've achieved and hear how it has benefited the community is very satisfying.





### Paul Calderwood on role and experiences of home working

I'm the Internal Communications Manager for Forestry and Land Scotland, supporting our Chief Executive, Executive Team, and teams across the agency to engage with colleagues and share news.

Forestry and Land Scotland has provided me with options to work flexibly. My son is pre-school age and I've been able to spend time with him during the middle of the week thanks to working compressed hours. Flexi time also lets me alter my hours when necessary.

I also have the option to work at home or in the office, so I can make even better use of my time by planning where to work based on the tasks I have

coming up. I frequently work to short deadlines to ensure news and updates are sent on time, and working from home lets me do what I need to do efficiently and in a very focused way. If I'm meeting with colleagues to develop ideas, then I find the office is a great environment for collaboration.

The thing I most enjoy about my role is helping colleagues understand what is happening across the organisation. Sometimes this involves taking a piece of complex information and making it more easily digestible in a number of formats, such as news articles, video and presentations. I like being creative, so it's an ideal role for me.



## Outcome 5: A High Performing Organisation

Forestry and Land Scotland is recognised as a high performing, efficient and effective, sustainable organisation that continues to transform and adapt.

### Forestry Strategy Priorities for Action

↓ Improving efficiency and productivity, and developing markets.

### Other Key National Strategies And Documents

- Programme for Government
- National Strategy for Economic Transformation
- Deputy First Minister's COVID Recovery Plan
- Climate Ready Scotland: climate change adaptation programme 2019-2024
- Energy Strategy: Position Statement (2021)

### Scotland's National Outcomes

↓ We have thriving and innovative businesses, with quality jobs and fair work for everyone.

### Sustainable Development Goals

SDG 04: Quality education  
 SDG 05: Gender equality  
 SDG 08: Decent work and economic growth  
 SDG 09: Industry, innovation and infrastructure

## Organisational Priorities:

- Improving our business systems and processes.
- Appraising and investing in our infrastructure to support financial sustainability.
- Working towards net zero by developing a more environmentally sustainable business.

FLS is an executive agency of the Scottish Government and how we operate and our relationship with Scottish Ministers is set out in our Framework Document.

FLS is also a trading body and is classified as a public corporation, for the purposes of its accounts, by the Office of National Statistics. This classification was awarded based on the nature of activity within the business and the high proportion of business trading. The classification enables the agency to build and sustain essential financial reserves across financial years to sustain and deliver outcomes. These are essential in managing the dynamic of activity in the forestry sector.

That means that the vast majority of our funding comes from commercial trading activities such as the sale of timber, renewable energy schemes, recreation, estate management and other income raised by FLS. Income raised goes back into the management of the national forests and land. This makes us unique compared to most other public bodies in Scotland, who are fully funded by Scottish Government.

Like all other agencies and public bodies in Scotland, FLS is required to demonstrate compliance around the duty of 'Best Value' as set out within the Scottish Public Finance Manual. This means delivering best value based on sound governance, good management, public reporting on performance and a focus on improvement. We take a mainstreaming approach to the implementation of Best Value requirements, and as such, key actions are included in our business plans to ensure continuous improvement in performance whilst having regard to economy, efficiency, effectiveness, equal opportunities and sustainable development.

Since our establishment in 2019, we have been developing and implementing a sustainable financial model for the business, exploring and developing solutions to support the organisation and manage potential and actual financial challenges. We need to focus on the long-term future of FLS and how we secure that in a very different world; in light of current challenges in Scotland such as recovering from COVID-19 and the UK's exit from the European Union. This means ensuring that FLS is still achieving the balance of economic, social and environmental programmes as we always have, and tapping into our

knowledge and skills to innovate, invest wisely for the future and grow our business.

