



**Public Involvement and Social Enterprise  
Framework – Introductory Workshop**

**17<sup>th</sup> May – Broneirion, Llandinam, Powys**

**Summary Report**



## Participants

Representatives of Community groups, Forestry Commission Wales (Local Area Managers and Community Ranger) attended the workshop at Broneirion.

Overall facilitation was undertaken by Penny Walker, an external facilitator, assisted by members of the FCW Woodlands for People Policy team – Barbara Anglezarke, Richard Davies, Aaron Fortt and Roz Owen.

### Participants:

Jenny Wong	Coedtir Mynydd/Llais y Goedwig
Gareth Ellis	The Green Valleys
Philip Swain	Longwood Community Group
Dolly Schwenk	Longwood Community Group
Christine Brooks	Knighton Tree Allotment Trust
Angie Zelta	Knighton Tree Allotment Trust
Fay Sharpley	Pobol Y Fforest/Llais y Goedwig
Ruth Stafford	Newtown Community Orchard
Gwyneth Davies	Tir Coed
Jo Cooper	Llais y Goedwig
Adam Thorogood	Llais y Goedwig
Roger Davies	Golygfa Gwydyr/Llais y Goedwig
Amanda Orrell	Cwmaman Community Woodlands
Melanie Ridge	Knucklas Castle Community Land Project
Neil Hurst	Communities First
Adrian Farey	Elwy Working Woods
Sharon Sweeney	Llandegai
Paul Dann	FCW
James Roseblade	FCW
Mike James	FCW
Steve Crosby	FCW



## AGENDA

10am Welcome, introduction  
Sharing experiences of working together  
Presentation and Q&A on the new Framework

### Lunch

Trying it out – Form 1 and 2  
Discussion sparked by forms  
Set your own agenda  
Feedback from the above  
Next Steps

4.15pm Close

## AIMS

- Introduce the new framework
- Get feedback from Community groups especially
  - aspects which need more work
  - support: needs and sources
  - anticipating FAQs.
- Share perspectives - positive and productive relations, mutual understanding
- Next Steps



## WORKING AGREEMENTS

- Mobiles** - silent, calls outside.
- Time keeping** - Penny in charge.
- Confidentiality / attribution** - No confidentiality issues
- One person speaking at a time**
- Language - acronyms must be explained**
- Respect - disagreements with respect**
- Talk through the facilitator**



**Best Things About Working Together**

<b>Opportunities and Resources</b>	FCW manages a large area of publicly owned woodland	<b>Network knowledge</b>	FCW have access to resources and knowledge
	FCW have a resource with great potential		Provide networking opportunities with access to contractors, timber extraction and processing
	FCW provide opportunities to access the resource		By working together both the FCW and community groups can learn from past mistakes and challenges to develop best practice
	Potential for local forests for use by local people	<b>More outputs</b>	By working together communities can access grants and revenue that FCW cannot, to provide opportunities for employment, training and infrastructure
	Excellent resource for education and recreation	<b>Resources, skills &amp; value for money</b>	They can raise money / access to wider range of funds
	PIEF may bring new opportunities		Can get work done cheaply
<b>Access to knowledge and advice</b>	Forest Research		Links and access to others
	Provide access to advice, education		Others deliver for us – better use of resources
	FCW can deliver things that community groups cannot		Can solve problems – volunteers bring expertise
	FCW can help with access to money	<b>Local Engagement</b>	The best approach is where FCW have approachable Officers on the ground
	Provide expertise in woodland management		The willingness of some FCW staff to work with communities
	Communities bring a range of different expertise to work with FCW		Some FCW staff are willing to engage at the local community level
	Communities bring new ideas, energy and a different perspective to the FCW		Where successful FCW does meet local needs and desires
<b>Long Term</b>	FCW stability helps remove short term money drivers and provides a longer term public perspective		



