

West Midlands Wood-fuel Update – February 2009

Heartwoods (www.heartwoods.co.uk)

- A big 'thankyou' to Andy Grundy, Heartwoods Project Officer who will be checking out forestry in Cuba before taking up a role with Midlands Woodfuel Ltd – Andy has been key in advancing woodfuel in WM
- A big 'hello' to Will Rolls, until recently East Midlands Woodfuel Co-ordinator, who has now joined Heartwoods to take forward the work of the Wyre Woodfuel Pathfinder, Grow With Wyre and the Wood Energy Task Group

Will is a graduate in forestry from Bangor University, originally from Malvern and has spent the last 4 years supporting development of woodfuel in the East Midlands including producing a number of leaflets and case studies and a dvd on woodfuel

http://www.biomassenergycentre.org.uk/portal/page?_pageid=74,15256&dad=portal&schema=PORTAL and can be contacted at:

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- Overall, the number of installations and interest in biomass continues to grow apace, with enquiries to Heartwoods rising and an ever increasing interest in fuel supply
- The Heartwoods website has comprehensive info on woodfuel

Wood fuel Challenge – Wyre Wood fuel pathfinder – Phase 1

- The pathfinder is due to finish by April 09, but has delivered 10 trained Woodfuel Champions, 12 advisory visits and 3 installation feasibility studies, with more to come
- one of Will's key tasks will be to evaluate the pathfinder and feed the lessons back to the wider region
- we had a display at the recent Grow With Wyre event which generated interest and contacts
- we expect to hold a final 'training'/networking event in April to feed back the findings and prepare for Grow With Wyre
- Forest Research has continued the Wyre woodfuel harvesting trials - the production costs for the coppice material in the first trial were very high suggesting coppice for fuel only as a by product of e.g. biodiversity funded work
- The pathfinder experience is a pilot for the regional RDPE project

WMids AONBs Wood for Heat project

- Target of 8 feasibility studies for owner supplied wood heat installations in Shropshire Hills and Malvern Hills AONB – 4 studies so far
- These will drive management of woodland and non-woodland trees within these protected areas and extend the pool of woodfuel 'champions' by tying in with the pathfinder

RDPE – WM Woodfuel Supply Chain

- Further delayed due to queries on project structure and financing
- FC hope to pick up accountable body role
- Estimated project start has unfortunately now been put back to summer 09
- In the meantime we hope to maintain momentum by using a small underspend from the Wyre pathfinder to continue to build capacity in the supply chain

Wood Energy Task Group

- Andy Grundy has agreed to continue as chair for the time-being
- Arranging a meeting has been delayed due to delay on RDPE but we hope to arrange a meeting in the next couple of months

Warwickshire Producer Group

- Congratulations to Zoe Bell and colleagues at Godfrey Payton for securing funding from Defra under the recent Bioenergy Infrastructure grant to set up a producer group in Warwickshire – Heartwoods supported the application

RE:Think Energy (www.rethinkenergy.org.uk)

- Funding for businesses for advice, feasibility and renewables installations in the Rural Regeneration Zone
- Delivered by Shropshire CC and MEA – Heartwoods signposting potential applicants on

- Re:Think Energy Staffordshire are developing a demonstration woodfuel depot in Staffordshire using wood supplied by FC – held a number of demonstration and training events

Bioenergy West Midlands (www.bioenergywm.co.uk)

- Successful regional conference in December 2008
- A range of successful training/networking events in biomass installation, anaerobic digestion, biofuels and a study tour to Germany on AD
- Upcoming events on funding for biomass projects, biomass heating and a study tour to Sweden

Regional Biomass Resource Study

- AWM have commissioned a resource study which the FC have fed into

Simon West
February 2009