We have developed a 'Business Sustainability Action Plan' and a set of 'Business Principles' which focus on the long-term future of FLS and the national forests and land. These incorporate a commercially driven asset management approach across the portfolio which will focus on continuous improvement and long term financial viability. By effectively implementing the plan and principles, we are confident in meeting the following:

"By 2025 FLS will be a provider, procurer and enabler of services driven by achieving best value and financial outcomes supported by a healthy and motivated workforce. FLS will be independent, self-sufficient, sustainable, flexible and adaptable to respond to changing political, social, market and environmental influences and will be confident in our long-term role to deliver our Vision and Mission for the people of Scotland"

We have also been taking steps to ensure that we can continue to meet our responsibilities as an executive agency of the Scottish Government. This includes ensuring good corporate governance and developing and implementing strategies to meet Scottish Government policy requirements. Where possible we will continue to develop and deliver a 'digital first' approach for transactions with our customers and suppliers. We also aim to foster a culture of continuous improvement and innovation, building and improving on our reputation.

In order to continue to be a high performing organisation, we need to continue to meet challenges in relation to the Climate Emergency. Taking a strong, proactive approach will ensure that the national forests and land, related infrastructure and services are fit for current and future generations and able to deliver positive outcomes across society. We are working with Adaptation Scotland to move along the maturity scale of the Public Sector Capability Framework for Adaptation and are taking steps to reduce our emissions.

An overview of our performance against our delivery priorities will continue to be included in our Annual Report and Accounts which are laid before the Scottish Parliament every year. We will also continue to publish corporate performance information on our website on a quarterly basis.

## Actions we will deliver under this Corporate Outcome over the period 2022-2025 include:

### 1. Improving our business systems and processes

- Maintaining the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) certification.
- Improving resource planning by increasing the quality, coverage and accuracy of forest information.
- Developing and implementing a strategic programme of built asset rationalisation and investment including the rollout of smarter working practices across the organisation.
- Developing and implementing the digital transformation programme to enable business process improvements.
- Ensuring that FLS meets all statutory duties as an executive agency.
- Reviewing, developing and implementing strategies and plans in relation to business improvement and Best Value.
- Implementing our new Gaelic Language Plan.
- Implementing and reviewing actions to enhance our approach to complaints and customer satisfaction.
- Promoting the organisation and its activities, both internally and externally, and continuing to communicate the significance and benefits that the national forests and land bring to the people of Scotland.
- Developing our project management approach to manage the balance of 'business as usual' and change.
- Supporting effective governance arrangements including the FLS Strategic Board, Audit and Risk Committee.
- Responding to Ministerial enquiries and Freedom of Information requests.
- Providing a range of corporate services to Scottish Forestry.

### 2. Appraising and investing in our infrastructure to support financial sustainability

- Implementing and delivering business planning activity, including the Business Sustainability Action Plan to drive business financial sustainability and resilience.
- Increasing investment in supporting infrastructure by implementing a new long term Civil Engineering and Timber Access Strategy, and applying an asset management approach to civil engineering infrastructure to ensure assets meet current and future business needs, taking account of likely climate changes.
- Implementing the new Acquisition & Disposal Strategy.
- Implementing a full Asset Management approach to the FLS property portfolio.
- Seeking new income generating opportunities from our national forests and land.
- Working collaboratively with adjoining land owners and other agencies to improve the management of the national forests and land.

### 3. Developing a more environmentally sustainable business

- Taking the corporate actions set out in our Climate Change Plan, including those to reduce emissions, and to move along the maturity scale of the Public Sector Capability Framework for Adaptation.
- Using the Public Bodies Reporting duties under the Climate Change Act as a focus for continuous improvement in our climate change contribution.
- Making full use of technology to communicate more effectively and limit the need for staff to travel, reducing our resource consumption and waste footprint.

There are a number of plans and strategies which set out how we aim to operate and deliver and these are published on our [website](#).

