

Date 5 December 2012

Mathias Woodlands

The Forestry Commission's Woodfuel Woodland Improvement Grant has enabled projects under both the Roads and Timber funds to be completed at The Reeds near Farnham in Surrey, on woodlands owned by C. G. J. Mathias & Son (Nurseries).

The 'Roads' fund supported the newly created road and loading bay which will enable timber to be extracted, even in wet weather, and for timber to be collected, off-highway, by articulated lorries. With a suitable track and loading bay in place, the un-managed woodland can become a profitable asset.

The 'Timber' fund has supported measurement of the neglected, standing crop and organisation of the sale of timber, bringing the woodland back into productive management. The two elements of the Woodfuel WIG grant together amounted to £10,174.

A site visit in March 2012 had revealed some very wet, soft areas that would need building up to make access and timber extraction possible. The gateway from the main road needed to be improved and widened to allow lorries to access an off-road loading bay which was to be constructed in the field. From the gates an extraction route was designed to follow a field boundary with new fencing alongside, providing access to a 5.4 ha block of woodland.

Access was across farmland and down an incline to the predominantly pine and poplar plantations with no metalled trackway for extraction machinery to use. The Roding project has put the infrastructure in place to make it possible to extract felled timber and begin the process of improving it as a managed woodland.



The newly created road which will enable timber to be extracted, even in wet weather.

Factbox Summary

WWIG funding £10,174

Size of woodland 5.4ha

Potential wood fuel yield £5-6,000

Composition of woodland

Poplar, Scots pine, oak, ash, birch, alder



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The site visit also showed that the woodlands had been un-managed for a considerable period of time and showed no evidence of any thinning for at least 20 years. As such, the woodlands were eligible for a grant towards getting professional help to bring them back into a managed cycle.



Approx 50+ year old Scots pine plantation to be felled.

The poplar and Scots pine plantations, both thought to be around 50 years old were felled by the end of 2012. Bracken was treated in the summer of 2012 and rhododendron will be cleared once the felling has taken place. The extracted timber is expected to realise £5-6,000 on the woodfuel market.

The Woodlands are part of C.G.J. Mathias & Son (Nurseries), a family-run business which specialises in growing and supplying large sized hedging plants. The Reeds project is now part of a larger and ongoing Mathias Woodlands woodland management plan (WMP) approved by the Forestry Commission. Owner Bob Mathias was well aware that this woodland was in a dilapidated state, but cost of access was the limiting factor. Through the CLA's weekly emails he discovered the Forestry Commission's Woodfuel Woodlands Improvement Grant scheme while he was putting together the management plan for the rest of their woodlands. Having discussed the matter with Mike Furness at Ngage who came to visit the site, he decided to include this area in his management plan.

Getting the road and loading bay in place was the key to the whole project, said Bob. Without the Woodfuel WIG it would not have been a viable option. Now that we have proper access we can harvest the timber and manage this valuable resource for the future.

"Bureaucracy is often rather daunting but for us Mike made the whole process incredibly easy. He took the trouble to come and see us and importantly was always at the other end of the phone if I had any questions."

Bob used the Woodfuel calculator as an example of the support he received. "I looked at the calculator and thought it was bureaucracy gone mad," he said, "but when Mike explained and demonstrated what to do it turned out to be easy to useand actually very helpful."

Said project manager Mike Furness: "Most applications we get are for either the 'Timber' or the 'Roads' funds, but occasionally, as here, a woodland can be eligible for both – and it's no more work to apply for both."



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Bob agreed: "The second application for the Timber project followed on from the first with no trouble at all. We knew what we were doing and it all went very smoothly."

Mike was involved in the early stages of this scheme and was able to explain to Bob exactly how to put his grant application together. Mike is keen to discuss ideas with other potential grant applicants to help set them out on the right lines so that they too can be successful. He is always willing to help with the paperwork, which is straightforward, and includes some paper forms and some online submissions.

The work at Reeds was completed by Christmas 2012 - a very satisfying end to the year.

Mike has also produced a useful 5 Steps Guide to making an application for a Woodfuel WIG which is available from the Ngage website:

<http://www.ngagesolutions.co.uk/blog/woodfuel-woodland-improvement-grant/>



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Woodfuel WIG Calculator Screenshot

EWGS - WIG application WF WIG Timber Calculator Version 3.2 (Issued 11.12.06)

WIG Fund: **Woodfuel WIG - Timber Fund** Case ref (FC use): **EWGS** Sheet number: **1**

Property Name: **Mathias Woodlands** Percentage contribution: **60%** Region: **South East**

Summary of operation / aims: **To organise and carry out a clear fell and sale of timber from the previously un-managed woodland known as 'Reeds' and identified as compartment 9 on the Mathias Woodlands woodland management plan.**

Work areas (optional): **Reeds, Compartment 9** Area of work (Ha): **5.44**

Claim Year	Total Cost	Total Grant
2011 / 2012	£ -	£ -
2012 / 2013	£ 1,450.00	£ 870.00
2013 / 2014	£ -	£ -
Total	£ 1,450.00	£ 870.00

Code	Quantity	Work areas affected	Std Operation	Notes	Select Claim Year (100%)			total	Cost/Unit	Unit	Total
					Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3				
WF3	1	All	Management of the wood sale process (e.g. tender / auction). Example - Drawing up contract docs; Pre commencement of work meeting			100	100	£ 300.00	Per harvesting contract	£ 300.00	
WF4	10	All	Marking of standing timber (at Forest Craftsman rate)	As evidenced by time-sheets.		100	100	£ 20.00	Per hour	£ 200.00	
WF6	600	All	Contract management and supervision costs (more than 300m3)	As evidenced by sale tickets.		100	100	£ 1.00	Per cubic metre harvested per harvesting contract	£ 600.00	
WF7	1	All	Low loader delivery of harvesting and / or processing machinery			100	100	£ 350.00	Per harvesting contract	£ 350.00	
										£ -	
										£ -	
										£ -	
										£ -	

Cost/ha	Claim Year	GLOS 23 Eprofile	Notes
£ 388.84	2011 / 2012	£ -	
	2012 / 2013	£ 1,450.00	
GLOS WIG Fund:	WF WIG	2013 / 2014	£ -

Further notes

It is not as difficult as it seems to use the Woodfuel WIG calculator.



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Notes:

1. For applications for Woodfuel WIG contact **Mike Furness**, Project Manager, **Woodfuel WIG** by email mike.furness@ngagesolutions.co.uk or by telephone 01494 568970 or 07795 515413
2. If woodland owners don't already have an approved Forestry Commission management plan, the Woodland Planning Grant is available to meet the cost of preparing one and they can contact their local Forestry Commission Woodland Officer for further information.
3. For more information about the Ditchley Foundation or Estate visit www.ditchley.co.uk/
4. For more information about the benefits of woodfuel visit www.biomassenergy.org.uk or www.forestry.gov.uk/woodfuel.
5. For media information, please contact Sharon Kavanagh, Ngage Solutions, Tel 07885 046973 or email sharon.kavanagh@ngagesolutions.co.uk



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