

Business Strategy for the Proposed Ramsey Forest



Wildflowers of Mann



Proposed Ramsey Forest Boundaries

PREFACE

The proposed Ramsey Forest project is a 20km² landscape scale project initiated by Wildflowers of Mann for the Manx Wildlife Trust as a part of their vision for a 'Living Landscape'. This campaign aims to reconnect the landscape allowing biodiversity to come out of small isolated sites; it is in effect a recovery plan for nature in the 21st Century. Ramsey Forest is not envisaged as dense woodland, but a more tree rich landscape, where existing woodlands and plantations are expanded and linked and lie within an area planted with more hedgerows and trees.

The multi-purpose benefits of forestry have become fully recognised over the past 50 years and now the use of landscape scale tree planting to create or reinforce local distinctiveness is well established. Ramsey Forest follows in the footsteps of many recent forest initiatives that aim to use tree planting and woodland creation to deliver market and non-market benefits to an area. In the case of Ramsey Forest the rationale for the creation of the Forest will be varied and include using the forest as a green backdrop for local regeneration, the creation of a short-stay holiday destination, supporting the farming industry as well as the many non-market benefits to health, quality of life, biodiversity and carbon sequestration.

The funding of the forest will come from a number of sources, and will be ongoing over the 30 year time-span of the forest creation phase. The Manx Wildlife Trust will not receive a return on this financial investment; instead the economic beneficiaries will be the Ramsey and Island economy.

The business of the Forest will be guided by its core values:

Biodiversity

Social Inclusion

Community

Economic Regeneration

Enjoyment

1 CONTEXT

1.1 The Historic Economic Justification for Forestry. For much of the 20th Century the planting of woodland in the British Isles was seen as an investment opportunity with real-term annual returns on investment of 5% or more predicted from conifer plantations. The concept of the 'strategic reserve' of timber also drove the tree planting effort so Britain would never be threatened with military defeat through a lack of a timber resource. In the later half of the 20th Century the strategic reserve was still relevant but by then in the context of a trade war. Other drivers for woodland creation included rural employment and shooting interests. In a 21st Century context many of these reasons failed to make sense as the low cost of imported timber reduced profitability considerably. The mechanisation of forestry operations undermined the potential of forestry as a mass rural employer and decades of European peace and free trade have pushed the concept of the strategic reserve far from the minds of the British government. While the Isle of Man context is slightly different to the British/Irish one, the same basic drivers for woodland creation of investment, self sufficiency and rural employment were involved.

1.2 Multi-Purpose Forestry. From the 1960's onwards the rationale for forestry started to factor in the recreation potential of woodlands. By the 1980's conservation, water quality and flood prevention were in the mix and by the 1990's carbon mitigation and economic regeneration also became factors. Today woodland creation enjoys strong public support, but the rationale behind their creation is complicated and mostly driven by economic development and the non-market benefits of woodlands as well as emotive public appeals.

1.2.1 The National Forest. In 1995 the new National Forest in the English Midlands was launched as a multi-purpose forest that aimed to take a large area of private farmland and derelict industrial land and turn them into a woodland-rich landscape, where a third or more of the area would be woodland. Woodland cover has already gone from 6% to more than 18% over an area of 200 square miles. Rural development, tourism, recreation, biodiversity and carbon mitigation remain the key drivers behind the vibrant National Forest project. The new National Forest has become the template for a new kind of forest across the British Isles. These forests account for most of the more ambitious tree planting schemes currently underway. While all the British forests that were created from 1920 to 1985 were primarily for timber, every forest created in the past 20 years has been for strongly multi-purpose reasons, with timber production as a rather minor concern.



1.3 Ramsey. Ramsey is the Island's second largest town and the only town in the northern half of the Island. The town retains a strong community and self-identity within the Island, but it has struggled to maintain itself economically in comparison with the capital (Douglas). Its main shopping centre has the best independent retailing on the Island, though in recent years many retail businesses have struggled and vacant shops are commonplace. Recent regeneration has come about through central Isle of Man Government regeneration funds that have focused upon the appearance and shopping experience of the town centre. The need for further regeneration initiatives is a strong community concern in Ramsey.

1.3.1 Other Communities in the Proposed Forest. Most of the housing outside of Ramsey occurs in areas such as Port-y-Vullen, Glen Auldyn and the Lezayre Road, which contain some of the highest density of exclusive housing on the Island.

