



# DEER IN AND AROUND TOWNS

## Challenges and Opportunities



### Aim

The aim of this guide is to introduce the complex relationship between deer and people that occurs in and around towns and cities.

### Background

Some of Scotland's 4 deer species are expanding in both their numbers and their distribution. In particular roe deer are adapting to new habitats and environments and are now common place in close proximity to Scotland's human population. This is largely due to the following:

- ◆ Habitat creation ranging from large afforestation schemes to small community woodlands
- ◆ Facilitation of the creation of these habitats through biodiversity promotion and green networks – particularly within the central belt's 'Central Scotland Green Network' (CSGN)
- ◆ An ability of roe to adapt into new habitats within the urban fringe where they were once resident, were displaced and are now subsequently re-colonising.

So what are the impacts of deer on people and people on deer?

### Opportunities

- ◆ Increased biodiversity – Deer, as one of our largest mammals, may be seen as a measure of success for urban, green belt, regeneration.
- ◆ Importance for environmental education programmes.
- ◆ Opportunity for people to see deer in their "back yard".
- ◆ Promotion of a healthier lifestyle - encouraging people to get out and see nature.
- ◆ Opportunity to explain traditional deer management to a wider audience.
- ◆ Provide legally obtained, locally sourced venison as a valuable food source.

### Challenges

- ◆ Public safety issues – Deer vehicle collisions (DVCs) 8,000–10,000 annually across Scotland with 65 of these causing serious human injury.
- ◆ Public perception of need to manage deer, legitimate firearms use and public safety.
- ◆ Recognising legitimate different viewpoints.
- ◆ Deer impacts to woodlands both commercial and amenity and nature conservation interests.
- ◆ Damage to private property, gardens, golf courses, cemeteries.

- ◆ Deer Welfare problems – DVCs, wire/ fence trauma, foreign body & toxic material ingestion, dog attacks, unlawful shooting, poaching, air rifles, cross bows, snaring & trapping.
- ◆ Perceptions over human and animal health risks from Lyme disease, tuberculosis (TB) and Blue Tongue and Chronic Wasting Disease
- ◆ Balancing statutory duties
- ◆ Challenge of utilising the resource in a sustainable way.



**Scenario A** – Small private garden < 0.5Ha deer hops fence and happens to be in there  
 ► No action required, deer are likely to leave of their own accord.



**Scenario B** – Larger scale private land area < 10 Ha, deer present in area regularly utilising it for shelter and food  
 ► Increased likelihood of responsibility over deer consider your situation in context of CPDM.



**Scenario C** – Large land area 10 – 10000 Ha, eg Local Authority owned, deer present on land all year  
 ► As an owner / manager of this land the CPDM applies to you.

When considering the Code of Practice on Deer Management (CPDM)\* and its application to your particular set of circumstances, your level of involvement will vary according to scale.