### Electric Vehicles

The sustainable transition to a zero emission fleet is an exciting challenge for FLS. We have one of the largest fleets in Scottish Government and the most complex. As well as our cars and vans we also operate harvesting machines, all-terrain vehicles as well as all the other specialised equipment to support our colleagues to manage our forests and land. And working in some of the most remote areas of Scotland means our fleet is essential and the amount of travel we have to undertake is significant.

Transforming this fleet to zero emissions is a key strategy for us to meet our Net Zero commitments, and to do our bit for the fight against global warming. But this comes with significant challenges for us – keeping abreast of emerging technologies, the need

to invest significantly in our charging infrastructure, and importantly ensure our colleagues understand how best to use these new tools. And that includes support staff in our Mechanical and Engineering team who play a vital part in literally keeping the wheels turning - they too need the skills and equipment to maintain these new vehicles.

So our aim is to have a zero emission fleet by 2030, and be able to do this in a planned and affordable way. This is not just about using electric vehicles, we need to change our behaviours to try and reduce our travel where we can and also use each and every one of our vehicles and machines as efficiently as possible.



## Corporate Parenting

As a Corporate Parent, Forestry and Land Scotland has obligations and responsibilities towards children and young people with care experience. When undertaking research to understand our duty, we quickly realised we wanted to make sure that wherever possible we extended our responsibilities to everyone who has a care experienced background.

Over the course of a year we worked collaboratively with [whocares?Scotland](#) as well as the core Scottish Government Corporate parenting team to create what we now know as our [Corporate Parenting Plan](#).

A really valuable part of this process involved consulting with a group of Care experienced people to review and discuss our plan. The group provided some excellent feedback and helped us to form the heart of our plan – 'Putting down Roots'.

We also ran awareness sessions with our Executive team and [whocares?Scotland](#). A member of their team shared their experience with care and provided a powerful message which instilled a great desire for our organisation to do all we can as a 'spoke' in the wheel of the wider Scottish Government family.

Actions within the plan are divided across the organisation, ranging from HR and apprenticeships to offering our forests and land for camping events and hopefully in the future; FLS staff involvement in camp events.

As we continue to grow and learn in our journey as a corporate parent, we endeavour to keep care experienced people at the root of our decisions.



# 8

## Diversity and Inclusion

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Mountain biker on one of the trails at Glentress



**Diversity and Inclusion is inherent in all that we do in FLS. We want to continue to develop an environment that is accessible, open and welcoming to people from all backgrounds and communities across Scotland and beyond – as a place to work, to visit and to participate.**

We will continue to integrate diversity and inclusion into everything that we do by identifying and removing barriers, enabling us to build a more inclusive organisation, services and facilities.

We are taking steps to develop a more diverse workforce in order to better reflect the communities we serve and to gain the benefits that diversity can bring, such as increased innovation, creativity, efficiency and effectiveness. Recent activity in this area has included making improvements to our recruitment system and processes, and using positive action statements and gender neutral language in job adverts. We actively seek to work with partners including Equate Scotland and Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) to develop the profile of our workforce.

We have also signed up to Working Family Friendly Scotland's 'Happy to Talk Flexible' campaign and use their logo on all job adverts to promote our commitment to striking a better work-life balance for all our colleagues.

We have already noticed some changes, with an increase in the number of women working for the organisation (33.4 % in 2021 compared with 31.1% in 2019) and we've increased the opportunities to grow our young workforce by doubling the number of Foundation and Modern Apprenticeship placements across FLS in the last 12 months.

We are also working hard to improve the accessibility of the forests and land that we manage by working with partners such as Euan's Guide, the disabled access review website.

We regularly publish information on our Gender Pay Gap and moving forward, we will also be reporting on our ethnicity pay gap in line with anticipated forthcoming legal requirements. As an executive agency, we are also required to meet the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012.

We aspire to not only meet, but exceed our legal obligations. More information on our requirements and approach to mainstreaming diversity and inclusion can be found in our equality publications on the [FLS website](#).



