

A SUMMARY OF ACTION PLANNED OR UNDERWAY TO IMPLEMENT THE ENGLAND FORESTRY STRATEGY

Introduction

This paper is an updated summary of the actions being taken to implement the England Forestry Strategy. It has been compiled from information supplied by Forum members. Actions are shown under each of the four programmes of the Strategy. The paper will continue to be updated for each Forum meeting.

The Forum is invited to note the contents of the tables.

**Forestry Commission
June 2000**

Note:

The information in the following tables has been compiled by the Forestry Commission and includes information provided by other organisations that are members of the England Forestry Forum. New information, added since the previous report, is shown in italics. Unless otherwise indicated (in square brackets after each entry), the information has been provided by the Forestry Commission.



ENGLAND FORESTRY STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS REPORT – JUNE 2000

1. Forestry for Rural Development

Influencing Policies for Agricultural Reform	
Action Intended	Actions To Date And In Progress
Ensure that forestry will be considered in the development of rural programmes under the Agenda 2000 proposals for a new Rural Development Regulation.	<p>Consultation paper considering options for forestry measures and mechanisms for implementing the EU Rural Development Regulation planned for issue in July 1999. Report of consultation published November 1999.</p> <p><i>MAFF has submitted the England Rural Development Plan to the European Commission (EC). The main forestry/farm woodlands measures in the Plan (which is subject to EC approval and the Government's Spending Review 2000) are as follows:</i></p> <p><i>(a) the continuation and expansion of the FC's Woodland Grant Scheme to support the maintenance and development of forests and afforestation of agricultural and non-agricultural land;</i></p> <p><i>(b) the continuation of MAFF's Farm Woodland Premium Scheme;</i></p> <p><i>(c) payments to maintain and improve the ecological stability of forests where the costs exceed the income from forestry under the WGS.</i></p> <p><i>In addition, the Plan includes an Energy Crops Scheme covering short rotation coppice and miscanthus. Forestry and its related industries could also benefit under the new Rural Enterprise Scheme. Negotiations about the content of the Plan are continuing with the EC [MAFF 23.6.00]</i></p> <p>Report on CAP and Forestry by the GB wildlife and countryside agencies published January 2000. [CA/EN]</p>
Support research into the implications of CAP reform for the transfer of land from farming to forestry.	<p>Ongoing programme of research by the Countryside Agency.</p> <p>Research contract on 'new entrants to the land market' has been commissioned by the GB wildlife and countryside agencies. [CA]</p>
Support Strategic Development of Woodland Resources	
Action Intended	Actions To Date And In Progress
Publish a national woodland inventory to provide better information about England's woodland resources.	<i>Collection of data for the Inventory is based on a two stage process – the main woodland survey covering woodland over 2 hectares and the small woodland and trees survey covering woodland less than 2 hectares, groups of trees and individual trees. During the year mapping and field work were completed in all counties in England apart from Northumberland. The results of both surveys for all counties will be published and made available on the Forestry Commission's Internet website over the next 12 to 18 months.</i>
Encourage new investment in the wood-processing sector by publishing forecasts of wood production and through our policies for regional development and support for rural economies.	Forecast of wood production published in 1995 covering a 20-year time horizon. Next forecast planned for publication once the woodland inventory work is complete (c. 2001).
Ensure that the supply of timber from our woodland resources is available at the levels indicated in long-term forecasts.	Development of Woodlots continues with new sections added for sawn timber, service, and marketing events. A sister publication (Eco-Ads) has been launched to establish buyer-seller linkages in the conservation sector.