1.4 Ramsey Forest Conception. Ramsey Forest first appeared as an idea from the Wildflowers of Mann Project in 2008 as a proposal to address local species extinctions of native wildflowers. Since then the Manx Heritage Foundation have funded the Wildflowers of Mann Project to undertake two research projects to bring the forest project to this stage; the oak/hazel woodland report was the ecological underpinning for the forest proposal and a landowner consultation has established that there is significant local landowner interest in the creation of more native woodland.

2 THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

2.1 Introduction. For the forest to meet its goals it will be essential to engage and involve the local community on many levels. While the local community refers mostly to Ramsey and people living in and around Ramsey Forest, it also includes other Island residents who have a particular interest in the Forest and its vision.

2.2 Forest Friends. This will be a formal Manx Wildlife Trust interest group (the final name will be decided at a later date) that will be convened to gather together interested individuals to aid much of the set up and day to day management of the Forest. There will be several specific roles:

2.2.1 Co-ordination and Fundraising. The group will initially act as a fundraising body, especially leading the local campaign of leafleting as well as internet communication/web management. Later on the group will be the mouthpiece of the community and lead the development and strategy of the forest management. The group will also be able to represent the Trust at fairs and shows as well as hold its own events.

2.2.2 Practical Management. A core volunteer workforce for the forest that will help establish woodlands through planting trees, fencing and weeding tasks. They are also the core group that will undertake conservation tasks such as coppicing and control of invasive species such as rhododendron. While these are critical winter tasks, during the summer the creation and management of trails, paths and recreation infrastructure will become the focus of volunteer effort.

2.2.3 Wardening. Volunteer wardens will be recruited from regular users such as dog walkers, mountain bikers and birdwatchers. The wardening effort is all about quality control rather than policing, so wardens will be asked to report faults and damage, will pick up scattered litter, report anti-social behaviour and carry out minor maintenance work such as cutting away brambles from footpaths.

2.2.4 Community Communication. The forest friends group will be the key interface between the Manx Wildlife Trust and the local community. By using the group to network, the Trust will be able to talk to more local landowners (with potential for further tree planting), will be able to reach out to local community groups, schools, potential commercial sponsors and the local authorities. To progress the social inclusiveness agenda the group may be able to identify issues and activities relevant to more vulnerable local groups.

2.2.5 Urban Tree Planting. Some volunteers will receive special training in urban tree planting and aftercare and should be able to offer a free native tree planting service for private gardens and public open spaces. With the supply of native trees being the only cost item, significant additional tree planting in Ramsey should be possible through local campaigning and volunteer effort.

2.3 User Groups. Recreation facilities will be built with the help and advice of local user groups and enthusiasts. These will include running groups, mountain bikers and other user groups. If the Forest is to host more regular and larger sporting events then a close relationship with these organisations is essential, both to tap into their volunteer organisational infrastructure to oversee events and to listen to the user groups to ensure recreation infrastructure provision meets their highest expectations.

2.4 Additional Help. Volunteer help to complete set practical tasks may be provided by corporate volunteers, Community Service groups and local groups such as Scouts and church groups.

3 AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

3.1 The Benefits of Trees to Agriculture. Most woodland creation in agricultural areas would traditionally lead to the loss of these areas to farming, but this is not necessarily always going to be the case. In low and medium input systems, (that would typically occur along the upland fringes around Ramsey) trees can be used to boost agricultural production and provide trees for timber or other benefits.

3.1.1 Using Trees for Shelter. The use of trees and shrubs as shelterbelts and hedgerows has long been a way of reducing wind speed to boost agricultural production. Naturally the trees produce some shade and so there is some loss of production in the immediate area of the shelterbelt, but reduced wind speeds can be detected at distances of over eight times the height of the hedgerow, so a tall shelterbelt network can reduce exposure to fields significantly. This can be particularly useful in the upland fringes where exposure from high winds has a major impact upon grass productivity.

3.1.2 Reclaiming Bracken and Gorse Dominated Valleys. In areas too steep for machinery, gorse and particularly bracken have colonised to form dense stands with an agricultural value of nearly nil. While they have some wildlife value and a proportion should be retained, the conversion of much of this area into woodland pasture would reclaim hundreds of acres of land for rough grazing. To create this woodland pasture the bracken or gorse first needs to be controlled by spraying or cutting, then trees allowed to establish at a density high enough to kill off most of the remaining bracken and gorse (spraying rarely kills bracken in one go, but it does knock it back for a few years). After about 10-15 years the trees should have shaded out the vegetation below and then they can be heavily thinned to create an open young woodland environment and the stock allowed back in. In the long-term the woodland should remain open enough to allow grass growth, but closed enough to inhibit dense gorse and bracken. Where this woodland pasture is part of a larger grazing unit it will provide a good early bite that will complement rough grazing in open areas. Oak and birch will be the preferred trees for wildlife and agriculture. Oak pulls nutrients up from lower soil horizons, and birch has a naturally alkaline leaf litter. Together they are able to significantly improve soils over the long-term (e.g. convert podzolic brown earths into brown-earths). The productivity benefits of bringing 100ha of land into productive wood pasture will allow a potential increase of 200 sheep to the Island's flock with an average market value of £9000 per annum.

