



Seeing the Wood for the Trees

E News

South East Forestry and Woodlands Partnership - Working together for England's most wooded region

NEWS

Woodland Trust 'Visit Woods' project

The Woodland Trust have won £1.2million from the Natural England Access to Nature initiative to develop an on-line database that will enable people to locate their nearest woodlands that allow public access. The database is due to be launched in 2010 and will include searchable maps and free downloadable resources.



INTRODUCTION

The country is not financially out of the woods yet but those involved in the firewood supply chain have been very busy, seeing a large increase in wood burning stove installations with firewood sales and prices steadily improving. Don't forget that a [felling licence](#) is needed whenever more than 2m3. of licensable timber is cut for sale in any calendar quarter across a woodland ownership – the woodland owner, agent and contractor may all be liable for prosecution if a felling licence is not obtained before felling commences. If the timber is not being sold then the maximum volume allowed to be cut without a licence is 5m3.

The increase in demand for firewood is having a positive effect on the biodiversity of our native woodlands. More woodlands are being brought back into management and the consequent thinning of the neglected woodland is opening up the canopy and allowing flora and insects to flourish once again. The ewgs Woodland Improvement Grant can be used by woodland owners to help with the costs of improving the extraction tracks within the woodland as well as other operations that will improve the biodiversity of the woodland.

Woodland owners are now able to improve the biodiversity and timber quality of their woodland at relatively little investment cost, as well as contractors being able to expect more profit from the job. It is now up to the firewood sector of the industry to make sure that they plan their cutting and seasoning so that they continue to supply new and existing customers with a quality product.

Public Forest Estate Study

At the request of Hilary Benn, the Forestry Commission (FC) are undertaking a study of the estate that the FC manages in England. The purpose of the study is to consider the long term sustainable role of the public forest estate, making recommendations about any necessary changes to improve its ability to deliver relevant priorities contained in the English forestry policy document, England's Trees, Woods and Forests. The process is expected to be completed by winter 2009. For further information visit our website www.forestry.gov.uk/england-estatestudy

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News



Red Squirrel Survival Trust

The [Red Squirrel Survival Trust](#) was launched in April by the Prince of Wales. Its aim is to help co-ordinate all the existing charities that are working to save the red squirrel.

Biomass Environmental Assessment Tool

Defra, the Biomass Energy Centre and the Environment Agency have supported the development of [The Biomass Environmental Assessment Tool \(BEAT2\)](#), which is an aid to assessing the likely environmental impact of a biomass energy project.



FC Woodfuel Website Revised and Re-launched

The Forestry Commission have created new [National Woodfuel pages](#) and updated the [Regional Woodfuel pages](#) to contain a variety of information relevant to those considering entering any point of the woodfuel supply chain. The Biomass Energy Centre has also launched a [national list of woodfuel suppliers](#) which gives lists of retailers of firewood logs, wood chip, wood pellets and wood briquettes for each county within each region.

Woodfuel Strategy for the Isle of Wight

A report, funded by the South East Woodland and Timber Fund, has been produced outlining the potential for woodfuel as a biomass source for heating on the island.

The report gives a thorough description of the points to consider when developing a woodfuel boiler project. It then considers the specific issues of the island. The Isle of Wight is a particularly interesting study because the costs of timber haulage to and from the island encourages the use of locally grown timber in such a project. The report can be downloaded from the informative website: www.eco-island.org.uk which contains many general articles on energy saving and carbon footprint reduction etc. The report can be found on the [reports and strategies page](#) of the website.



Capital Funding for Forestry Update

The Forestry Commission (FC) in the South East have recently produced leaflets explaining the capital funding options that exist for the forestry sector.

These leaflets were available in time for evening funding workshops that the Forestry Commission held around the region during March 2009, aimed at informing forestry contractors of the availability of capital grants for upgrading or adding to their machinery. The [leaflets can be downloaded](#) from the associated grant pages of the FC regional website. Please contact: southeast.fce@forestry.gsi.gov.uk if you would like a supply of printed leaflets for distribution.