Continue to provide support for regional and local marketing initiatives, including small-scale and craft uses.	<p>Second woodland initiatives networking day held in Cambridge in May 1999 and report of discussion published June 1999.</p> <p>National Small Woodlands Association's Initiatives Register has now been put on the Internet and will be transferred to a map based research tool during 2000. [NSWA]</p>
Extend the range of business advice, training and local support offered to woodland businesses, particularly small producers.	<p>England Forestry Forum Working Group established to review the range of business advice and training and recommend how it could be extended. <i>Interim report and recommendations to Forum produced June 2000 (Paper 14/00).</i></p>
Develop Understanding of the Rural Economy	
Action Intended	Actions To Date And In Progress
Commission a study of the economic impacts of forestry in the rural economy.	<p>Study completed and results summarised in England Forestry Forum Paper 11/00.</p> <p><i>National Forest Company has commissioned work to identify the economic and employment related benefits to date of creating the National Forest. [NFC]</i></p>
Encourage Diversification	
Action Intended	Actions To Date And In Progress
Support a targeted programme for short-rotation coppice planting and encourage the use of wood fuel for energy production using the most efficient technology.	<p>Project Arbre (North Yorkshire) - project officer jointly funded by the Forestry Commission and Dept. of Trade and Industry (ETSU) appointed. Pilot locational supplement to WGS provided for three years until March 2001.</p> <p>FC, MAFF and NFU worked with Arbre developers to organise 5 workshops with farmers and also a seminar with environmental and other interest groups to promote SRC. Since then there has been a significant increase in planting, with 700 hectares expected to be planted in spring 2000, bringing the total to around 1,200 hectares. [MAFF]</p> <p>Further benefit for energy crops could accrue from the England Rural Development Plan (see above). [MAFF]</p>



2. Forestry for Economic Regeneration

Promote Forestry for Land Regeneration	
Action Intended	Actions To Date And In Progress
<p>Promote the role of forestry in the restoration of former industrial land by supporting research to develop cost-effective methods of establishing woodlands and establishing a national network of sites demonstrating best practice.</p>	<p>Forestry Commission and National Urban Forestry Unit have funded a study (The Potential for Woodland on Urban and Industrial Wasteland) by Manchester University. <i>Forestry Commission Research Agency has published the full report of the study as a Technical Paper (No. 29). An Executive Summary has also been published jointly with NUFU.</i></p> <p><i>NUFU involved with phytoremediation trials with the Mersey Forest and John Moores University. [NUFU]</i></p> <p>Forestry Commission and English Partnerships have established a Steering Group to look at forestry and regeneration related issues. Specific areas for investigation will include the Coalfields, New Towns, liabilities, and long term management.</p> <p>Seminar on regeneration of brownfield land to community woodland jointly hosted by the National Forest Company and FC Land Regeneration Unit in autumn 1999. [NFC]</p> <p>National Forest Company and Forestry Commission Research jointly produced Technical Paper 27 'Woodland Creation: Experience from the National Forest' – documents 3 demonstration woodlands, two created on ex colliery/clay working sites. [NFC]</p> <p>DETR has published "Soil Forming Materials: Their Use in Land Reclamation" and the Forestry Commission now uses this as the standard by which woodland grant schemes on appropriate sites will be assessed.</p> <p>England Forestry Forum Working Group established to consider the role the Forum can play in promoting forestry for land regeneration and develop an agenda to guide action. <i>Interim report and recommendations to Forum produced June 2000 (Paper 15/00).</i></p>
<p>Promote a decision making framework for the design, planning and site preparation requirements of woodland establishment on former industrial land and use this as a basis for Government funded work.</p>	<p>Work in the Mersey and Red Rose Community Forests funded by English Partnerships and the Forestry Commission to develop a decision making framework for woodland establishment on closed landfill sites has been completed and launched regionally.</p>
<p>Consider the need for longer-term support and management of woodlands on former industrial land and explore new ways of securing their future.</p>	<p>Forestry Commission's Land Regeneration Unit reviewing long-term liabilities issues in conjunction with solicitors.</p> <p>Groundwork Trust through Wasteland Woodland Programme has just established a working group to explore opportunities for managing wasteland to woodland sites.</p>
<p>Act directly through the Forestry Commission acquiring and managing land in regeneration partnerships.</p>	<p>The Forestry Commission's Land Regeneration Unit has acquired c50 hectares of freehold land and a further 140 hectares of leasehold land in the Mersey and Red Rose Forests. Forest Enterprise seeking to acquire 1,200 hectares of land in Thames Chase over the next 10 years and currently negotiating the acquisition of 200 hectares. <i>Forest Enterprise awarded £9 million under the Government's Capital Modernisation Fund for a package of measures worth £14 million involving the creation of 1,000 hectares of new woodland. (See Forum Paper 22/00 for more information.)</i></p>



