

Identify social and community forestry opportunities and activities

Overview

This standard is about identifying social and community forestry opportunities and activities.

Social forestry includes identifying opportunities to use the forest (or woodland) for social benefits for the local and wider public and encouraging community participation and involvement. Social forestry practitioners will have a good understanding of the needs of forests and woodlands and how to manage them as well as a good understanding of how to manage the needs of people.

Community forestry includes all aspects of public participation in ownership, management and involvement e.g. community involvement in the management, lease or purchase of forest or woodland and the activities that can take place there such as access, recreation, tourism or the supply of woodland products.

Your work must conform to all relevant legislation and codes of practice when carrying out this work.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. identify the risks and health and safety implications of public involvement in the forest or woodland
2. identify the opportunities and constraints relevant to the forest or woodland
3. identify statutory, formal and informal public access to the forest or woodland area
4. identify what level of local resident, community or wider public consultation is required and suitable methods of engagement
5. consult with interested parties to identify social and community forestry or woodland opportunities and activities
6. analyse all available information to determine potential opportunities and activities
7. explore the feasibility and viability of potential opportunities and activities
8. seek and evaluate specialist external advice if necessary
9. evaluate the range of potential opportunities and activities available to determine the preferred options
10. ensure your plans comply with relevant health and safety requirements and industry recognised standards
11. encourage the sustainability of the forest/woodland area for future generations

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. the opportunities and constraints relevant to the forest or woodland
2. the nature of designations and how these may influence the opportunities and activities available
3. the implications of any potential hazards
4. relevant national legislation controlling rights of way and access
5. the importance of public consultation and engagement when investigating social and community forestry opportunities and activities, and who should be consulted
6. the social and community forestry opportunities and activities which could be carried out and the implications of these
7. how to assess the feasibility and viability of potential opportunities and activities
8. where and when to obtain professional advice and guidance
9. the different factors that need to be taken into account when evaluating potential social and community forestry opportunities and activities
10. how to manage conflicting issues around public use and managing the environment
11. sustainable methods to ensure the future of the forest or woodland
12. the health and safety implications of public involvement in forest or woodland activities

Glossary

Social benefits include:

improving well-being
reducing stress
providing opportunities for physical exercise (e.g. 'green gyms')
walking
dog walking
running
cycling
orienteering
forest schools
guided groups
scouts/guides etc
wildlife watching
sketching, painting, photography

Community benefits include:

sense of ownership
bringing people together
common purpose
involvement in management
products (for community use or for sale)
jobs
access and tourism
additional income

Opportunities and constraints:

local, regional, national and global policies;
legal, physical, environmental, recreational, community, ecological, historical, social, cultural, aesthetic and economic factors

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Interested parties:

Those directly involved with potential social and community forestry opportunities and activities

Those affected by potential social and community forestry opportunities and activities

Factors to taken into account: e.g. legal, cost, resources

Potential hazards: e.g. contaminated land, invasive species



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