



Bute Community Forest 2023 AGM

November 2023

AGM Format

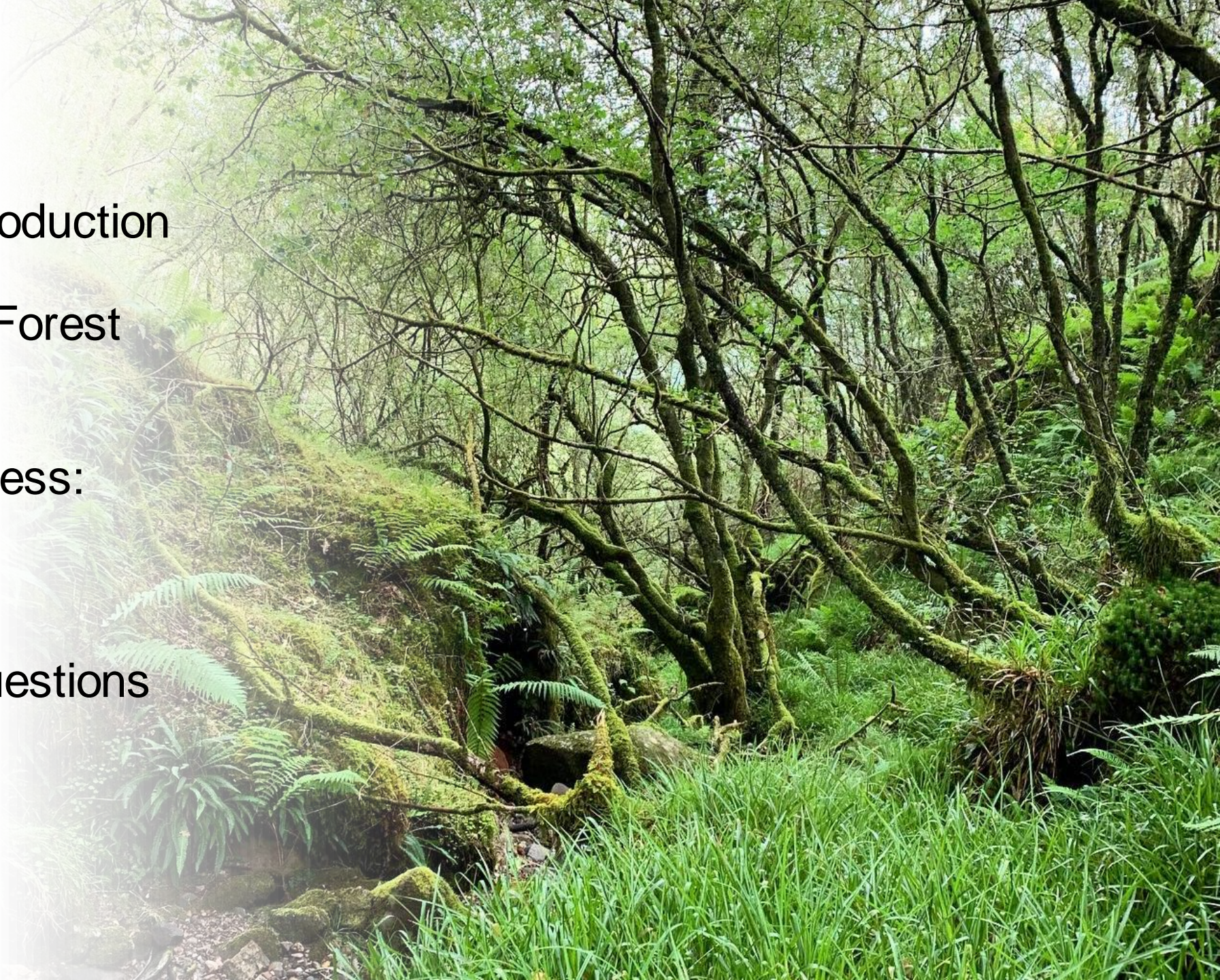
Welcome and Introduction

Bute Community Forest
Presentation

The Formal Business:

