

Woodfuel Research

By

Ian Tubby, Forest Research

Forest Research has been investigating the potential of woodfuel as a 'low carbon' source of energy for more than 25 years. During this time researchers have built up a broad and detailed knowledge of how to efficiently and sustainably harvest and process woodfuel from high forest and purpose grown energy crops. This information has been used to help shape forestry policy and also guide foresters and woodland owners looking to diversify their income streams. Strong links to the international woodfuel community provide information and 'case studies' that supplement results emerging from novel research projects carried out in the UK.

Recent research projects and outputs have focussed on:

- The potential of woodfuel in Scotland
- Small scale woodfuel harvesting systems
- The evaluation of woodfuel chippers
- The development of yield models for short rotation coppice
- Woodfuel resource evaluation studies
- Wood ash disposal routes

Much of this work is summarised in the recently published 'Woodfuel meets the challenge' leaflet or the more technical 'Woodfuel Information Pack' which is updated with new sections as research projects are completed.

Information is also available on the internet. The Biomass Energy Centre offers comprehensive links to studies, reports and organisations involved in woodfuel research, production, supply and end use as well as giving a broad overview and key facts on the whole range of biomass fuel options and conversion technologies underdevelopment or in use today. See www.biomassenergycentre.org.uk.

Information on projects, initiatives and case studies specific to Scotland is available at the 'Use Woodfuel' website. See www.usewoodfuel.co.uk. This website also provides contact details for the Forestry Commission Scotland Woodfuel Officers who will be able to provide face to face advice in your region.