The Rural Development Program for England (RDPE) training delivered through LandSkills South East is increasingly being used. The chainsaw courses are proving popular but there are plenty of other courses covering Woodland Skills, Health & Safety and Business Management available to the sector; please take the opportunity to train while there is funding available (until 2011) to support your skills development. The popular [Woodfuel IGNITE](#) course will be delivered at various locations in the region. To find out your nearest RDPE forestry related training provider see the [RFF Training web page](#) which also has a link to LandSkills South East.

Forestry projects are continuing to be approved under RDPE, throughout the region with well over £500,000 invested in the sector in the past 12 months. These included support for wood chip storage barns, equipment for the processing and distribution of woodchip and firewood, biomass boilers and harvesting equipment. There is still plenty of RDPE funding available to the forestry sector, for further information see RDPE in the Funding Opportunities section below.



Funding awarded under the second round of the South East Woodland and Timber Fund (SEWTF) for 09/10.

The assessment panel for the first round of the SEWTF was held on the 5 June 2009. This is the last financial year that this grant will be available. This year there is £112,000 available and in the first round the applications exceeded funds available with a total grant request greater than £250,000! This was the first application round where all the LEADER groups were up and running and therefore the panel decided that applicants in LEADER areas and eligible under LEADER would not be considered. There were 25 applications from which 13 were approved to a total of around £80,000. The project types were 1 woodfuel, 1 training, 3 sawmill related, 3 forestry management and 5 firewood projects.

Funding Opportunities

Natural England – Access to Nature

There is £25 million allocated to this scheme which supports projects that encourage people from all backgrounds to understand, access and enjoy England's natural environment. Its aim is that by 2014, 1.7million people will have had improved opportunities of experiencing the natural environment. For further information and details of how to apply for the grant see the [Natural England Access to Nature webpage](#).

England Woodland Grant Scheme

Robust grants budget - open for applications for payments from 2009 - 2012, see the [FC regional grants page](#) for current information on ewgs grants in the region.

- [improved standard costs](#), on average UP BY 20% (see Operations Note 9)

Biggest opportunities:

- 80% WIG's in priority areas to improve management access to your wood/s;
- enhanced planning grants to help owners evaluate what they have (and to help woodland managers to engage with new clients);
- up to **£3,800** per ha capital grant PLUS annual payments for Farm Woodland and from the Single Payment Scheme for creating new woods near towns and on the Isle of Wight.

Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) Project Funding (grant aid greater than £50,000)

For an informal discussion on possible forestry projects contact Jane Hull: email jane.hull@forestry.gsi.gov.uk; office phone : 01296 696543 or mobile: 07747 622783. FC are keen to ensure the forestry sector benefits from the funding opportunities available and will help find ways to guide and support potential forestry projects through the application process. Please get in touch to obtain advice or look at the forestry funding page of the FC website - www.forestry.gov.uk/segrants.

RDPE Training Subsidies - LandSkills South East

The RDPE training programme for the sector is increasing its range of courses. Contact your local RDPE training provider to find out what courses can be made available to you. Training Providers are happy to discuss delivering courses away from their premises if enough trainees can attend to make the course financially viable for the Provider. LandSkills South East can sub-contract other trainers in order to enable delivery of approved courses. See the [FC South East Training page](#) for more information. If you have any forestry related training queries, please contact Melanie Wallis at Alice Holt (01420 23337) for advice.

Publications and Resources

[The Timber Trade Journal's Address Book & Buyer's Guide 2009](#) has been published at £90 plus postage. It includes a Guide To Timber Certification with suppliers of certified timber & finished products clearly highlighted, so it is easy to identify who's producing products from sustainable sources.

A new publication, Silvicultural Guidelines for the [Tending and Thinning of Broadleaves](#), can be downloaded from the Irish Agriculture and Food Development Authority website.

[Forest Vegetation Management in Europe](#) provides information on the use of pesticides in light of the European proposals that may result in the reduction of use of certain pesticides.

Forest Research have revised and re-issued '[Guidance on site selection for brash removal](#)' with particular interest in brash that may have a financial value as an energy source.

Forest Research have published '[Stump Harvesting: Interim Guidance on Site Selection and Good Practice](#)' which aims to help the selection of sites for stump harvesting in order to avoid negative environmental impacts.