- Accounts
- Trustee Election

Opportunity for questions



Bute Community Forest

- ✓ what we are
- ✓ where we are
- ✓ what we do
- ✓ what we have done
- ✓ what we plan to do
- ✓ how we do it



Our Mission & Values

- To protect and enhance the environment
- To engage the community with the Forest
- Environmental education and awareness
- To manage the land for the benefit of the community and wider public

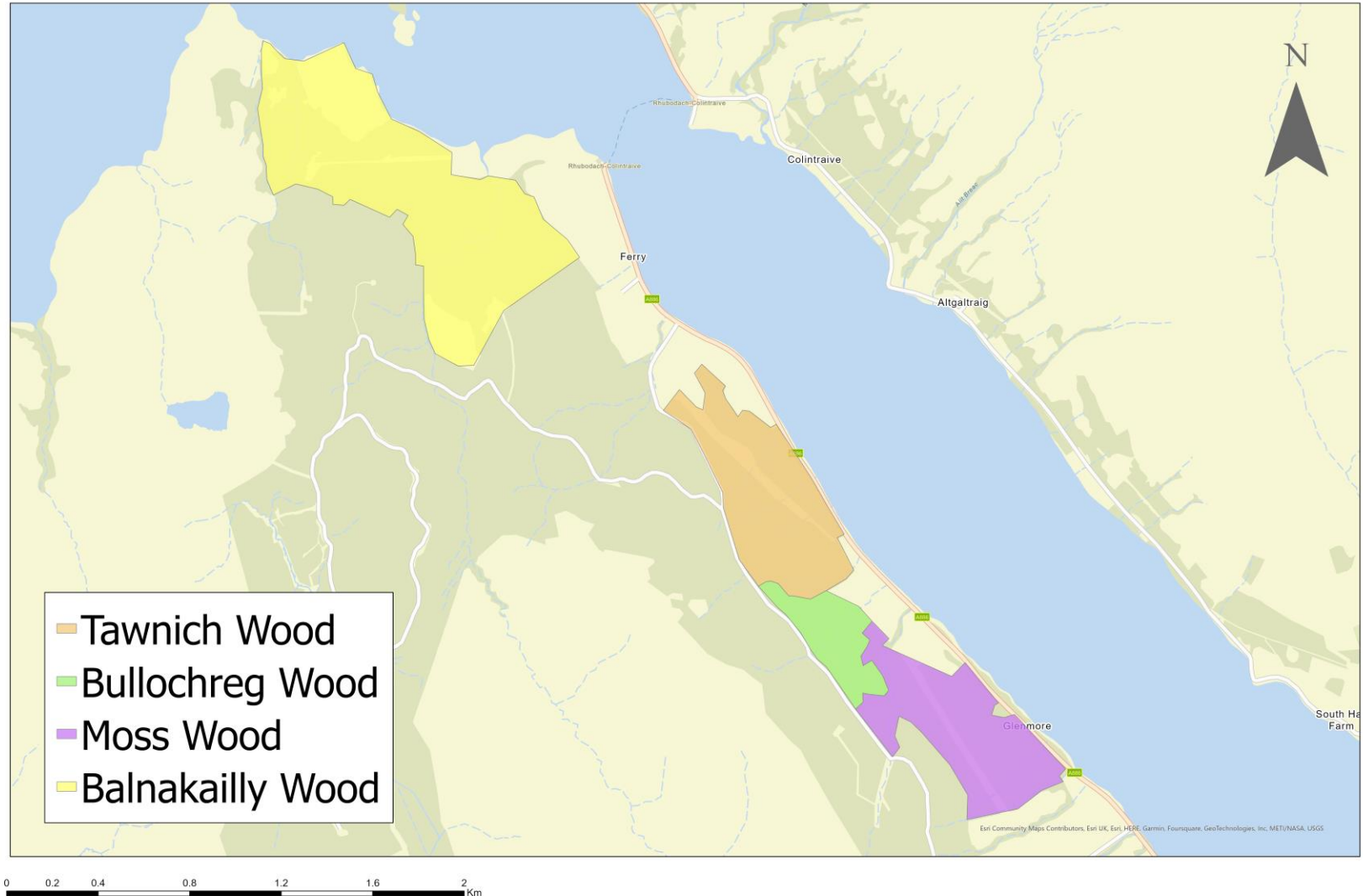
Also - more generally - to support the wider sustainability and success of the island as a whole