3.1.3 Game. Hedgerows and woodlands will help retain wild and reared game on the land.

3.1.4 Diversified Stock. The provision of woodland pasture will allow agricultural enterprises to diversify the range of stock kept, with free range pigs, fowl and poultry or exotic niche stock all possible.

3.2 Diversified Activities. The inclusion of significant woodland areas in a farm holding will give further options for diversification into commercial leisure and recreation activities. Examples include shooting, camping and outward bounds activities (Refer to the Recreation Plan).

3.3 Countryside Stewardship. Government support is still essential to most agricultural profitability. The Isle of Man's Countryside Care Scheme is the main agricultural support scheme to farmers on the Island, but an agri-environment scheme also operates on a few farms. The planting of trees on farmed land would generally render that land ineligible for farm payments. There is however some flexibility; so up to 25 trees per field unit are allowed as is up to ½ acre of non-productive land per field unit. Hedgerows and shelterbelts (with hedgerow trees) can be created around the margins of a field unit and along historical boundaries within a field unit. As dense bracken is not eligible for payments the planting up of dense bracken areas will have no effect upon payments.

3.4 Forestry. As would be expected in a forest, the growing of timber is one key economic activity. Two very different types of forestry can be recognised within the forest; plantation forestry and native woodland forestry.

3.4.1 Plantation Forestry. Plantation forestry relies upon planting non-native (mostly North American) conifers at close, even spacing and harvesting them together some 30-60 years later. Variants on this include various continuous cover systems, where the same species are grown, but harvesting is staged to maintain an element of canopy cover at all times. The majority of commercial forestry activities are and will continue to be in the Isle of Man Government's conifer plantations. It is likely that the productive conifer area will decrease as many ravines within plantations are converted to native broadleaf woodland, but productivity should hold steady as faster growing varieties and species are used in the future. Plantation forestry on the Island produces low and medium quality timber that mostly enters the fencing and garden furniture market via the Isle of Man Sawmill in St Johns.

3.4.2 Native Woodland Forestry. These are woodlands dominated by broadleaf trees native to the Island. Some of these woodlands are ancient semi-natural; some have developed more recently by trees self-sowing themselves into areas of bracken and gorse. Other woodlands are plantations in origin but are slowly developing a semi-natural character. Most of the proposed new woodlands will be established with native trees to mimic semi-natural woodland as far as possible.

3.4.2.1 Productivity. Native woodlands grow at about 20% of the productivity of conifer plantations. Because of the slow growth and small area of native woodland, the Isle of Man produces very little hardwood timber, so despite the potential high value of well grown trees, there is not an established commercial market. Ramsey Forest could significantly increase the area of native broadleaf woodland on the Island and the potential amount of hardwood produced, but with biodiversity being the chief management aim, the quality will be fairly low and much of the overall production will become part of the deadwood ecosystem. Native hardwood production of the forest is projected to become around 500-1000m³ per year (from an estimated 200ha of native woodland producing an estimated 4m³ per ha per year). Assuming around half of this timber re-enters the ecosystem as deadwood, this will leave 250-500m³ of timber available for commercial use per annum. In addition to productivity from timber most broadleaves will also create an additional 25% firewood from branches and waste wood.

3.4.2.2 Value. The value of this timber will range from less than £5 per m³ for firewood to over £100 per m³ for high quality saw-logs. Timber becomes more valuable as it is processed and marketed, thus high quality oak timber could easily be worth ten or twenty times its round timber value as quality furniture. In the hands of a master craftsman Ramsey Forest native timber could be worth hundreds of thousands of pounds to the local economy, but to a firewood merchant, the total value of the Forest's native timber resource could be less than £2000 per annum. Developing the Forest's timber economy may seem like a long-term proposition, but there are already a lot of commercially mature trees within the area and nurturing genuine local craft talent and networking with landowners could well develop a small but valued local industry.