A forest trail suitable for mobility scooters, Dalbeattie Forest, near Dumfries

# 9

## Monitoring Implementation

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Examining tree bark through a magnifying glass, Rannoch Wood

We have developed a series of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to help us track, measure and manage performance and progress against our Corporate Outcomes. These are reviewed on an annual basis.

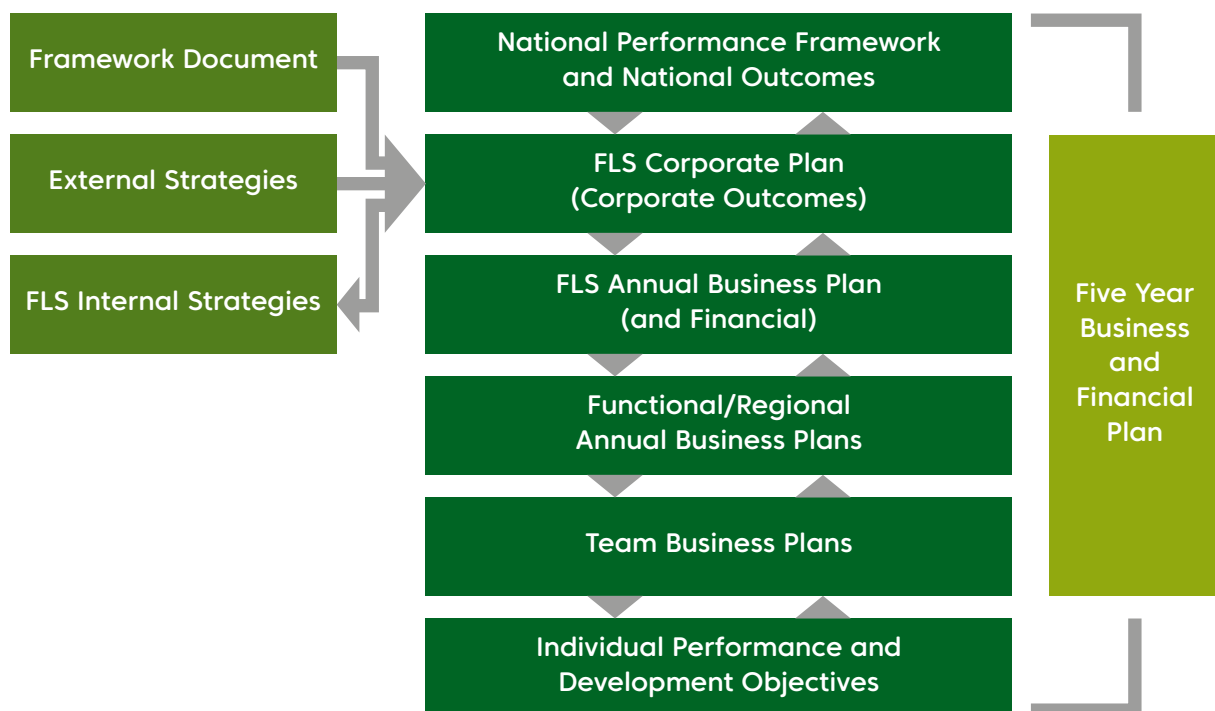
The KPIs are also monitored and reported to the Executive Team on a quarterly basis. Information is then published within the Corporate Performance Reports on our website.

Organisational Business Plans are developed and published on an annual basis and set out specific actions that we will take over the financial year to deliver on our Corporate Plan and Corporate Outcomes. This work is underpinned by our rolling five year business and financial plan. Associated Business Plans are also developed for each of our

Business Functions and Regions and these set out the activity each area will undertake to support the delivery of the Corporate Plan.

Our Corporate Outcomes are reflected in our Business Plans, Team Plans and individual performance and development objectives. This ensures that employees across FLS can see how they individually contribute to our Corporate Outcomes and ultimately to the National Outcomes set out within the National Performance Framework. We refer to this series of plans as our Corporate Planning Framework.