- The 'Community' are those resident on the island
- The Forest is owned by community - and is open to all

Where we are

- At the north end
- 400 acres/ 160 ha
- Divided into two areas
- SSSI old oak woodland (yellow)
- And Moss Wood etc. further south

BUTE COMMUNITY FOREST



What we do?

- **Woodland management**

- We have two Woodland Management Plans – one for SSSI Old Oak Woodland and one for the Moss Wood/ Bullochreg/ Tawnich area

- **Habitat creation**

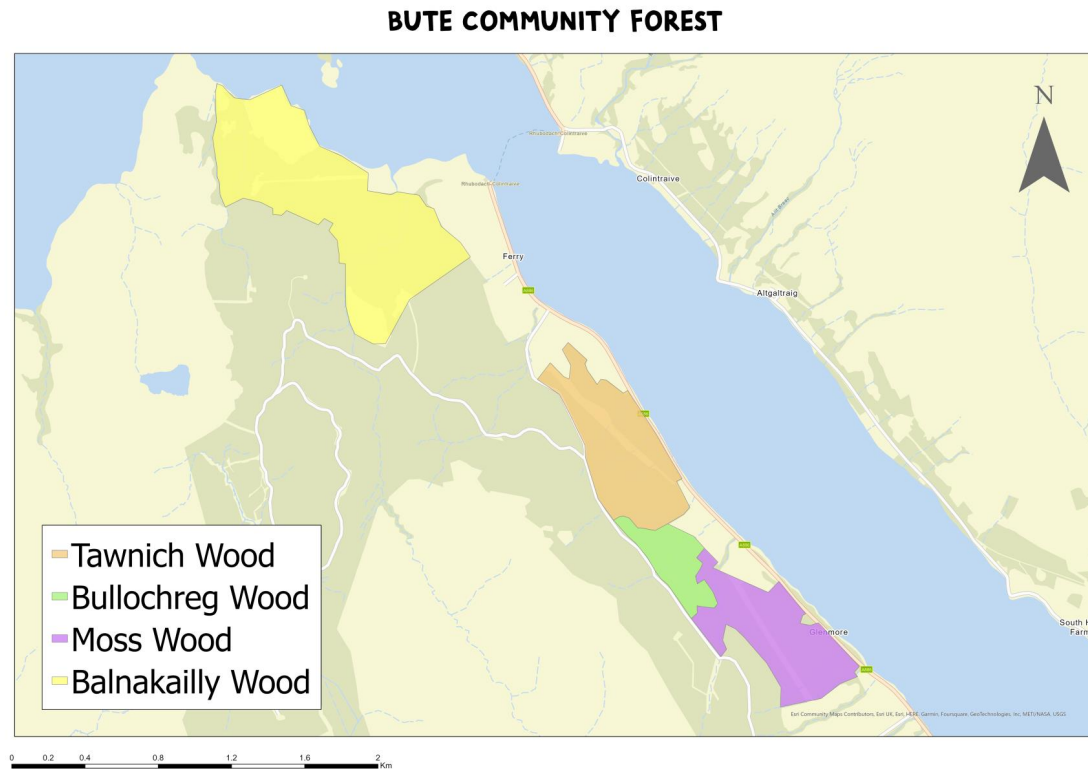
- Replacing monoculture sitka spruce with native broadleaves bringing greater biodiversity