The UPM Tilhill and FPD Savills [Forest Taxation Guide 2009](#) can be downloaded from their website.

In May the Forestry Commission released its latest [National Statistics](#) including such things as statistics on timber price indices and UK wood production and trade.

For up to date information on news, funding and activities in the South East, why not set up the Forestry Commission South East England homepage: www.forestry.gov.uk/southeastengland as a favourite on your Internet window



South East Woodland and Timber Fund (SEWTF)

This is the final financial year in which the SEWTF is available. **The last ever closing date for applications is 4 September 2009.** For further information on suitable projects for this funding and application forms, please see the [SEWTF website](#).

Leader Project Funding (grant aid up to £50,000)

The RDPE LEADER groups are keen to receive completed Expressions of Interest forms from the forestry sector. To identify whether or not you are in a Leader area, see the postcode finder and maps on the [Leader page](#) of the SEEDA website. Download the forestry funding leaflet from the [south east grants page](#) for further information on which fund to approach.

Woodfuel

For funding available for boiler installations and woodfuel related projects please contact the region's Woodfuel Development Officer Gillian.Alker@forestry.gsi.gov.uk or visit the Grants and support page of [Biomass Energy Centre Website](#).

Policy

UK Woodland Assurance Scheme (UKWAS)

The timetable for the revision of the UKWAS has been decided and is available from the [UKWAS website](#). It is looking for wide consultation with evidence gathering and initial consultation in 2009, revision draft for consultation in 2010 with the final phase of the revision in 2011.

Business Opportunities

The Horticultures [Carbon Footprint Offsetting Partnership](#), based in Rugby is part of the £25m national tree planting project. The project is developing a register of fencing contractors, planting services and other tree planting related expertise. To register your interest in becoming involved in the project in the South East, email richard@carbonfootprint-offsetting.com.

Links

For a list of links to organisations and information relevant to the forestry sector, please go to the [RFF links page](#).

Focus

Health & Safety Legislation

Most people running small forestry related businesses are concentrating on finding contracts and scheduling them to fit around weather, birds, animals, ground disturbance, machine availability, family commitments etc. This leaves little time left to consider Health & Safety and other legislative requirements. There can be a tendency to think of Health & Safety legislation as creating red-tape and being another obstacle in the way of getting the job done and earning money. Health & Safety advice exists to help reduce the risk of accidental injury to you, anyone who works for you and any member of the public your work may have an impact on (see the HSE 1998 publication '[tree work accidents](#)'). The Health & Safety Executive have some very useful information on their website.



Subsidised [training](#) is available from LandSkills South East on a range of Health & Safety issues. For further information on your legal responsibilities for Health & Safety in the work place and for free leaflets and guidance, see the [RFF Health & Safety webpage](#).

Events

Land Based Advisory Service workshops

Business Link are continuing to run their programme of [complimentary and interactive workshops](#) throughout the South East of England, including such topics as Business diversification and Profiting from alternative energy.

South West Woodland Show 2009

Longleat - 11 September 2009, 09.00-18.00. This event is held every 2 years and alternates with the APF. It is run by the south west regional committee of ConFor and is of interest to all in the forestry industry.

Weald Woodfair

18-20 September 2009

The Weald Woodfair is designed to bring together representatives from the entire timber industry 'from forest to final form'. It involves anyone with an interest in wood. There are a wide range of demonstrations, exhibitors and stalls, ranging from traditional woodland crafts, educational activities, trade exhibits, forestry demonstrations. to products and timber for sale.

Woodfuel: Fuel for the future?

18th September 2009

If you are interested to learn more about the opportunities, practicalities and support available to develop a woodfuel based business you may be interested in the free workshop, which the Forestry Commission will be hosting at the Weald Woodfair for further information contact heather.pettitt@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

European Bioenergy Expo and Conference

9-10 October 2009, Stoneleigh Park

Trees: The key to climate Proofing our Cities (Part 2) - Trees and Urban Climate Adaptation, Treeworks

19th November 2009

The Royal Geographical Society, Kensington. This conference aims to mobilise policy makers and the wider community to ensure a sustainable urban forest canopy capable of meeting future climate adaptation needs.