3.4.2.3 Coppice. The small amount of coppice woodland projected to be created will potentially be able to yield marketable products such ornamental hurdles, bean poles, hedging binders and craft items. While labour intensive to manage, the value of the products should create a modest revenue if managed by volunteers.

4 ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

4.1 Introduction. Ecosystem Services is the modern term for environmental non-market benefits. The valuation of ecosystem services puts figures (in units of currency) to the value derived from services. These figures are derived through a number of means such as the replacement cost of a service (e.g. how much would we have to pay if we had to process contaminated water that had come from damaged ecosystems). While giving real currency values to ecosystem services recognises their value to society, caution is required in their interpretation and extrapolation. With this cautionary note aside it is well worth noting the different ways in which the proposed forest could bring additional non-market benefits to the Island. One valuation of ecosystem services has been carried out by the Isle of Man Government and does provide a starting point to local ecosystem valuation¹. The additional value of Ramsey Forest is largely linked to the amount of woodland created. A realistic estimate of this is 100-150ha over the next 30 years.

4.2 Flood Control. Tree canopies intercept rain, evaporating up to 5% of rainfall before it falls on the soil. Transpiration from mature trees and organic rich woodland soils further moderate run-off following rainfall allowing rain to enter watercourses over a longer period of time. This flood prevention service has been estimated by Brander and McEvoy¹ as being worth an estimated £2,297 per annum per ha of woodland to the Isle of Man. Unfortunately as the precursor habitats to new woodland (gorse, bracken or grass) have not been valued, it is impossible to put a nett increase value for flood prevention on local woodland creation (though the value of woodland is likely to be significantly higher than other habitat types). Perhaps the most significant benefit would come from woodland creation in Glen Auldyn, which could have significant impacts upon the Auldyn River, moderating the peaks and troughs of water flows and reducing the risk of flooding to the local community. Even where floods still happen, by delaying the onset of a flood, the presence of more woodland in a catchment gives people time to secure lives and property.

4.2.1 Urban Trees. By intercepting rain water, urban trees can be a useful buffer to excess storm-water runoff caused by summer rain storms. In addition urban trees slow wind-speed, absorb particulate pollution and bring in valued wildlife.

4.2.2 Water Quality. While no domestic water supplies originate from the proposed Ramsey Forest area, the ability of the forest to filter and moderate high and (particularly) low flows in rivers will increase the value of a watercourse for wildlife, particularly fish.

4.3 Carbon Capture. 25m² of new woodland can lock away 1 tonne of atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO²), thus 100ha of new woodland would potentially lock away 40,000 tonnes of CO² (about 10,000 tonnes of pure carbon), though the type of woodland and its management would dictate the actual amount, and more importantly, how fast the carbon capture occurs. Plantation forests capture carbon rather fast, but most benefits are lost at the clearfell stage, while native broadleaf woodland retained to old-growth stage will continue to lock away carbon for over 300 years, but the speed of capture will be somewhat slower. The value of carbon sequestration is based upon a widely fluctuating market in carbon credits (ranging from <£5 to >£20 per tonne of C). Voluntary sequestration schemes operate at about a level of up to £20 per tonne of atmospheric CO² (£80 per tonne of C). Therefore the eventual value to society of Ramsey Forest for carbon sequestration can be measured at a rate beginning at £50,000.

4.3.1. Woodfuel. Wood is a commonly used domestic fuel. It is the only commonly used domestic and community fuel source that is carbon neutral, thus its use reduces our dependence upon fossil fuels. If 30% of the total estimated additional native timber production goes to firewood this will be enough to meet the domestic heating requirements of over 100 houses. (Offsetting over 600 tonnes of CO²)

¹ Brander L. and McEvoy P. (2012). *The economic value of ecosystem services from the terrestrial habitats of the Isle of Man*. Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture. Isle of Man.

4.4. Health. The health benefits of regular countryside recreation can be very significant, with sedentary lifestyles the fourth highest underlying factor responsible for poor health (behind smoking, diet and blood pressure). The costs associated with people's sedentary lifestyles are likely to be significant to the Isle of Man. Creation of further woodland will probably not induce more people to take part in an active lifestyle, but making woodland more available and attractive to people is easily possible. The Ramsey Forest will hope to engage more people into participation through improved access, community participation and addressing the needs and concerns of a range of user groups who have physical or less tangible reasons for not using countryside recreation (see the Recreation Strategy). If just 1% of the Island's population can be motivated to lead less sedentary lifestyles this could save the Island's health service over £6,000 per annum². Stress, depression and mental fatigue can be alleviated by the restorative environment of woodland recreation. The costs to the economy of mental ill health, from direct medical costs, to time off work and the influence of mental health on secondary health issues are estimated at £76 billion to the UK economy³. Additional proven health (and by implication economic) benefits accrue from accelerated recovery times.