- **Environmental education**

- A comprehensive under-11 schools engagement programme

- **Community engagement, facilities and events**

Moss Wood Woodland Management Plan (1)

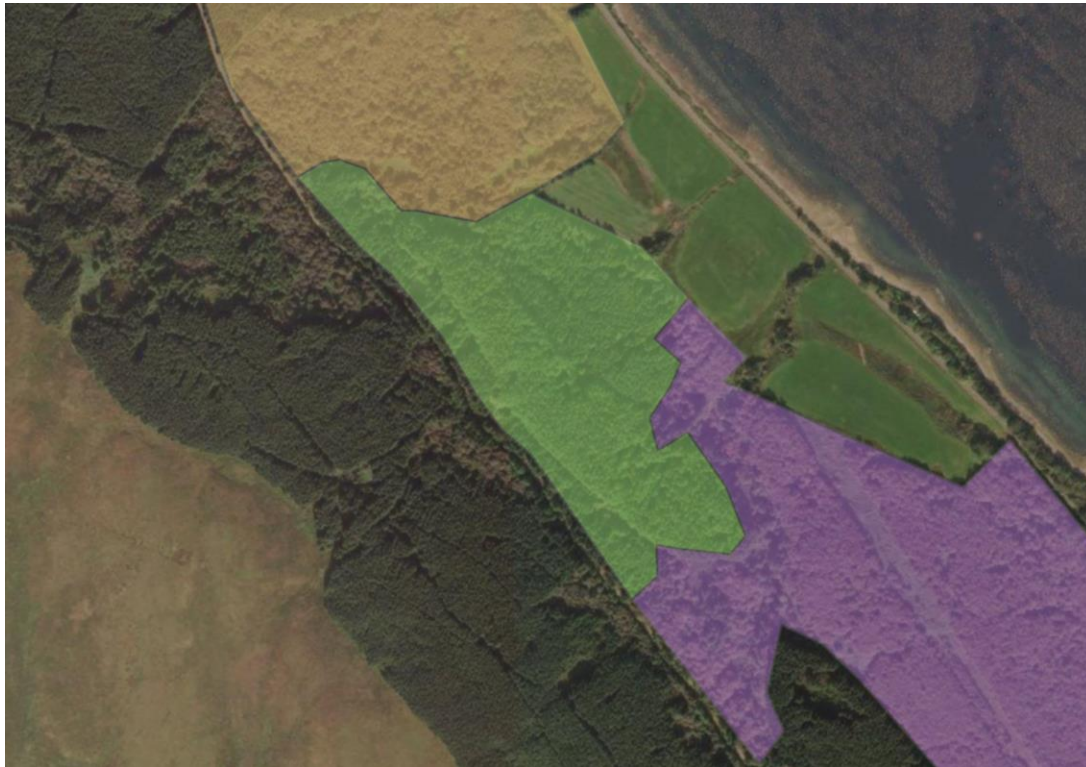


In 2022-2023

- Developed and finalised the plan
- Consulted through Bank of Ideas Open Day, survey and stakeholders
- Submitted the WMP for approval for Scottish Forestry
- WMP = 3 main parts: Bullochreg, Moss Wood and Tawnich Wood

Moss Wood Woodland Management (2)