Support Regional Programmes	
Action Intended	Actions To Date And In Progress
Encourage the Regional Development Agencies to use forestry and woodland programmes in implementing their objectives.	<p>RDA Guidance on preparation of regional strategies issued by DETR, March 1999.</p> <p>RDAs will be represented on the Forestry Commission/English Partnerships Steering Group (see above).</p> <p><i>National Forest 'written in' to the East Midlands Regional Development Agency Strategy and Rural Action Plan. [NFC]</i></p> <p><i>Yorkshire Forward is working with the Forestry Commission's Land Regeneration Unit on woodland schemes for a number of former colliery sites in South Yorkshire.</i></p> <p><i>The Forestry Commission has initiated 'partnership projects' to develop a database of brownfield sites with potential for woodland within its Economic Regeneration Priority areas. These will draw on the publicly available National Land-Use Database and will be used to inform regional strategies.</i></p>
Encourage the development of new urban forestry initiatives which can demonstrate achievement through partnership approaches.	<p>Urban Renewal Foundation included forestry as an issue as part of their Sustainable Land Re-Use Investigation at the Newcastle Land Regeneration Expo, June 1999.</p> <p>National Forest Company has a number of schemes underway – notably in Burton upon Trent and at Swadlincote, using funding from the Single Regeneration Budget. [NFC]</p> <p><i>NUFU has published guidance on developing a strategic approach to urban forestry (1999) which has been actively promoted to local authority and other organisations. [NUFU]</i></p> <p><i>NUFU is supporting three new regional urban forestry initiatives (East Lancashire, West Yorkshire, Thames Gateway), all of which demonstrate a partnership based approach to working. [NUFU]</i></p>
Promote Forestry Through Land Use Planning	
Action Intended	Actions To Date And In Progress
Review Circular 36/78 on Trees and Forestry and consider, as part of a rolling programme, how the role of woodlands might be highlighted through regional and national planning guidance.	<p>England Forestry Forum Working Group reviewing content and promotion of revised guidance. <i>Interim report and recommendations to Forum produced June 2000 (Paper 16/00).</i></p> <p>Publication of the revised document anticipated late 2000. [DETR]</p>
Review the guidance in Minerals Planning Guidance Note 7 in due course and if necessary amend this to reflect revised forestry policy.	
Work closely with mineral and waste planning authorities to ensure that Government forestry policies are fully reflected in development plans.	<p>European conference on Mineral Planning, Harrogate October 1999, includes a plenary session on the role of forestry as an after-use.</p> <p><i>National Forest Company has established a policy framework within Staffordshire, Derbyshire and Leicestershire Minerals/Derelict Land Plans, promoting restoration of sites to forest-related land uses. [NFC]</i></p>
Work with the minerals and waste industries to encourage consideration of forestry as an after-use at an early stage of planning development.	<p>As above.</p> <p><i>National Forest Company works closely with all main minerals companies in the National Forest. Also involved in a sub-regional partnership led by Staffordshire County Council which is developing a long-term restoration strategy for sand and gravel workings between Tamworth and Burton upon Trent. [NFC]</i></p>