4.5 Recreation. Brander and McEvoy¹ estimated the value of woodland recreation on the Isle of Man to be worth £5.73 million per annum on the Island (with confidence intervals from £3.46m to £8m). If through woodland creation, better provision and outreach we are able to increase Island recreational visits by 1% this would lead to an additional estimated £57,300 per annum valuation.

4.5.1 Adventure Business. In addition to the non-market valuation of recreation, there will also be the scope for enterprise. At the moment there are a few businesses on the Island charging for organised countryside recreation activities such as canoeing, paint-balling and quad-biking. The provision of additional facilities on public land and support for recreation development on private land will increase the potential for the use of the Forest as a host to significant commercial recreation activity. With the paid commercial recreation market increasing, the Forest could support local job creation and increase the attractiveness of the Island to an affluent tourist market (see section 6).

4.6 Other. There are many other even less tangible and difficult to estimate ecosystem services to society from a local increase in house prices to an inherent valuation of nature. The value of wild fruit (bilberries and blackberries) and wild fungi will increase as more people use the resource and a greater area of countryside is made available for recreation. The value to society of woodland as a backdrop to economic development is covered in the next section.



Blackberries are a free ecosystem service worth many thousands of pounds to the Island.

² Figures extrapolated from NHS Scotland statistics.

³ Sustainable Development Commission 2007.

5 A SETTING FOR INVESTMENT

5.1 Introduction. The proposed Ramsey Forest will provide a backdrop for Ramsey Town to regenerate itself. Naturally the Forest alone cannot achieve substantial regeneration but it can make a valuable contribution. Ramsey is already undertaking significant uplift of its shopping area (the best independent shopping area on the Island), but between forest and the coast (the Island's first Marine Nature Reserve) Ramsey centre would have a superb green context for economic renewal. The Forest should bring direct benefits to the economy such as firewood, tourism and retail, but the more telling benefits will be from indirect improvements to the local green infrastructure. Ramsey Forest will not only be a landscape area but will also be a marketing brand

5.2 Direct Economic Benefits. The most important economic aspect of the forest will be the part the Forest can play in attracting tourists and Island visitors to Ramsey. From a tourist perspective the benefits will go to local accommodation providers and local restaurants. Local visitors will use cafes, restaurants, local attractions and local shops. A pleasant well maintained woodland recreation experience may just be the deciding factor for someone to have a day out in Ramsey. The amount of additional trade to Ramsey may not create many jobs, but it could be the additional income needed to permanently secure many more existing ones.

5.2.1 Advertising. Ramsey Forest will need to be advertised as a destination locally through the distribution of leaflets and media awareness. If quality can be ensured and maintained, word-of-mouth should do the rest. The simplest and most effective form of advertising will be through roadside 'Welcome to Ramsey Forest' signage on the major access roads such as the Mountain Road and the Lezayre Road.

5.2.2 Working with Ramsey. For Ramsey Forest to integrate into the tourist economy of Ramsey, the Forest needs to have links with the town. The most explicit link is the fact that Ramsey will lie within the Forest boundary, thus even a trip to the shops is a visit to the forest. Ramsey shops will be encouraged to promote this by becoming supporters of the Forest either in a passive way such as displaying a window sticker or in a pro-active way such as:

5.2.2.1 Purchasing promotional advertising in Ramsey Forest interpretive literature and websites.

5.2.2.2 Selling goods and services related to the forest such as bike-hire, walking sticks and local craft-made forest goods.

5.2.2.3 Becoming corporate supporters of the forest to help finance the forest directly, and foster a green image.

5.2.2.4 Featuring on the Forest website as a local service.

5.2.2.5 Displaying leaflets and interpretation about the forest in shops.

5.2.3. Concentrating Recreation. Creating a cluster of good quality forest recreation sites will bring with it more visitors and so the viability of recreation enterprises is significantly increased. Potential profitable enterprises could include horse riding stables, mountain biking, paint balling, off-road segway and personal trainers. The more recreation opportunities there are the more attractive the area will become for visitors and more enterprise opportunities will arise and be viable. As the recreation market becomes larger it should also become more specialised and professional.

