

NW England RDPE forestry related Axis 1 and 3 funding
December 2009

The purpose of this update is to indicate the type of funding currently available for forestry and woodland related projects under RDPE in NW England.

Axes 1 and 3 are delivered by the NWDA and in this region mostly through Local Action Groups (LAGs) using Axis 4 (the Leader approach). There is some direct delivery from NWDA in parts of Greater Manchester and Cheshire.

Axis 2 is delivered by the Forestry Commission through the English Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS) and Natural England through Environmental Stewardship (ES).

Contact details are given on Page 2 for all these organisations.

Summary

- Cumbria - The 2 LAGs in Cumbria are funding significant numbers of forestry related projects (20 approved). This is where the majority of woodland is located in the region and also where significant RDPE funding lies. Funding committed across the areas to date is over £250,000 with more in the pipeline including Forestry Advisory Services (£600,000) which are currently being procured. Projects supported so far are split about 50:50 overall between woodfuel and firewood and other forestry projects which include a bandsaw, furniture, sawmill, sculpture, promotion and a festival.
- Lancashire - In Lancashire the 3 LAGs only opened for business for their direct grants in September so applications are only just starting to come through. So far the 3 LAGs have received 12 forestry related enquiries resulting in 3 EOI's and 1 application covering a whole range of projects including woodfuel, firewood processing, timber extraction and processing, education, furniture and wooden screens.
- Merseyside - In Merseyside the Mersey Rural LAG is developing a 'call for projects' to deliver the Biomass theme in their Local Development Strategy through advisory services and information actions. Direct grants are available.
- Greater Manchester and Cheshire – direct grants are available through the NWDA RDPE team. Northern Marches LAG – are looking at a forestry apprenticeship scheme as part of a co-operation project with other LAGs.
- Region wide - (Axis 3 Voluntary Modulation) – a £4million micro-renewable project for woodfuel, wind and hydro has been approved which will be able to support larger scale community based woodfuel projects with demonstration aspects. This is likely to be open for Expressions of Interest (EOI) at the end of February 2010.
- Training – the 2 Cumbria LAGs have already been through training needs analyses (TNAs) which Cumbria Woodlands, the National School of Forestry and FC have fed into but partners need to get engaged with TNAs in other parts of region to ensure forestry needs are recognised. Cheshire and Greater Manchester TNA processes will start in New Year with Lancashire to follow.
- Promotion – the FC and Woodland Initiatives are promoting the opportunities to the sector in the region through their own contacts but it is important to keep raising awareness and encouraging potential applicants to discuss ideas with LAGs and NWDA. The FC and partners are planning a forestry and RDPE event in Spring 2010.
- Axis 2 – the Forestry Commission all EWGS grants are still open for applications for both creation and management. Please contact the Woodland Officer for your area, see contact details below. Natural England can support small scale woodland creation and management as part of a ES scheme. Please contact your local adviser – contact details below.

Contacts

LAG name	LAG officer/contact	FC lead	Woodland Initiative
Solway Border and Eden	Sam Bramwell sambramwell@sbeleader.org.uk	Jim O'Neill jim.oneill@forestry.gsi.gov.uk	Ed Mills (Cumbria Woodlands) edward@cumbriawoodlands.co.uk
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