<b>The Things That Get In the Way of Working Together Better</b>			
<b>Institutional inflexibility</b>	Beaurocracy	<b>Activity depends on individuals , there is no institutional memory</b>	Success depends on the individual LAM and they leave and all the knowledge goes with them
	Administrative systems		There is no long term continuity because staff are always moving to new roles
	Procedural constraints		Lack of continuity
	FCW is a large organisation which can be difficult to communicate with		Lack of consistency in the decision making process
	Forest Design Plan inflexibility		FCW staff are frequently changing roles
	Conflict between felling plans and community expectations for their woodland	<b>FCW does not provide sufficient resources to work with communities</b>	Lack of resources because working with communities is often given a low priority
	Conflict with other users	<b>Inadequate Information</b>	Communities have difficulty in identifying who they need to talk to and where the FCW woodlands are.
	FCW is averse to risk taking	<b>Different aims and objectives</b>	FCW's processes are not set up for small and voluntary groups
<b>FCW is a centralised organisation</b>	Centralised control		FCW is set up for big business not small providers, this leads to a lack of networks and contacts for small scale users of woodland
	Increased centralisation has led to a loss of personal contacts at the local level which has resulted in local needs not being met		This makes FCW appear as if it lacks imagination and doesn't listen
	Little flexibility		FCW fails to understand different users' needs
	Takes a long time for anything to happen		FCW's policies and strategies are not always compatible with common sense approach to delivery



	There is a lack of local knowledge		FCW has difficulties providing economic benefits to local communities
	FCW has too few local staff resources	<b>FCW has a wider context</b>	This results in competition and boundaries for communities
	Who do individuals and communities contact?		
	Often FCW seem unable to make decisions		

### Further reflections on the what works / what gets in the way exercise

1. Too dependant on individual staff who move around too often
2. There can often be a conflict of interest between users
3. It's about getting the approach right because both FCW and community groups aims and objectives broadly tally
4. FCW needs to communicate more effectively and quickly
5. FCW staff need to understand groups' history and agenda
6. It all depends on good communication, education and mutual understanding
7. It would help communities if they could understand perspectives and perceived 'hidden' motivations of FCW
8. We have to understand that FCW and Community groups interpret policy and how to deliver it on the ground differently
9. FCW is set up to deliver traditional forestry - they do not have the structure or resources to work with communities and small scale groups.



## **Golygfa Gwydyr, Long Wood, Coetir Mynydd, Local Area Manager Presentations: Q+A**

**Q:** What sort of community consultation has happened in Golygfa Gwydir and Longwood?

**A:** All initiatives and projects undertaken by Golygfa Gwydyr were based on community appraisal data.

Consultation was broad based and bottom up which is essential.

Longwood consulted from the beginning and engaged local

community and county council members who are on the Board.

They also used other organisations' events - having a community presence is essential.

**Q:** Why is there a 12 week timeframe for granting Permissions?

**A:** Woods may have planned harvesting operations and many users and stakeholders – all this needs to be checked and consultation carried out.

**Q:** The scale of permission charges will deter people from getting involved - taking money from groups who need to fundraise. Why are FCW charging?

**A:** It covers administrative and contributes to staff costs. These reasons will be clarified further.

**Q:** When will the Public Involvement Framework be launched?

**A:** June 30<sup>th</sup> 2011. However it will be regularly updated and refined in the light of monitoring and evaluation and feedback from all participants.



## Application Form / Assessment Process Comments and Feedback

### General

- Need to make sure that forms and guidance are all in plain English/Welsh – there are some nasty bits of jargon in there at the moment.
- FCW needs to seriously reconsider its charging policy.
- Include examples of well filled in forms on the website – what a well answered question looks like.
- For some proposals, should we consult other woodland users / those who have legal rights in the woodland?
- Make it clear to applicants that until they have formal confirmation, it cannot be assumed that Permission will be granted for dates/activities.
- Offer accessible free mapping applications? Ask for marked map showing event/project location / route?
- Suggestion that we should separate off the Permissions / MA & Lease Forms – why, if people are applying for an MA or lease does the Framework ask them to fill in Form 1? Move the initial part of Form 1 to the beginning of Form 2.
- Need an application and assessment process flowchart, clarifying roles and responsibilities (e.g. who makes the decisions), response date targets.
- FCW needs to look at its procurement rules re. charging and the use of local contractors.