5.3 Green Infrastructure. There is good evidence that green space can make positive impacts on local economic regeneration, especially for job creation, business start up, increased land values and inward investment⁴. In the case of Ramsey Forest the additional green infrastructure is provided by the urban trees and the forest setting. A part of the increase in green infrastructure will be 'perceived', through the increased awareness and value placed upon existing woodland features and the growing urban forest. The additional provision of local high-quality countryside recreation sites creates added value green infrastructure.

5.3.1 Property Values. An increase in green infrastructure (including apparent increase) should lead to an increase in property values. Increasing property value brings with it greater investment confidence (that capital investment is secure), and with this comes motivation to improve maintenance and aesthetic upkeep of property (which will lead a better environment, increasing property values and further motivation for investment and so a virtuous loop is created).

5.3.2 Competitive Edge. For areas looking to attract inward investment, high levels of green infrastructure gives a clear competitive edge over other urban areas such as Douglas. This is particularly pertinent to attract high value industry, entrepreneurs and skilled workers.

5.3.3 Spending. Attractive locations lead to people staying longer and spending more. It will also allow for specialised niche sectors such as bike hire, outdoor clothing and locally produced forest craft products and foods.

5.4 Events. Many sports groups such as mountain biking and cross country running hold regular 'meets', with good quality venues attracting hundreds of people from across the British Isles. Ramsey Forest will be an ideal host. Just a few successful annual events can bring significant income to the local economy. Non-sporting events such as major church or scout camps or art/music festivals should find Ramsey Forest an ideal location, indeed by giving Ramsey a positive 'green' image it will make it a more attractive location for events with little or nothing to do with the Forest.

⁴ Forest Research (2010) *Benefits of Green Infrastructure*. Forest Research, Farnham.

6 THE COMPLETE TOURIST DESTINATION

6.1 Introduction. Ramsey Forest will market itself as a self-contained short-stay destination. This will take the form of a holiday package organised through the Forest (Manx Wildlife Trust) and administered by a local travel agent that combines flight arrangements, local accommodation and a range of outward bound activity options (with mountain biking the core activity).

6.2 Infrastructure. For the Forest to receive tourist visitors it has to have had a significant infrastructure uplift. These improvements outlined in the Recreation Strategy essentially will allow access from three or more landscaped car-parks that link into well maintained walking and biking trails in the existing plantations. It is estimated it will take between three and four years for this infrastructure to be established.

6.3 Accommodation. Ramsey's new hotel facility and a small holiday cottage village at Ballure form the key accommodation in the area. The establishment of alternative accommodation provision such as log cabins, eco pods, yurts etc .would provide the ideal accommodation springboard for Ramsey Forest visitors. As many activities are all season and all weather the promotion of the package as a winter event would be particularly attractive for local accommodation providers.

6.4 Activities. Any package would include a number of recreation options. Within the forest, cross-country mountain biking, downhill mountain biking, paint-balling, golf and motorised activities such as quad-biking, should all be possible within three to four years. Provision of new and novel activities such as roller-skiing will be an important marketing tool. Outside the forest a greater range of activity options would also be available.

6.4.1. Leaders. Activities will be led by local qualified, experienced and insured experts. The success of the enterprise is largely in the hands of the activity providers, thus a good working relationship with local outdoor adventure organisations is essential.

6.5 Administration. While the overall co-ordination of the venture will be by the Manx Wildlife Trust, a local tour operator will provide the necessary administrative oversight of visitor bookings.

6.6. Target Audience. Essentially energetic, UK based and affluent. The short stay experience would suit stag parties, and small groups. The destination can not compete on price with the UK, but quality, (which should lead to a good reputation), customer service and a novel destination will be the key selling points.

6.6.1. Advertising. The Ramsey Forest website will be the contact hub that will showcase the experience through video clips, testimonies and a sleek professional layout that will lead to the tour operators booking system. Potential customers will be led here from Isle of Man tourist media and interest group advertising (magazines and websites).

6.7 Profit. About 10% of the visitor fee will go to the Manx Wildlife Trust to finance the maintenance and creation of the recreation infrastructure and help finance wider Ramsey Forest goals. A further 5% carbon offset charge would also go back into the Forest. 100 visitors paying £500 per package will make an estimated £7,500 per annum for the Forest.

7 FUNDRAISING

7.1 Costs. The actual cost of creating the forest is modest in comparison with the benefits that should accrue. While volunteer effort will go a lot of the way towards the management of the forest, there will be necessary costs.