<p>Seek opportunities to consider how the setting of future built development might be enhanced by the incorporation of wooded and other green elements, and how to encourage such development through planning guidance.</p>	<p>Proposals for a joint accord between the Forestry Commission and English Partnerships setting out shared priorities to be developed in the context of the Forestry Commission/English Partnerships Steering Group (see above).</p> <p>National Forest Company has produced a 'Guide for Planners and Developers'. [NFC]</p>
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Promote Environmental Improvements

Action Intended	Actions To Date And In Progress
<p>Create new woodlands along transport corridors as part of a programme of environmental improvements.</p>	<p>Countryside Management initiative underway along the route of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link in Kent which will include creation of new woodland to replace that lost along the route. [EN]</p> <p><i>Well established Highways Agency/NUFU programme in the West Midlands (Woodlands by the Motorway). NUFU and Highways Agency exploring scope for replication in West Yorkshire, east Lancashire and elsewhere. [NUFU]</i></p>

3. Forestry for Recreation, Access and Tourism

Increase Access to Woodlands	
Action Intended	Actions To Date And In Progress
Draw on the Forestry Commission's report on woodland access in England in implementing the Strategy.	<p>As part of the review process, a series of seminars to look at the practical issues associated with increasing access to woodlands and improving the quality of information about access opportunities were organised in York, Bristol and Milton Keynes in summer 1999. A report of the seminars was published in September 1999.</p> <p>Forestry Commissioners recommendations on options for increasing access to woodlands published October 1999 (details available on Forestry Commission Internet website). <i>Background work on 'Access to Other Land' published by the Countryside Agency May 2000.</i></p> <p><i>Countryside and Rights of Way Bill includes provisions for landowners to voluntarily dedicate land for access.</i></p>
Target grants to increase the opportunities available to visit woodlands, particularly in areas where there are shortages of access.	<p>Over 7000 hectares of new woodlands planted under WGS Community Woodland Supplement since 1992.</p> <p>85% (2,600 ha.) of National Forest land has some form of access. Supported with a wide range of information packs and other materials. [NFC]</p>
Promote a network of forest tracks suitable for cycling as part of the National Cycle Network and our Integrated Transport Strategy.	<p>Forest Enterprise and Sustrans joint accord launched summer 1999.</p> <p>National Forest Company has grant aided the development of 6km. of new cycle routes in the National Forest area. <i>National Forest Company is also a partner in the cross-regional Burton-Swadlincote Transport Strategy, which aims to achieve improved leisure/transport links, including links with the National Cycle Network.</i> [NFC]</p>
Improve the Quality of Information About Access	
Action Intended	Actions To Date And In Progress
In partnership with woodland owners and others, explore ways of making up-to-date information available on woodlands to visit and improve the quality of information, building on the Forestry Commission's Walkers Welcome package.	<p>Forestry Commission is providing support (funding and data) for the Forestry Trust's Regional Access to Woodlands Guides. Guides for south-east England, the West Country and Severn, Wye and Avon have been published. Work on Guides for north-west England and the Midlands is underway by the Trust.</p> <p><i>National Forest Company annually update their "Access Pack" which promotes nearly 100 new woodlands with open access. The Company and local authority partners are shortly to produce an Access Standards Guide detailing proposals for common waymarking, surfacing and signage associated with woodland access sites and trails.</i> [NFC]</p> <p><i>Walk in the Woods programme, promoting access to hundreds of woods during May each year, facilitated as part of the Trees of Time and place campaign. Information collated by the Tree Council.</i> [NUFU]</p>
Enhance the Nation's Forest Estate	
Action Intended	Actions To Date And In Progress
Give priority to acquiring freeholds of leasehold land in areas close to centres of population, particularly in the Community Forests and the National Forest, when there is a shortage of existing woodland access.	<p>Forest Enterprise plans to purchase up to 3,000 hectares of freeholds over the next five years to provide new or assured public access to land currently held under lease. Forest Enterprise has set an indicative target of achieving at least 500 hectares of public access land within each Community Forest and the National Forest within 10 years.</p>