### Form 1

- Question 7f need to clarify whether information required is income or profit and how income gained will be used, e.g. to cover costs, be donated to charity or make a commercial profit
- Question 11 should be 11(a) and question 12 should be 11(b)
- The question about larger Text/Audio? Text Phone needs to have a telephone number or e-mail address.
- Need to highlight the sentence that encourages people to contact the FCW to discuss (page 1)
- Where the form asks for timescales and an estimate of numbers the associated guidance needs to be more specific.
- The charging section is not clear. There need to be a more specific sentence about who will be charged and who will not be.
- The timing of site visits needs to be explained.
- There is no explanation for why questions 13 (previous experience of working with FC) and 14 (details of insurance, risk assessments etc.) are asked. Is it a competency issue?
- The form is trying to do too many things.
- Form 1 guidance does not refer to paying permission charges.
- A simple flow chart would be useful.



## Form 2

- Relate guidance much more to specifics and signposting – not simply rewording the question.
- Include contact numbers in the guidance.
- A simple flow chart would be useful.
- More information and guidance needed on environmental impact – this is a complicated area.
- Groups need access to advice and support for form filling – it should be clear who can offer this.
- Consider omitting the cover sheet.
- Add a question asking if the group is newly formed and make it clear that new groups are not penalised in any way – the question is to assess what support/signposting is likely to be needed.
- Consider putting a word limit on answers.
- Put " Guidance notes " on the cover of guidance
- Q1- Omit 'answering all the relevant questions' as all the questions have to be answered.
- Q7 – Include Woodlands for Wales outcomes via a drop down menu
- Q10 - Need to say " that it doesn't matter if you have not developed or worked on a project before".
- Q10 - Ask for references.
- Q11 – Explain what 'Environmental Impact' means.
- Q11+Q12 - Make the guidance more specific, explanatory and signpost the applicant to more advice. Provide a list of the different type of legal agreements that are available.
- Q12 - Add a " Don't Know" Box
- Q12 - Need to say " Attach sheet with details of Management Committee members"



### Further comments on the Framework proposals

- Need to ensure continuity of contact between FCW and the community group - less movement of FCW staff.
- FCW need to bring back Local Officers.
- FCW need to have systems and processes in place that value community inputs and activity – Local Area managers are a crucial part of the process.
- Case studies should include the Pathfinder projects including the process that they went through.
- Local Voluntary sector umbrella organisations will be able to offer support to community groups – they need to know about the Framework, e.g. County Voluntary Councils (CVCs) - PAVO, CAVO, GAVO etc.
- Llais y Goedwig will also be able to offer support.

### Outstanding Actions and Queries

Action / Query	Who	By When
Ensure that illustrative case studies are available on both the web and in hard copy	W4P Team	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2011
Circulate the workshop report to attendees	W4P Team	31 <sup>st</sup> May 2011
Review the permission charging structure for communities and charity events	W4P Team	tbc
Circulate the additional slides from the presentations	W4P Team	31 <sup>st</sup> May 2011
Circulate the forms to "non experienced" groups and get some feedback	Llais y Goedwig	10 <sup>th</sup> June 2011
Clarify the "Forestry Only" definition for leasehold land	W4P Team	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2011
Clarify what the minimum Public Liability Insurance cover should be	W4P Team	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2011
Look at the rationale which underpins the 2 vehicle limit for access	W4P Team	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2011
Action the feedback re Forms 1 and Forms 2	W4P Team	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2011



## Topic Discussion Groups

Workshop participants identified a number of important issues concerning FCW's working relationship with community groups and social/small enterprises for further discussion during the afternoon session. Key points are summarised here.

