



Cambusbarron
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRUST

Web: www.ccdt.org.uk Email: admin@ccdt.org.uk Reg. SCIO: SC041449

Gillies Hill Community Woodland Vision

October 2020

Overall Vision

To provide a woodland for all.

Overall Strategy

To engage with the local community and improve the woodland to meet their needs.

We will motivate and engage with the local community and visitors in order to progress individual projects in line with our members wishes and the consensus of the local community. Combined these projects will bring our vision for the hill to fruition.

The proximity of Gillies Hill to Cambusbarron and the larger population in the wider Stirling area facilitates voluntary involvement, which is a key component of the sometimes-intangible community development benefits arising from community asset ownership.

Whilst some management operations at Gillies Hill will necessitate the use of appropriately skilled and qualified professional contractors, many activities have the potential to be carried out by volunteers, overseen by the Community Forest Manager and other individuals with appropriate training and experience. Community volunteer development will be crucial to the success of projects.

We will develop our own resources and capabilities in order to carry out these projects and plans, whilst continually consulting with our local community, our users as well as all statutory authorities to ensure that we maintain a strong moral, ethical and legal basis for our work. Whilst a woodland is subject to the forces of nature it is impossible to stop users from being exposed to some risk. However, our project work and any artificial structures within the woodland should be maintained as safe as is reasonably practicable.

We will also abide by the spirit and rules of the constitution of the Cambusbarron Community Development Trust.

Aspects of the strategy will include:

1. Access
2. Forestry Management
3. Environmental Enhancement
4. Polmaise Castle and Gardens
5. Walled Garden
6. Gillies Hill as an educational resource

1. Access

Vision

Gillies Hill Woodland provides access that meets the needs of all the community and users of the wood (includes all ability access, opportunity to explore, 'wildness', mountain biking, works access etc.).

Strategy

We believe that there is enough room in the woodland for the needs of all users of the woods. This means we will take a mixed approach to managing access to balance these needs – improving some paths but leaving many as they are.

We will designate 3 classes of paths:

Access routes – these will form a 'core' route through the woodland, and these are the only paths we will look to upgrade to improve accessibility (both for users and for works access). The exact route and design of these paths will be consulted on further.

Main paths – these paths represent the most frequently used routes through the wood and the only work that will be carried out on them will be to prevent erosion/degradation and to keep clear of vegetation. Waymarking will be restricted to the main paths and access routes.

Minor paths – these paths will be left as they are.

In developing these assets, we will provide a range of complimentary facilities to enhance community access including path waymarking; signs to mark places of interest; interpretation boards; threshold entrance signs as well as benches and picnic areas.

We will identify community use of the woodland by consulting and listening to the users and residents. We will devise strategies, plans and facilities to enable as wide usage as possible. Only where necessary we will impose rules with the aim of protecting the woodland and its users from distress or damage.

2. Forestry Management

Vision

To manage the woodland to create a safe, vibrant, and productive environment for users and wildlife.

Strategy

The woodland will be managed, and specific plans developed to progress the following strategic aims:

- Promote indigenous wildlife,
- Progressively re-plant with predominantly native species,
- Appropriately manage dangerous trees,
- Provide income for the Trust to reinvest back into the community.

3. Environmental Enhancement

Vision

To encourage native, and sometimes selected, species of flora and fauna to thrive in our woodland.

Strategy

We will identify species of flora and fauna we want to encourage and develop plans to protect and encourage them to live and grow in our woodland.

We will develop strategies for managing invasive species, particularly those which threaten the environmental balance of the woodland and the welfare of our identified indigenous species.

4. Polmaise Castle and Gardens

Vision

To make the immediate grounds and ruins of Polmaise Castle a recognised landmark and destination within our woodland.

Strategy

Manage Polmaise Castle gardens to provide an attractive and welcoming environment for people to explore. Develop the castle ruins and immediate grounds so that they are safe and more accessible for visitors. Record and communicate details of the history, heritage, and environment of this land.

5. Walled Garden

Vision

Bring the walled garden and its immediate surrounds back into use as a community growing space for trees, plants, fruit and vegetables, to enhance the health and welfare of the local community and beyond. Also create a working area to facilitate forestry activity across the woodland.

Strategy

Sensitively restore the walled garden and its access so that it is safe. Engage the local community to assess the demand for a sustainable mix of rented allotments and community growing initiatives.

6. Gillies Hill as an educational resource

Vision

Cambusbarron Community Development Trust will enable community groups of all ages to visit, enjoy and learn from and in the woodland.

Strategy

To enable the Cambusbarron Village Nursery to develop a facility in the woodland to meet the needs as an Early Learning and Childcare provider which specialises in outdoor play and learning.

We will develop our own resources for education and reach out to local education providers and community groups to set up sessions and workshops for learning to meet their needs.

Cambusbarron Development Trust 2020