## Corporate Planning Framework



# 10

## Resourcing Our Plan

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Felled, trimmed and delimbed logs lie on the forest floor ready for collection, Romach Hill, near Forres, Moray

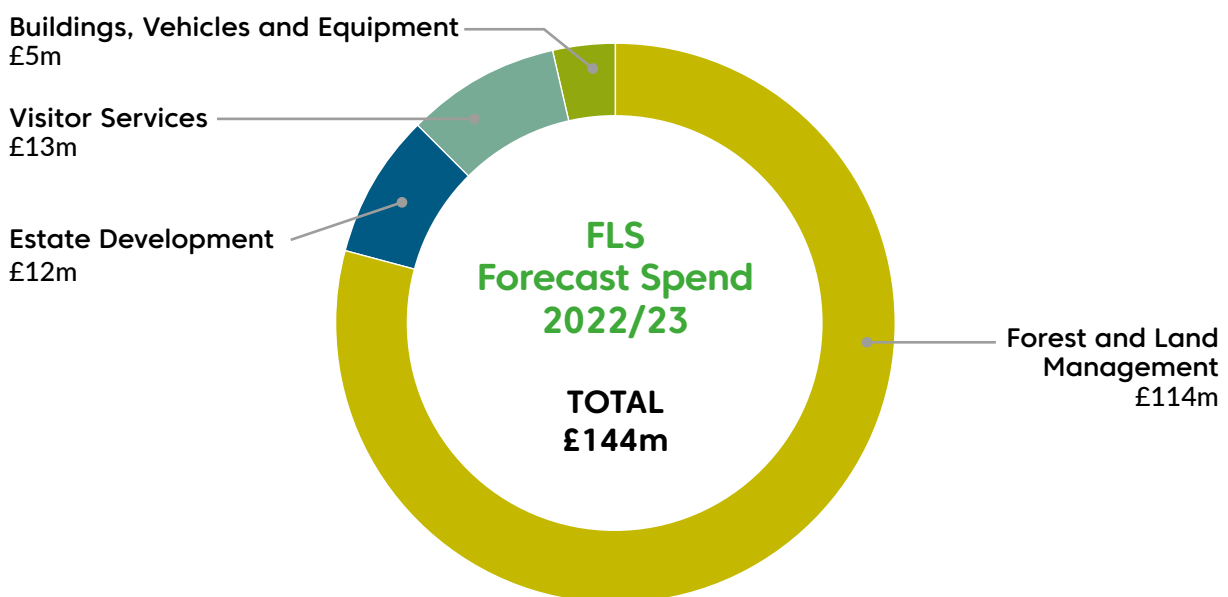
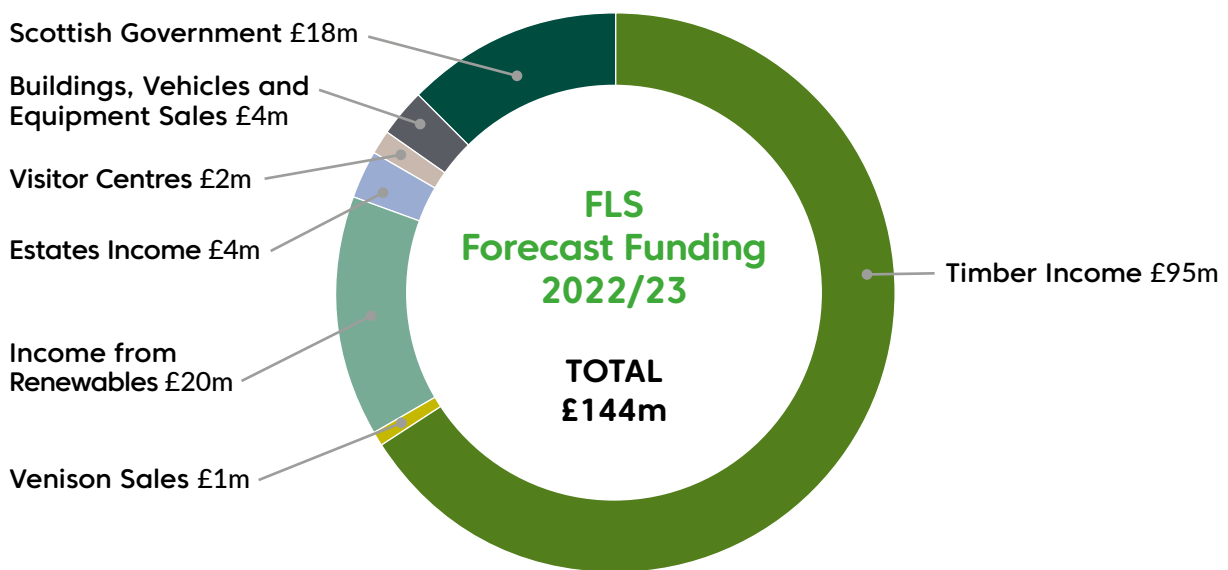
FLS is different from most other public bodies in Scotland in that we earn a large proportion of our income through commercial trading activities such as the sale of timber, renewables, recreation and leases. We use this revenue to invest in activities such as woodland expansion and to build a sustainable financial model for the long term. In addition we receive Scottish Government funding.