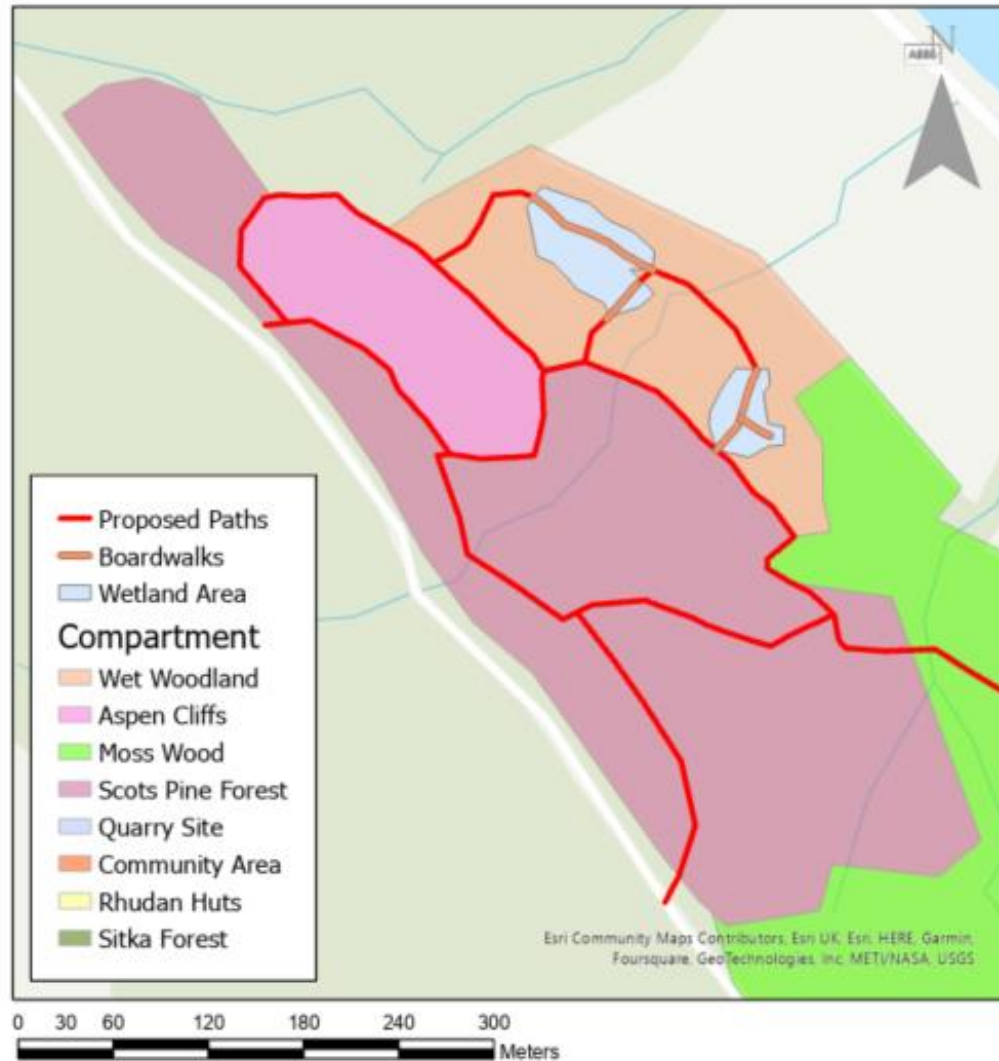
Bullochreg



In 2022-2023

- Commissioned groundworks (mounding etc.)
- Commissioned planting contractors
- Placed our tree order (Scots Pine and Juniper)
- Works to commence December 2023
- Planting to be undertaken by local Isle of Bute firm

Bullochreg Replanting Plan



- Scots Pine Forest
- Aspen Cliffs
- Wetland Area
- Major new habitat creation

- December groundworks will formalise path layout



Scots Pine Woodland

Scots pine forest at Loch Morlich, Aviemore



Aspen Woodland

Wet Woodland



Moss Wood Woodland Management (3)



Moss Wood area

- Light touch woodland management
- Area of community activity focus
- Manage human/natural environment interface
- Location of welcome hub (on the Quarry Site)
- Development of path network

Moss Wood Woodland Management Plan (4)