7.1.1 Professional Management. Paid staffing will be required to co-ordinate the many activities within the forest. Volunteer groups will require some leadership and many tasks will require trained personnel (herbicide spraying, landowner liaison, ecological assessment, project development, health and safety audits etc). About 19 hours (2.5 days) a week will be required to ensure that the aims of Ramsey Forest can be fully met. This will cost £15,000 per annum.

7.1.2 Tree Planting and Establishment. While many trees will be established by natural regeneration, several thousand trees will still need to be planted every year. Planted and naturally regenerating trees will still need fencing and weeding, which will incur a major cost. It is hoped that much of the fencing timber will be supplied by the Government's sawmill. The budget for tree establishment per annum will be £10,000.

7.1.3 Car-parks, Trails and Interpretation. Creating and maintaining the recreation infrastructure of three or more car-parks with ancillary trails and interpretation will require some inputs, though it is hoped that much of the crushed stone for the car-parks will come free as recycled road chippings and woodwork for the trails supplied free or at low cost by the Island's sawmill. The budget for recreation provision will be £5,000 per annum averaged over the first ten years, but this will be heavily weighted towards the first three.

7.1.4 Overheads. Ensuring the Manx Wildlife Trust are able to operate the Forest smoothly and safely requires overheads like office space, senior staff supervision, insurance, photocopying, website costs, financial management etc to be covered. The estimated cost for this is £5,000 per annum.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Staff	15000	15000	15000	15000	15000	15000	15000	15000	15000	15000
Tree Establishment	10000	10000	10000	10000	10000	10000	10000	10000	10000	10000
Visitor Services	10000	10000	10000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000
Overheads	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000
TOTAL	40000	40000	40000	32000	32000	32000	32000	32000	32000	32000

7.1.5 The First Ten Years. The total estimated costs for the first ten years of the Project will be £344,000 and this will be the target for initial fundraising.

7.2 Revenue Streams. Funding the forest will come from a great number of sources. Perhaps the greatest advantage of the Forest for fund raising is its multi-purpose nature, thus fundraising can be targeted to organisations that want to promote biodiversity, social inclusion, economic development or public health. The spread of funding sources is outlined below with projections of income in the table, but over the first ten years it is likely that some will prove more successful than others and potentially new opportunities may arise.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Large Funding Schemes	50000	50000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Small Funding Schemes	2500	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000
Local Fundraising	15000	5000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000
Corporate Sponsors	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000
Carbon Offsets	6000	6000	6000	6000	6000	6000	6000	6000	6000	6000
Tourism	0	0	0	7500	7500	7500	7500	7500	7500	7500
Landowner Contributions	2500	2500	2500	2500	2500	2500	2500	2500	2500	2500
TOTAL	81000	70500	17500	25000	25000	25000	25000	25000	25000	25000

7.2.1 Large Funding Schemes. These are funding streams that should yield grants of £1,000 or more. The Isle of Man Lottery, The Prince of Wales Countryside Restoration Trust and the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts are all potential funders that have been identified.

7.2.2 Small Funding Schemes. Smaller organisations often give modest grant aiding for a variety of different reasons. The Isle of Man Ornithological Society is one such organisation.

7.2.3 Local Public Fundraising. The Forest Project will be preceded in 2013 by public awareness raising and a fundraising campaign. This will be focused around the town of Ramsey by concentrated fundraising (such as door to door leafleting), but will also be open to the whole of the Island through the media and Manx Wildlife Trust publicity.

7.2.3.1 Plant a Tree Scheme. Ramsey Forest will offer a plant a tree scheme where members of the public will be able to sponsor the planting of individual trees.

7.2.4 Corporate Supporters. Part of the fundraising campaign will be to provide a scheme for local companies to sponsor the Forest.

7.2.5 Carbon Offsets. Paying money to offset carbon emissions is a common activity, especially for flights and travel. The Ramsey Forest will seek to either set up a local carbon offset scheme, perhaps associated with the TT festival, or seek to become a recipient of an established carbon mitigation scheme.

7.2.6 Tourism. As laid out in **Section 6** the Forest will aim to set up and co-ordinate a short stay activity break package. This enterprise will not be able to progress until a good recreation infrastructure is in place, but after this it should yield a modest and regular income.

7.3 Landowner Contributions. When planting tree on private land we will ask for a voluntary contribution. This is the approach taken by the Manx Woodland Trust and it has so far covered much of their material costs of planting. In some cases a landowner will not feel able to contribute, but this should not discriminate against a planting scheme.