### Making FCW managed woodland economically sustainable

<b>Group members</b>	Roger, Fay, Steve ,Adrian, Paul, Ruth, Roz
<b>Why is this important?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Welsh Government woodland estate has great potential to provide local employment, wood fuel and training.</li> <li>• Sustainable management is possible.</li> <li>• Forests are the primary driver for regeneration in many communities.</li> </ul>
<b>Establishes good practice to build on, resource &amp; experience we already have</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage public and private bodies to install wood fuel systems</li> <li>• Develop an 'ecosystems services' way of working, taking into account social, environmental and economic issues.</li> </ul>
<b>Pitfalls to avoid, barriers to overcome</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you place an accurate value on a community or community activity?</li> <li>• Economy of scale favours large scale activity</li> <li>• Difficult to access good quality timber to sell locally for good prices</li> </ul>
<b>Our suggested way forward</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the service industries</li> <li>• Use woodlands for learning, events, agro forestry</li> </ul>
<b>The very next steps are ( and who will take them)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include clauses in policy and tendering documents which favour small scale local businesses which benefit local communities</li> <li>• Educate landowners about the benefits of providing woodland for fuel, amenity, communities, biodiversity etc.</li> </ul>



**Ensuring that FCW trees/land/land assets deliver community benefit**

<b>Who was in this group</b>	Adam, Angie, James, Aaron, Philip, Christine, Jo, Neil.
<b>Why is this important?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It provides multiple and diverse benefits to the community</li> <li>• It empowers and connects communities</li> <li>• It can be used as a means of addressing local, national, global issues ( building resilience and addressing climate change)</li> <li>• Forestry is owned by the public and should provide community benefit.</li> </ul>
<b>Establishes good practice to build on, resources and experience we already have:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local knowledge brings better solutions</li> <li>• Local supply chains meeting local needs (energy, building, food)</li> <li>• Use the experience of existing community groups ( Wales, UK, World)</li> <li>• Use local people ( Volunteer time and training skills)</li> </ul>
<b>Pitfalls to avoid, barriers to overcome:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historic memory of past land acquisition and lack of local return</li> <li>• Sustainable projects. Many projects do not make enough income or have insufficient funding to sustain them</li> <li>• Often there is a disconnect between intention and capacity</li> </ul>
<b>Our suggested way forward:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable income to keep social projects going</li> <li>• FCW need to work with local communities to build capacity ( training, equipment, expertise providing signposting and access to this</li> <li>• Social enterprises and community groups need to take on contracts and provisions</li> </ul>
<b>The very next steps are: ( and who will take them)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FCW need to:</li> <li>• Facilitate community links and links with other delivery partners</li> <li>• Increase access of groups to resources, training and other forms of agreements</li> <li>• Engage directly with community groups</li> <li>• Appreciate cultural and geographical differences between groups</li> <li>• Encourage and support enlightened and risk taking by Local area managers</li> <li>• Provide enough LAM capacity</li> <li>• FCW needs to show how it is delivering " Woodlands for Wales"</li> </ul>