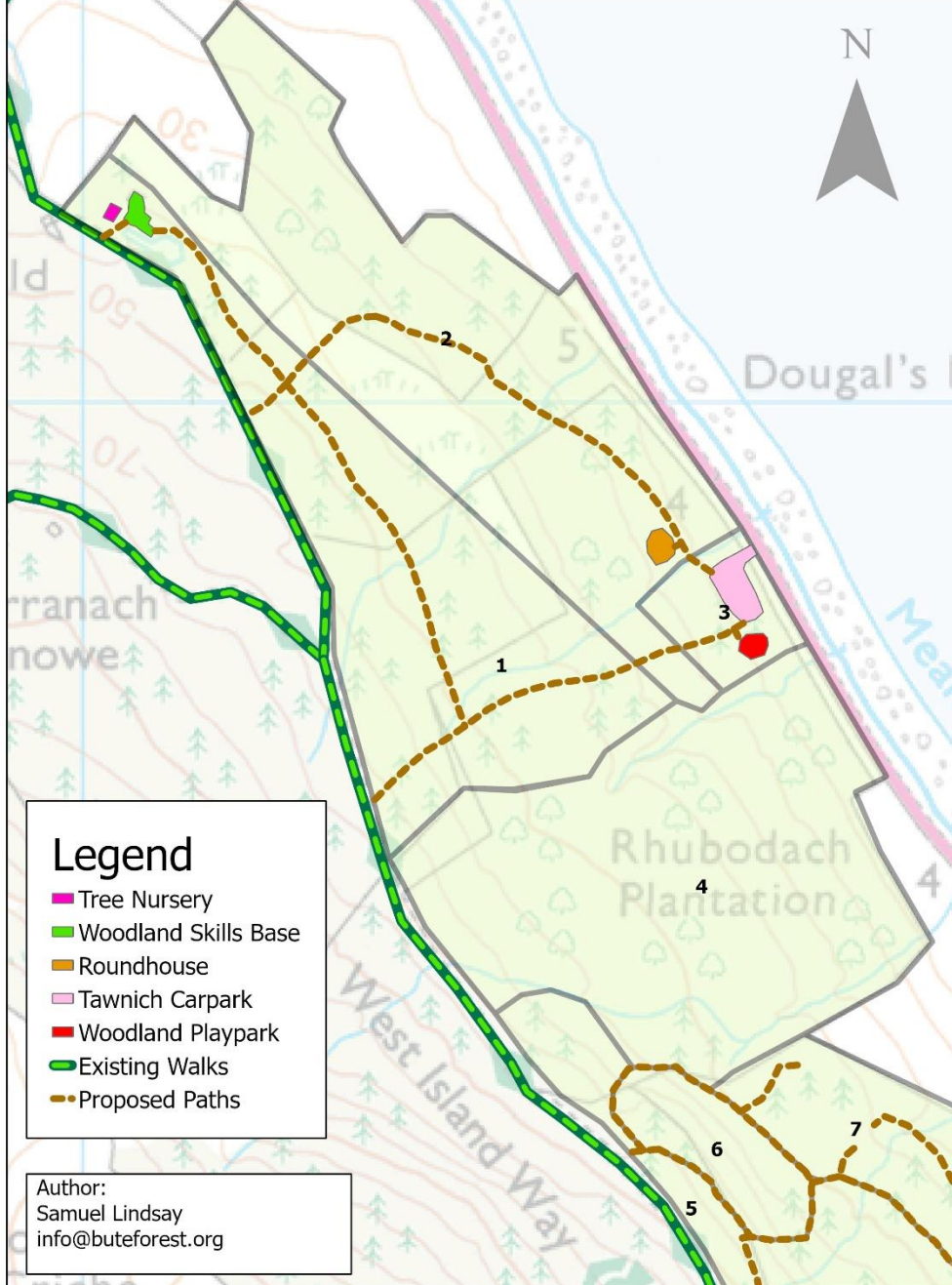
Tawnich Wood area

- Currently sitka spruce – planted monoculture ready for harvesting
- To replant with broadleaves - and create ‘sustainable harvesting’ woodland
- Include a second welcome area, paths and recreation

Tawnich Wood Plans

2022-2033

- The Roundhouse has already been built – *heroic thanks to Gordon Stevenson, Jessica Herriot and Jim Rodger*
- Early stages of Tree Nursery in place
- Next phase is harvesting and replanting