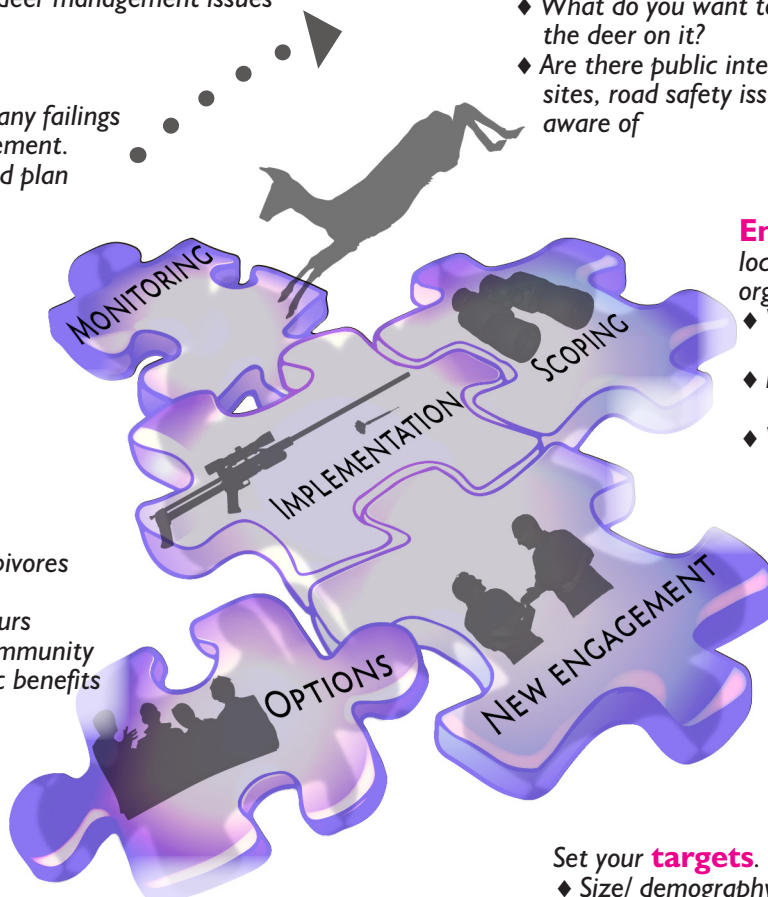
Compare yourself to the following 3 scenarios and establish which route you should follow.

A summary of the deer management planning process under CPDM  
 The plan will be as detailed or as simple as the complexity of the deer management issues

**Acknowledge** any failings and revise management.  
 ◆ Prepare a revised plan

**Review** the plan's success.  
 ◆ Annual review  
 ◆ Major reviews 5-10 years

**Monitor** the results.  
 ◆ Deer populations  
 ◆ Deer culls  
 ◆ Deer welfare  
 ◆ Damage by deer  
 ◆ Usage by other herbivores  
 ◆ Habitat impacts  
 ◆ Impacts on neighbours  
 ◆ Impacts on local community  
 ◆ Social and economic benefits



**Recognise** the public as well as private benefits associated with wild deer on your land.  
 ◆ What do you want to do with your land and the deer on it?  
 ◆ Are there public interests e.g. designated sites, road safety issues or access issues to be aware of

**Engage** with your neighbours, the local community and relevant national organisations.  
 ◆ What do your neighbours want to do with their land and the deer on it?  
 ◆ Have you provided the opportunity for the local community to be involved?  
 ◆ Where there is a national or regional interest have you sought input from national organisations?

**Identify** what you can do.  
 ◆ Have you taken account of others' interests?  
 ◆ Are you being realistic?

Set your **targets**.  
 ◆ Size/ demography of deer population  
 ◆ Required habitat condition/ extent  
 ◆ Income to be generated from deer  
 ◆ Scale of deer cull  
 ◆ Maximum no. of road casualties  
 ◆ Are your targets realistic?

**Identify** the actions.  
 ◆ Who will do it?  
 ◆ When?  
 ◆ Where?  
 ◆ How?

\*The Code of Practice on Deer Management was introduced by Section 27 of the Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011. CPDM promotes the management of wild deer in a sustainable manner. See: <http://www.snh.gov.uk/land-and-sea/managing-wildlife/managing-deer/>



## Common scenarios Likely catalysts for action

- ◆ DVCs
- ◆ Deer damage to property, woodland, agricultural interests
- ◆ Incidents of wildlife crime
- ◆ Threat to deer welfare
- ◆ Public perceptions

**2** Lethal control <sup>1</sup>

**3** Population assessment

**2** Removal <sup>1</sup>

**2** Fencing

## Range of actions & solutions

**2** Relocation <sup>1</sup>

**2** Awareness raising / education

**3** Impact assessment

### Cons

- ◆ Cost of mitigation
- ◆ Public perception
- ◆ Media
- ◆ Welfare implications

### Pros

- ◆ Improved public interest and awareness of deer
- ◆ Improved biodiversity
- ◆ Potential for locally sourced, quality venison supply
- 2** Demonstration of BP Guidance and application of CPDM

<sup>1</sup> Refer BPG : Deer in & around Towns – Guidance for Responding to Situations