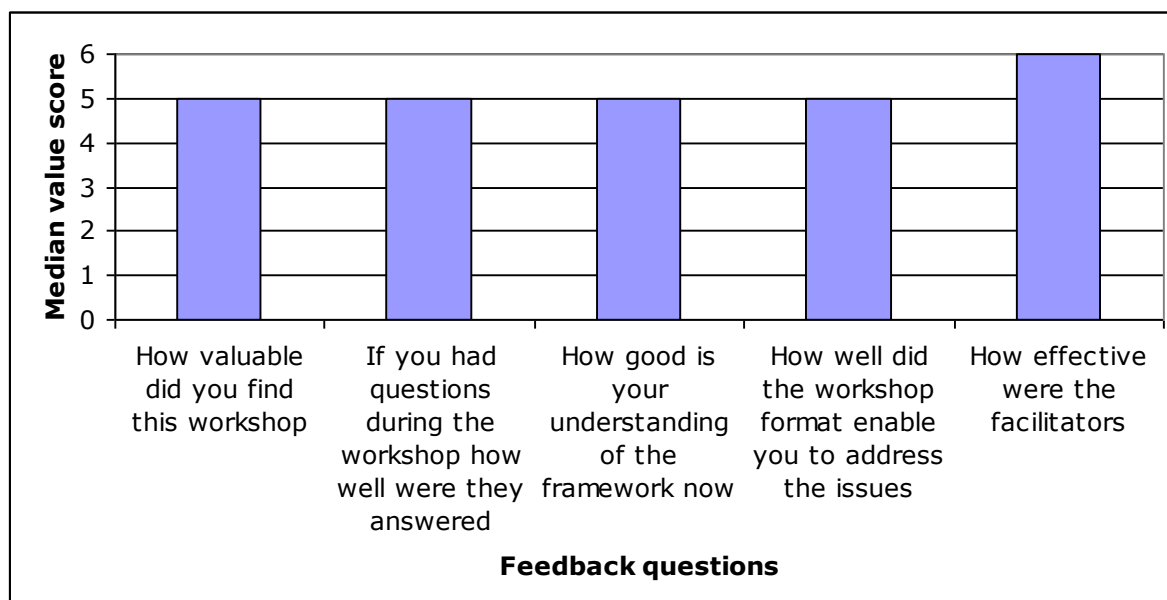


## What should the public involvement (civil society) framework include?

<b>Who was in this group</b>	Jenny, Barbara, Roz, Richard
<b>Why is this important?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is not only just about today's forms It encompasses all forms of public engagement</li> <li>• The framework is stating that FCW is "open for business"</li> <li>• Provides scope for other forms of public access to the estate including procurement and enterprise</li> <li>• The framework needs to widen the procurement opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>2. Establish good practice to build on , resources and experience that we already have:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to adopt best practice i.e. the British Waterways " right to manage " statements</li> <li>• The Forest Act needs to be tested further</li> <li>• Forest Design Plans need to be far more participative and allow for community co-management</li> <li>• Llais y Goedwig is developing a manifesto so that the views and needs of community groups are represented to the Welsh Government and others in a clear and structured way.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Pitfalls to avoid, barriers to overcome:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community access to the Welsh Government is difficult</li> </ul>
<b>4. Our suggested way forward:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to agree what is possible with FCW (decide what level of the Arnstein ladder individual communities want to reach)</li> <li>• Welsh Government and FCW need to decide the scope of the offer of civil society engagement.</li> <li>• FCW need to publicise the framework</li> </ul>
<b>The very next steps are: and who will take them.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• June launch to include all possibilities</li> <li>• Use Coedtir Mynydd consultation exercise to inform future Forest Design Plan development – ensuring that community aspirations are fully accounted for</li> <li>• Keep using the pathfinder projects and all other communities that come forward to refine the framework.</li> </ul>



## Participant Feedback from Workshops



Participants were asked to score, on a scale of 1-6 (where 1 was equivalent to poor and 6 to excellent) a number of questions about the workshop. The graph shows the median values given at each area workshop. The relatively small number of participants results in the mean values being virtually the same as the median.

Participants were asked to provide further comments detailed below. These are presented verbatim.

### What do you think the most important next step should be?

- Stimulate cultural change within FCW - local economy drivers
- Change in attitude across FCW to value social as much as economic activity/profit
- Explore other frameworks that would enable social enterprises and community groups to benefit from forestry - imaginative thinking is required
- To relook at the Forestry Act
- Good support for new groups filling in forms. Talking to WHaM about how local groups can be made aware of procurement and how procurement scoring can take regional/social and economic benefits into account
- Decentralise. Face to face contact at very early stages of applications , with guidance on form filling
- Faster implementation
- Capacity building at local level to exchange skills and support more community management of local FC woodlands. Around



each FCW woodland to arrange stakeholder meeting for more local consultation

- On the practical side, making forms more accessible to new forest users and addressing issues of localism at a more strategic level
- Institutionalise a community/SME focus in FCW
- Case studies - promotion of possibilities with FCW estate

**Any other comments**

- PIEF needs to work alongside the other related issues/policy within FCW/WAG eg firewood sales, WHAM, decentralisation
- Facilitator is excellent
- Lovely venue. Very relevant
- Very respectful atmosphere, relaxed at the same time
- There is a long way to go, don't give up!
- Great chance to talk and share ideas with FCW and other orgs/groups. Good mixture of interaction, presentation, structure and free flow.