As a public corporation, FLS is required through the FLS Framework Document to retain financial reserves in order to protect against cash flow variances and enable essential investment.

Our five year business plan details the assumed investment required in each financial year.

Our anticipated income and expenditure for 2022/23 is detailed below.

## Financial Resources

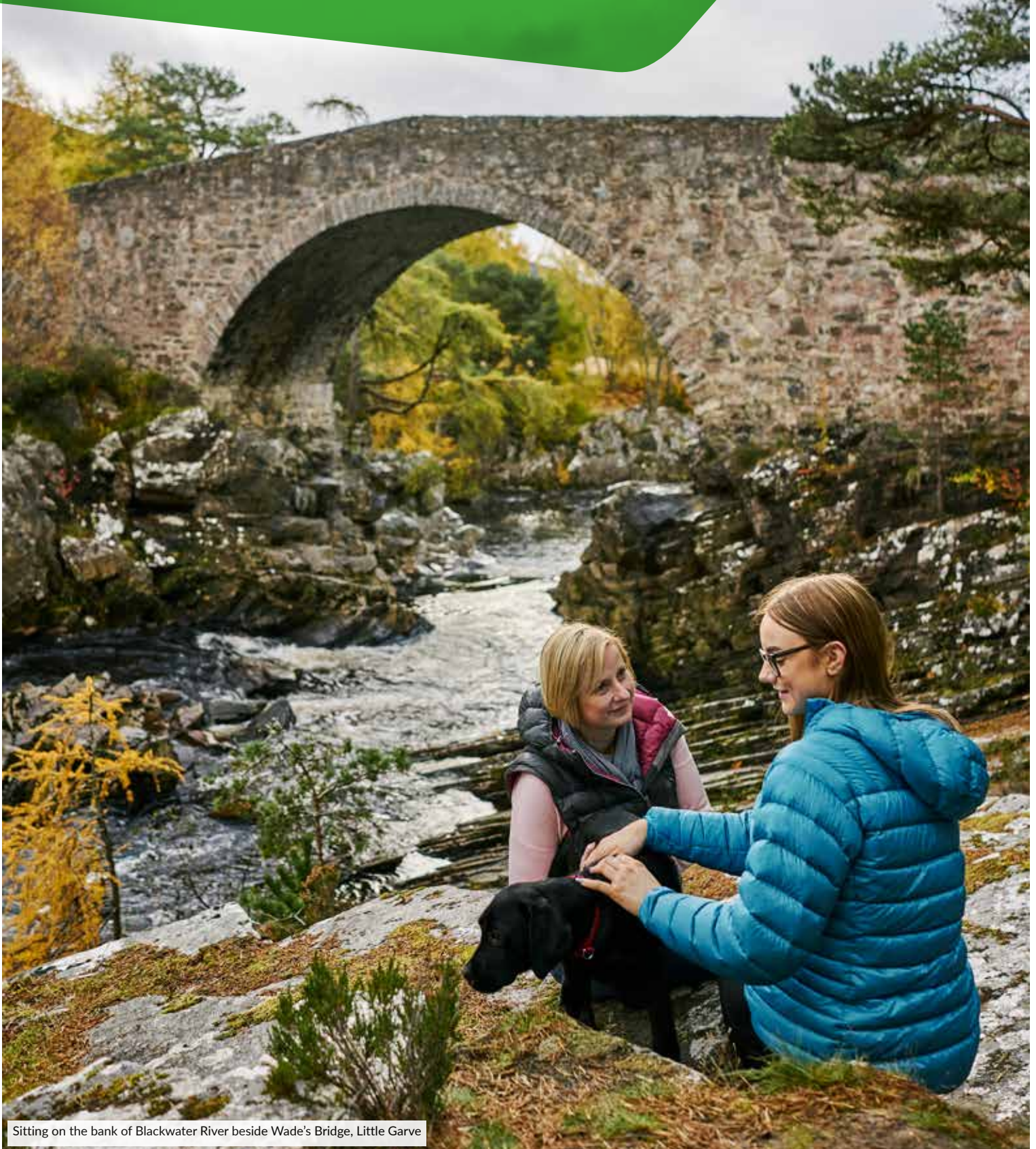


Any deficit from planned spend is met from FLS reserves.

# 11

## Reporting Progress

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Sitting on the bank of Blackwater River beside Wade's Bridge, Little Garve

We will report progress on the implementation of this Corporate Plan through our Corporate Performance Reports which will provide a quarterly overview of our work and the progress we are making. Detailed information will also be provided within the Annual Report and Accounts, laid before the Scottish Parliament. The Corporate Performance Reports and the Annual Report and Accounts are published on the [FLS website](#).

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## Further Information

Further information on this Corporate Plan can be requested by contacting the Corporate Development Team using the following details:

Forestry and Land Scotland  
Great Glen House  
Leachkin Road  
Inverness  
IV3 8NW

Telephone: 0131 370 5541  
Email: [enquiries@forestryandland.gov.scot](mailto:enquiries@forestryandland.gov.scot)  
Website: [forestryandland.gov.scot](http://forestryandland.gov.scot)



White-tailed eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*) parent bird at nest with 8 week ago chick, Wester Ross, Scotland, UK  
Copyright: Mark Hamblin/2020VISION

# A

## Annex

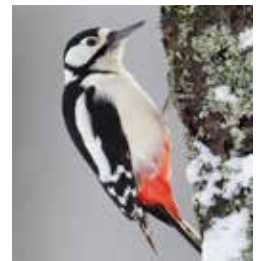
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Walking the dogs at Windyhill, Renfrewshire Woods