Develop the Forestry Commission's Woodland Park network close to towns and cities.	
Work in partnership with sports' governing bodies to accommodate noisy or intrusive recreation in suitable woodlands and relieve pressure on sensitive sites.	
Improve recreational and other facilities through private sector partnerships.	Forest Enterprise aims to develop at least three major Forest Centres and four new catering franchises through Private Finance Initiative partnerships over the next five years. Invitations to tender issued autumn 1999.
Promote Better Understanding	
Action Intended	Actions To Date And In Progress
Support research into the economic contribution that woodlands and forests make to tourism and the potential for forest-based tourism initiatives to benefit local communities.	National Small Woods Association producing a practical guide to the costs and benefits of all major recreational activities in woodland in conjunction with the Countryside Agency in 2000. [NSWA] Forestry Commission carrying out a study to examine the economic contribution of forestry to tourism within Britain. <i>Contract for Phase 1 scoping study to look at existing methodology, research and data is nearing completion.</i> Phase 2 will subsequently calculate actual money spent, employment and the associated multipliers.
Engage with the public to promote the benefits of trees, woods and forests.	Results from the Forestry Commission's 1999 Public Opinion of Forestry survey published November 1999. Survey report available on the Forestry Commission's Internet website.. National Small Woods Association launching a 'Local Woods Campaign' in 2000. [NSWA] <i>Trees of Time and Place campaign achievements include 400 MPs who have pledged support through Constituency Oaks, 2,500 schools now participating in Growing with Trees (in partnership with Learning through Landscapes); 500 sites secured for planting personal seedlings and the promotion of urban forestry, community nurseries and local provenance stock. [ToTap]</i>
Support the Forest Education Initiative by developing the national network of local groups to encourage children and young people to better understand the importance of woods and forests.	FEI Challenge fund to support the formation and development of local groups being prepared with launch planned for summer 1999. Eight challenge fund bids have been approved for projects ranging from resources to local schools to a new woodland site for use as a living classroom. FEI has completed (June 1999) a review and evaluation of its existing educational resources. FEI developing proposals for interactive website for launch by summer 2000. New clusters are due to be launched in the South Yorkshire and Tees Community Forests in spring 2000. National Forest area to establish a new FEI cluster during 2000. [NFC]



4. Forestry for the Environment and Conservation

Protect Existing Woodlands	
Action Intended	Actions To Date And In Progress
Review the effectiveness of the existing measures for protecting ancient semi-natural woodlands and, if necessary, introduce new measures for giving them added protection.	<p>Forestry Commission added to the list of non-statutory consultees for development in or affecting ancient semi-natural woodlands and ancient replanted woodlands in April 1999.</p> <p>Additional woodland sites are being proposed to go forward for protection under the European Habitat and Species Directive. [EN]</p> <p>Woodland Trust has completed a study to examine the current mechanisms for protection of woodlands in England and Wales. [WT]</p> <p>England Forestry Forum Working Group established to consider the extent and nature of threats to ancient semi-natural woodlands and develop proposals to address any identified threats.</p>
Seek opportunities for encouraging the replacement of woodland lost to development with equivalent areas of new planting.	Guidance being developed on where it is appropriate to remove trees to create/restore open habitats. [EN/FC]
Introduce Long-Term Plans to guide the management of woods and forests.	Launch of Long-Term Forest Plans in summer 1999. First plans will be prepared during 2000.
Promote the Environmental Benefits of Trees and Woodlands	
Action Intended	Actions To Date And In Progress
Support research to improve understanding of the value of the environmental benefits of trees, woodlands and forests and the environmental processes that they perform, particularly in relation to aerial and water borne pollution.	<i>Countryside Agency is commissioning a study to assess the economic benefits of community forestry. [CA]</i>
Promote greater appreciation of the broad environmental benefits of trees and woods to practitioners, decision makers and the public.	<p>Countryside Agency has established the Countryside Character Network with forestry interests represented.</p> <p>England Forestry Forum Working Group established to develop proposals for encouraging better understanding of the concept of landscape by Forum members and other interested groups.</p> <p><i>Heart of the National Forest Visitor Centre is promoting greater appreciation of trees to the public. 80,000 visitors in the first year. National Forest Discovery Centre (due to open in 2001) will demonstrate the role of trees and woods in everyday life. [NFC]</i></p> <p><i>Trees Matter!: a review of the benefits of urban trees and woodland published by NUFU (1998). Widely distributed to opinion formers and practitioners. [NUFU]</i></p> <p><i>Gardening Which?: promotional work with NUFU, Trees for London and others to raise profile of benefits: A Blueprint for Trees published (1999). [NUFU]</i></p> <p><i>Trees and Healthy Living national conference organised by NUFU (1999). Substantial media coverage of the health benefits of trees. Report of conference, with details of underpinning research, published by NUFU (2000). [NUFU]</i></p>