7.4 Additional Enterprise Funding. The Forest will in time become a platform for community activities, new recreation pursuits and biodiversity enhancements. As ideas develop they can in turn become options for separately funded schemes.

7.5 The Following 20 Years. As a 30 year project the Forest will doubtless develop and the emphasis will alter over time. Funding for 2024 onwards is too far away to envisage now and much will depend upon factors such as the state of the Island's economy and Ramsey's economy, the success of tree planting schemes and community involvement and much more. The Forest has no statutory underpinning thus has the freedom to change radically over time to meet its underlying aims, from the management structure, to the Forest boundaries and partner organisations.

8 MANAGEMENT

8.1 The Manx Wildlife Trust. This charity (*Charity no 22510M*) will be the organisation with the overall responsibility for the Forest Project. The Manx Wildlife Trust has no landholdings within the proposed Forest and the acquisition of land will be a low priority, with the Trust working with local landowners to secure tree-planting and recreation and other targets. The Trust may enter into tenancy agreements with landowners, particularly on Government land, to enable it to secure third party grants and as a part of a formal agreement to conduct management and maintenance work on land. Money raising, formal agreements and contracts will all be in the name of the Manx Wildlife Trust. Within the Trust, the charity's Trustees have the overall responsibility for the management of the Forest Project by delegating responsibility to personnel and sub-committees of the Trust. The finances of the Forest will be held within a restricted account of the Manx Wildlife Trust and only used for the purposes of the Forest.

8.1.1 Legacy. The Trust will take responsibility for the Forest over its 30 year formative period. At the end of which it is expected that the active tree-planting and recreation capacity building will end and a long-term management provision for the Forest will be put in place. The nature of this management and who will be responsible for it will be decided in the last ten years of the Forest Project.

8.1.2 Volunteers. The on-going strength of the Wildlife Trust is the range of skills and commitment of its volunteers. This vital Trust resource will be able to be called upon to aid with events, art and design work, scientific survey, fundraising and much more.

8.2 The Wildflowers of Mann Project. An autonomous part of the Manx Wildlife Trust set up and run as a partnership between the Manx Wildlife Trust, Government departments and non-governmental organisations since 2000. The Wildflowers of Mann Project conceived and developed the Forest and will be responsible for the day to day management of it (at least for the initial formative years) on behalf of the Manx Wildlife Trust. The Project's steering committee will provide guidance and advice on the development of the Forest.

8.3 Forest Friends. This will be a voluntary wing of the Manx Wildlife Trust that that will be convened as a community group to aid and assist the strategic and practical development of the Forest (see section 2).

8.4 Timetable. In 2012 Ramsey Forest was initiated with a landowner consultation which has shown there is enough scope and scale of interest among the local landowners (and tenants) to initiate the Forest Project. Three documents, including this one, have been prepared to enable prospective funders and stakeholders to analyse the proposal – the Biodiversity Strategy, Recreation Strategy and Business Strategy. The Forest Project should begin as a public campaign in Spring 2013 and will concentrate on fundraising, public consultation and further landowner consultation, as well as some potential pre-planting preparation of planting sites. In 2014 the Forest will be officially launched and tree planting and other forest building activities will commence.

8.4 Staff. The Forest project will be managed by a part time professional worker employed by the Manx Wildlife Trust. The duty of the Forest co-ordinator will be to implement the Forest Plan. The Forest Plan will be produced in late 2013 and will be an updated and amalgamated version of the Biodiversity, Recreation and Business Strategies.

9 VISION

Ramsey Forest will follow the modern interpretation of a 'Forest' as an area where tree planting will be used to help meet a wide range of objectives. Part of the Forest's objectives will be achieved through the simple recognition of the naturally expanding woodlands around Ramsey as a Forest and by providing good quality access to the resource that is already there. As the forest establishes itself it will not only contribute to local pride and sense of community but should also act as a backdrop to help revitalise Ramsey Town.

The economic benefits of the Forest will be tangible direct market benefits to local, visitor and retail business and through non-market ecosystem benefits such as flood control, carbon capture, biodiversity and quality of life. The benefits to the local economy are impossible to accurately predict with the available data, but as the forest develops the annual benefits should be in the order of hundreds of thousands of pounds in return for an expenditure of about £35,000 annually. As time goes on and the costs decrease (as infrastructure is completed), the benefits will inevitably increase for generations to come.

People love trees and planting them is a popular selfless expression of faith in the future and this will be a key to much of the fundraising needed for the forest. The multi purpose benefits of the forest should also translate into multiple potential funding sources over the years from carbon capture to public health and economic regeneration.

