



Case Study: Mitigation – using woodfuel heating systems in Wales

Wood Energy Business Scheme

Forestry Commission Wales is supporting the use of wood as a substitute for fossil fuels through the Wood Energy Business Scheme (WEBS). Funding for the scheme comes from the EU, and grants are available to support micro-businesses, small and medium enterprises and social enterprises to develop the sustainable and renewable wood-heat market across Wales.

The scheme provides grant support for woodfuel heating systems, small scale electricity generation using wood (Combined Heat and Power) and woodfuel supply businesses.

Established in 2004 WEBS has funded heating schemes in a range of commercial and public sector buildings – from small rural tourism businesses to manufacturing companies, and public sector sites including hospitals and schools. It has also funded a range of fuel supply businesses producing wood chips and pellets. Over the coming years it aims to develop the wood-heat and energy sector in Wales into a

‘mature market’ supported by both an established woodfuel supply chain and boiler installation and maintenance businesses.

Penpont Estate

Through WEBS funding Penpont Estate near Brecon now supplies all its own heat and hot water and is developing a woodfuel supply business. The estate, managed by Gavin and Davina Hogg, comprises over 800 hectares of mixed farmland and mature woodland with a Grade 1 listed house as the centrepiece. The house and grounds are open to the public and are also a venue for conferences, events and activity breaks.

For accommodation businesses, heating costs are a significant overhead, so the onsite supply of wood made it the natural choice for heating the complex of buildings. It also supported the owners’ interest in bringing the neglected estate woodland back into management.

WEBS funded the heating system and also the purchase of woodfuel chipping equipment used to supply high quality



chips for the boiler. Management of the woodlands now provides a year round supply of wood chip. The Penpont Estate is developing a spin-off business to supply woodchip for other boiler systems, and offer a chipping service for nearby woodland owners.

Benefits for our climate

Woodfuel is a sustainable and low carbon source of energy. Using wood from well-managed forests ensures that carbon dioxide released during burning is recaptured by the growth of new crops. The growing demand for woodfuel therefore gives woodland owners an incentive to manage their land productively which in turn improves the conditions for local wildlife.