Promote greater appreciation of the value and use of locally-native trees and shrubs.	<p>Guidance on collection and use of local seed sources published in August 1999 as Forestry Commission Practice Note No. 8.</p> <p><i>National Forest Company, with Charnwood Wildlife Project, have undertaken research with nurseries and grant aiding bodies on their willingness to grow and specify local provenance stock. [NFC]</i></p>
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Use the Biodiversity Action Plan to Guide Nature Conservation

Action Intended	Actions To Date And In Progress
Establish a framework for monitoring important woodland habitats and species linked to the National Biodiversity Network.	<p>Draft framework being tested by English Nature for monitoring of SSSI sites (to be described in an article in March issue of British Wildlife). [EN] <i>Framework to be used as the basis for monitoring other native woodlands, probably through a sampling system .</i></p> <p>Members of the UK Woodland Habitat Action Plans Group are working on monitoring systems outside as well as inside the SSSI system. Details available from Keith Kirby, EN. [EN]</p>
Establish an English Native Woodlands Partnership to co-ordinate and implement links between the Forestry Strategy and the Biodiversity Action Plan.	<p>Woodland HAP and species targets being refined to provide local level guidance by a sub group of the English Native Woodlands Partnership. [EN] <i>Woodland HAP targets expressed by Natural Areas due to be agreed at July meeting of English Native Woodlands Partnership.</i></p> <p><i>Draft lowland broadleaves HAP submitted to JNCC as part of HAP gap analysis work.</i></p>
Target grants through the Woodland Grant Scheme to reverse the fragmentation of existing native woodlands, conserve priority species, and help with the preparation of management plans for semi-natural woods	<p>WGS New Native Woodlands in National Parks Challenge Fund is contributing to this.</p> <p>FC in collaboration with the English Native Woodlands Partnership is developing an initiative to stimulate woodland creation, which will help reverse the fragmentation of native woods.</p> <p>Work between EN and RC (Research) carried out on ways of identifying high priority areas. [EN]</p> <p>EN Species Recovery Programme continues to support research and management on woodland species including red squirrel, violet click beetle and other deadwood species, bats, pine marten. [EN]</p> <p><i>A pilot of a scheme to grant aid the preparation of management plans and supporting surveys is being trialled in the West Midlands and South West England.</i></p> <p>Publication imminent of Veteran Trees Management Handbook, Safety Guidance for Owners of Veteran Trees, and a booklet on grants available for managing veteran trees under the EN-run Veteran Trees Initiative. A related series of workshops have also been held. [EN]</p>

Protect Cultural Heritage

Action Intended	Actions To Date And In Progress
Work with archaeological authorities and others to identify sites of historical importance, to make sure that proposals for new planting that might affect such sites are evaluated before applications are determined.	<p>Joint accord between the Forestry Commission, Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers (ALGAO) and English Heritage, setting out shared priorities, being prepared for completion late 2000.</p>