0 0.05 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 0.5
Kilometres

Balnakailly SSSI Old Oak Woodland (1)



- Key objectives is to preserve and enhance woodland quality
- Some limited works permitted – path improvements, signage etc.
- Overall scope of works agreed with Nature Scot
- Next phase = implement infrastructure improvements

Key Projects – Off-Grid Huts



2022/2023

- Successful first season (opened from end of May)
- £8,000+ in bookings
- Excellent feedback



“Absolutely perfect stay at the huts - the kids loved it and wanted to stay longer! Clean, cute and so memorable, with a beautiful location. Will be back! Xx”

Key Projects – Quarry Site (Welcome Hub)



2022/2023

- Quarry site purchased – 95% contribution from Scottish Land Fund
- Project proposals developed
- Funding strategy in progress – HIE potential investment of £100,000
- Key features:
 - Dedicated off-road car parking for 10-15 cars
 - Welcome hut with information boards
 - Toilets and shower block (to support the huts)

Key Projects: – Community Shelter & Roundhouse

Moss Wood



Roundhouse – Tawnich Wood



Environmental Education

- Strong part of our ethos - and key element of the work of Bute Community Forest
- Approach = working with the local schools and nurseries
- Mission is that every child Primary school age and under will get a chance to spend time in the Forest (set to be achieved this year)
- Recognised by funders (£7,500 from Awards for All)
- Future = expand the offer to more of secondary school age

Environmental Education

(Autumn – Winter 2023)

- Rothesay Primary (13 visits)
- North Bute Primary (8 visits)
- St Andrew's Primary (21 visits)
- Apple Tree Nursery (10 visits)
- Rothesay Early Years (24 visits)

Total = 187 (including 111 sessions Spring – Summer)



Our 2023 Events

- Bird Trail (ongoing)
- Geocaching (ongoing)
- Wildflower Wander (19)
- Easter Egg Hunt Trail (100+)
- Contemporary Art & Poetry Exhibition (50+ launch day)
- Port Gala (60+)
- Achievement Bute Forest Explorer Days (60+)
- Fungi Foray (27)
- Forest Bathing (8)
- Orienteering (40)
- Gathering the Oaks (9)
- Milestone Circle Launch (60+)

500+ Interactions



Forward Priorities

Short Term

- Replanting at Bullochreg
- Quarry Site Welcome Hub
- On-going hut management
- SSSI Balnakailly Woodland Management Plan submission
- Path and signage for SSSI
- Pathways through Bullochreg
- Schools programme (ongoing)
- Events programme (ongoing)

Medium Term

- Felling and replanting Tawnich Wood
- Tawnich Wood plan implementation
- Growing Bullochreg
- Developing the Tree Nursery
- Restoring the SSSI and the Atlantic Rainforest
- Forging academic links and new strategic partnerships

Delivering the Priorities

- Staff complement 1.6 Full Time Equivalent
- 0.6 FTE position fully funded till March 2025 – post needs filled
- Continued need to draw in grant funding
 - To deliver the Quarry Site welcome hub
 - To continue environmental education programme & events
- To grow income streams where possible
 - Maintain and increase Hut occupancy & revenue
 - Develop new revenue streams
- Grow capacity through increased voluntary efforts

Accounts

- Full year accounts to end of September 2022 available (also see website)
- Circa £72k 'unrestricted' funds balance at 09/22
- Year-end Sept 2023 accounts under preparation
- 2023 accounts will include remaining sale of timber from larch stand and neighbouring compartments and full costs of felling (final return expected to be in the region of £40k net)
- Forward Business Plan to look consider mix of trading and grant income

Election of Trustees

Each of the following are standing for re-election:

- Peter Atkins
- Martin Catlin
- Alexander Davey
- Tony Edwards (stepping back)
- Mel Hindley
- John Reid (co-opted)
- Peter Vincent (retired)
- Richard Whitcomb, Chair

Further nominations welcome