FLS Corporate Outcome	Forestry Strategy Priorities for Action	Other Key National Strategies and Documents	Scotland's National Outcome	Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
<p>FLS supports a sustainable, low-carbon economy by managing the national forests and land in a way that encourages sustainable business growth, development opportunities, jobs, tourism and investments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving efficiency and productivity and developing markets</li> <li>Engaging more people, communities and businesses in the creation, management and use of forests and woodland</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Strategy for Economic Transformation</li> <li>Fourth National Planning Framework: Position Statement</li> <li>Climate Ready Scotland: climate change adaptation programme 2019-2024</li> <li>Energy Strategy: Position Statement (2021)</li> <li>Scotland Outlook 2030: Responsible Tourism for a Sustainable Future</li> <li>Blue Economy Action Plan (in development)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have a globally competitive, entrepreneurial, inclusive and sustainable economy</li> <li>We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment</li> </ul>	<p>SDG 07: Affordable and Clean Energy SDG 08: Decent work and economic growth SDG 09: Industry, innovation and infrastructure</p>
<p>Scotland's national forests and land are looked after, playing their part in tackling climate change, and their biodiversity is protected and enhanced.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring forests and woodland are sustainably managed. Expanding the area of forests and woodland, recognising wider land use objectives</li> <li>Increasing the adaptability and resilience of forests and woodland to changing climates. Enhancing the environmental benefits provided by forests and woodland</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land use - getting the best from our land: strategy 2021 to 2026</li> <li>Strategy for Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture Research 2022-2027</li> <li>Climate Ready Scotland: climate change adaptation programme 2019-2024</li> <li>Scottish Biodiversity Strategy (and post-2020 Statement of Intent)</li> <li>Environment Strategy for Scotland 2014-2024</li> <li>National Transport Strategy: Protecting our Climate and Improving Lives (2020)</li> <li>Our Place In Time: The Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland 2014-2024</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment</li> <li>We are healthy and active</li> </ul>	<p>SDG 03: Good health and wellbeing SDG 12: Responsible consumption and production SDG 13: Climate Action SDG 15: Life on Land</p>
<p>Everyone can visit and enjoy Scotland's national forests and land to connect with nature, have fun, benefit their health and wellbeing to and have the opportunity to engage in our community decision making.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engaging more people, communities and businesses in the creation, management and use of forests and woodland.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scotland Outlook 2030: Responsible Tourism for a Sustainable Future</li> <li>Scottish Tourism Emergency Response Group National Action Plan (2021)</li> <li>Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming: Report 2021</li> <li>Scottish Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement</li> <li>National Standards for Community Engagement</li> <li>A More Active Scotland: Scotland's Physical Activity Delivery Plan (2018)</li> <li>A Culture Strategy for Scotland (2020)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are healthy and active</li> <li>We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe</li> <li>We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society</li> </ul>	<p>SDG 03: Good health and wellbeing SDG 04: Quality education SDG 05: Gender equality SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities</p>
<p>Forestry and Land Scotland is a supportive, safe and inclusive organisation that provides exciting careers, professional development and strives to be an employer of choice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engaging more people, communities and businesses in the creation, management and use of forests and woodland</li> <li>Improving efficiency and productivity and developing markets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scottish Government People Strategy</li> <li>Forestry Industry Safety Accord (FISA)</li> <li>Fair Work Convention</li> <li>Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming: Report 2021 (Scottish Government)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society</li> <li>We have thriving and innovative businesses, with quality jobs and fair work for everyone</li> </ul>	<p>SDG 03: Good health and wellbeing SDG 04: Quality education SDG 05: Gender equality SDG 08: Decent work and economic growth SDG 10: Reduced inequalities</p>
<p>Forestry and Land Scotland is recognised as a high performing, efficient and effective, sustainable organisation that continues to transform and adapt.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving efficiency and productivity, and developing markets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Programme for Government</li> <li>National Strategy for Economic Transformation</li> <li>Deputy First Minister's COVID Recovery Plan</li> <li>Climate Ready Scotland: climate change adaptation programme 2019-2024</li> <li>Energy Strategy: Position Statement (2021)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have thriving and innovative businesses, with quality jobs and fair work for everyone</li> </ul>	<p>SDG 04: Quality education SDG 05: Gender equality SDG 08: Decent work and economic growth SDG 09: Industry, innovation and infrastructure</p>





To look after  
Scotland's  
forests and  
land, for the  
benefit of all,  
now and for  
the future.





Forestry and  
Land Scotland  
Coilltearachd agus  
Fearann Alba

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