



Scottish
Environment
LINK

Still Delivering the Goods

Case Study 5



ONGOING



COMPLETED

Woodland Pasture at Glen Finglas Woodland Trust Scotland



Photo: Philip Formby/WTML

Read the full report, with the 15 case studies here:

<https://www.scotlink.org/publication/still-delivering-the-goods/>



Background

Since publication of *Delivering the Goods*¹⁶ in 2008, much progress has been made on the Woodland Trust Glen Finglas Estate and in the wider landscape with the establishment of the Great Trossachs Forest NNR and the associated partnership working. Activities at Glen Finglas are now led by a locally based Estate Manager.



Project aims

To promote natural woodland regeneration in the historic woodland pasture at Glen Finglas to extend the dynamic mosaic of woodland, scattered open grown trees, scrub and open ground habitats on a landscape scale.



Project Timescale

Now, ongoing as part of overall management plan for the Estate.



SBS Objectives

The aims from the **2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity**:

1

To protect and restore biodiversity on land and in our seas, and to support healthier ecosystems.

By seeking to protect, expand and connect the woodlands and wood pasture at Glen Finglas, this project is protecting and restoring a wide variety of biodiversity, as well as improving several terrestrial ecosystems.

2

To connect people with the natural world, for their health and wellbeing and to involve them more in decisions about their environment.

Partnerships with neighbours and the National Park, increased visitor numbers and significant community engagement all lead to more connection with nature.

3

To maximise the benefits for Scotland of a diverse natural environment and the services it provides, contributing to sustainable economic growth.

The project is demonstrating the value of both natural and semi-natural woodlands in the provision of ecosystem services, notably carbon sequestration, but also supporting sustainable land management businesses.



¹⁶ <https://www.scotlink.org/publication/delivering-the-goods/>



Photo: Niall Benzie/MTML



Project Summary

Glen Finglas lies at the heart of Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park and is part of the Great Trossachs Forest National Nature Reserve – a 200 year-long landscape-scale woodland restoration project involving the RSPB, Forestry & Land Scotland and the Woodland Trust. Home to mountains and rivers, hills and glens, woodland and moorland, it is perhaps best known for its upland wood pasture – old growth trees growing on open pasture land. Glen Finglas has one of the finest examples of this habitat in the UK and a herd of Luing cattle who help us to keep it this way. It is this special landscape that the project has been conserving for over twenty years, by efforts to:

- Maximise the biodiversity of the estate, predominantly through natural regeneration and mainly by managing grazing.
- Reduce sheep grazing in favour of Luing cattle and deer, with the cattle remaining outdoors all year round to provide favourable conditions for woodland pasture regeneration and expansion in Glen Finglas.
- Expand or establish woodland in the two neighbouring glens to the east, including by planting where necessary, to provide buffer zones and to establish habitat networks so that species can move more easily in response to climate change.
- Encourage cattle to roam freely over the three glens on the estate.
- Work to promote woodland restoration with neighbours, including Forestry and Land Scotland and private owners.



Climate Impacts

The climate related benefits of this project include:

- Increased woodland/tree cover having measurable Carbon sequestration – some woodland areas are managed through the woodland carbon code.
- Peatland restoration project reducing carbon loss from uplands.
- Farm operation working to low emission, with full carbon audits completed as part of beef efficiency scheme.
- Extensive livestock farming in well wooded landscape can demonstrate positive carbon balance.



People Information

Photo: WTML



Direct employment: The estate now employs full time staff, while the project also supports jobs across the wider economy through contractors and local tourism businesses.

Volunteers: As with many eNGO projects, this work is supported by an array of volunteers.

In 2019, a minimum of 887 hours (or roughly 120 person-days) of volunteering took place within the Glen Finglas Estate.

Visitor numbers: Since the Woodland Trust project began, there has been a large increase in recorded visitor numbers and monitoring is ongoing as part of the NLHF project:

- > Around 2012, there were approximately 12–15,000 visits pa. By 2016, this had increased to at least 35,000 visits pa on the Estate and the Visitor Gateway has up to 15,000 visits pa, some of those visits will only be the Gateway and hence a small proportion will be additional to the 35,000 visits. By 2019, there were around 39,000 visits pa. The aim is to increase number of visits to 40,000pa by 2022.
- > This increase in visitors helps to sustain local businesses, especially the tourism sector.



Successes and achievements

Major project milestones achieved since site acquired in 1996:

- > 1,500ha woodland creation, some of which now being grazed to extend wood pasture habitat.
- > Over 20km walking/cycling paths improved/created.
- > Establishment of Great Trossachs forest partnership with RSPB Scotland, Forest and Land Scotland and Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority.
- > NNR status achieved.
- > HLF Gateways project improves access, builds visitor gateway building, more tree planting and lots of interpretation.
- > Peatland restoration project on 100ha of degraded habitat.



Issues and challenges

Funding can be both hard to access, and many land management schemes are now subject to increased uncertainties post-Brexit.



Funding

There have been a wide range of funding mechanisms including government forestry grants and agri-environment schemes, charitable trusts, corporate partnerships and donations from members and supporters.



Further information

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods/woods/glen-finglas/>

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/media/46392/10513-glen-finglas-leaflet-map-a2-v3.pdf>