

## What is RDPE?

The Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) looks to support farmers and foresters to deliver environmentally beneficial land management practices and also modernise and adapt to changing circumstances. Funding is also available to develop wider rural businesses and enhance opportunities in communities where deprivation exists. The key priorities for the remainder of the current seven year Programme (2007-2013), which is jointly funded by Defra and the EU, are to improve the competitiveness of the agriculture and forestry sectors, provide support for the uplands, rural broadband, skills and tourism and ensure continued growth of Environmental Stewardship and delivery of the English Woodland Grant Scheme.

## RDPE and Forestry

There is support for improving the competitiveness of forestry, through advice, training and capital grants as well as managing and planting woodland for environmental outcomes. Below is a summary of the main funds available for forestry in North West England under RDPE. There are a number of funds so speak to the local contacts given for more advice.

## Local Action Groups

The Local Action Groups (LAG) in NW England offer a range of support for forestry and woodland related enterprises, including advisory services, training and capital grants.

LAG	Contact (phone/email/website)	Forestry offer
Cumbria Fells and Dales	01768 869533 <a href="mailto:info@fellsanddales.org.uk">info@fellsanddales.org.uk</a> <a href="http://www.fellsanddales.org.uk">www.fellsanddales.org.uk</a>	Advisory service Training Direct grants
Solway Border and Eden	01697 349212 <a href="mailto:info@sbeleader.org.uk">info@sbeleader.org.uk</a> <a href="http://www.sbeleader.org.uk">www.sbeleader.org.uk</a>	Advisory service Training Direct grants
North Lancashire	01772 538795 / 07875 185531 <a href="mailto:Sharon.mcguinness@lancashire.gov.uk">Sharon.mcguinness@lancashire.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/ruralgrants">www.lancashire.gov.uk/ruralgrants</a>	Direct Grants
Pennine Lancashire	01772 538796 / 07875 185533 <a href="mailto:Rick.patterson@lancashire.gov.uk">Rick.patterson@lancashire.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/ruralgrants">www.lancashire.gov.uk/ruralgrants</a>	Direct Grants
Lancashire West	01772 538797 / 07875 185532 <a href="mailto:karen.kerrigan@lancashire.gov.uk">karen.kerrigan@lancashire.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/ruralgrants">www.lancashire.gov.uk/ruralgrants</a>	Direct Grants
Mersey Rural	0151 443 2297 <a href="mailto:jonathan.jackson@knowsley.gov.uk">jonathan.jackson@knowsley.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://www.merseyruralleader.org.uk">www.merseyruralleader.org.uk</a>	Advisory Service Direct grants

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South Pennines (closed to new applications)	01874 846049 <a href="http://www.pennineprospects.co.uk">www.pennineprospects.co.uk</a>	Direct Grants
Northern Marches (grants currently fully committed)	01244 973297 / 07734 132405 <a href="mailto:David.Boyce@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk">David.Boyce@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk</a>	Direct Grants Training

### Local Defra Rural Development Teams

The Defra Rural Development Team are delivering national schemes such as FFIS as well as region specific schemes. In the NW the team, in places outside LAG areas, provide support such as direct grants and managing contracted training programmes in Cheshire and Greater Manchester. They also manage the LAGs, region wide schemes and process applications and claims. As more national schemes are launched there will be fewer region specific projects.

Tel: 01228 640311 Email: [rdpedeliverynorthwest@DEFRA.GSI.GOV.UK](mailto:rdpedeliverynorthwest@DEFRA.GSI.GOV.UK)

### Farming and Forestry Improvement Scheme (FFIS)

Launched on 16 November 2011 there is £20m available under FFIS until December 2013. The grants are for capital items and the grant rate available is up to 40% in non upland areas, and up to 50% in upland areas and the maximum grant allowable per project is £25 000. The minimum grant is £2,500. The competitive fund will support projects which improve the economic value of forests through the efficiencies of improved processing and adding value. Eligible items include timber processors, forwarders, forestry trailers, tractors mounted forestry grabs. The fund will be run in a number of rounds (1<sup>st</sup> Round closed on 17 January 2012 and expect 2<sup>nd</sup> round to open in April 2012). For more information [www.rdpnetwork.defra.gov.uk/funding-sources/farm-and-forestry-improvement-scheme](http://www.rdpnetwork.defra.gov.uk/funding-sources/farm-and-forestry-improvement-scheme)

### Further forestry related funding to come – details still to be confirmed

**Rural Economy Grant (up to £60 million)** – grants of up to £1 million or more for micro and SME businesses to boost farm competitiveness, and support significant growth in the agri-food, rural tourism, **forestry**, renewable energy, and other high-potential sectors particularly. *Expect this fund to be launched at end of February 2012.*

**Skills and Knowledge Transfer (up to £20 million)** – a flexible and locally targetable skills training programme to enable rural business growth. *The fund will to be launched in the summer 2012 following completion of existing local skills programmes.*

An additional £3m will support schemes to improve footpaths and access, **skills training for new entrants to the forestry workforce**, and developing tourism support. *The timing of the launch of these initiatives is to be confirmed.*

# RDPE and forestry

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## Forestry Commission

The Forestry Commission administers the English Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS) which provides grant support for landowners wanting to create new woodland and carry out sustainable woodland management, particularly where it protects and enhances the woodland's environmental or social value. More information [www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs)

- [Woodland Planning Grant](#) for preparing plans that help with management of the woodland and meet the Woodland Assurance Standard;
- [Woodland Assessment Grant](#) for gathering information to improve management decisions;
- [Woodland Improvement Grant](#) for work in woodlands to create and sustain public benefits;
- [Woodland Regeneration Grant](#) for supporting change in woodland composition through natural regeneration and restocking after felling;
- [Woodland Management Grant](#) for helping with the additional costs of providing and sustaining higher-quality public benefits from existing woodlands; and
- [Woodland Creation Grant](#) which supports the creation of new woodlands where they deliver the greatest public benefits; and launched in November 2011 the
- [Woodfuel Woodland Improvement Grant](#) **this new grant supports the sustainable production of woodfuel and other timber products.**  
This grant can fund access infrastructure and preparation work needed for harvesting

Tel: 01524 565800 Email: [northwest.fce@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:northwest.fce@forestry.gsi.gov.uk)

If you are interested in Woodfuel WIG and you are in Cumbria please contact Ngage –  
Tel: 01494 568 970 Email: [mike.furness@ngagesolutions.co.uk](mailto:mike.furness@ngagesolutions.co.uk)

## Woodland Initiative run RDPE Programmes

### Cumbria Woodlands

Cumbria Woodlands run the Woodland Advisory Service on behalf of the 2 Cumbrian LAGs. They are also delivering training for the sector through a consortium contracted to the LAGs.

- Advice – 2 levels of service – Silver Birch (free) and Oak (small charge). For more information – Website: [www.cumbriawoodlands.co.uk](http://www.cumbriawoodlands.co.uk). Tel: 01539 822140/822439  
Email: [info@cumbriawoodlands.co.uk](mailto:info@cumbriawoodlands.co.uk)
- Training – courses include chainsaw handling, woodland management, pesticides and woodfuel production. For more information visit [www.cumbriawoodlands.co.uk](http://www.cumbriawoodlands.co.uk) Tel: 01539 822140/822439 Email: [clare@cumbriawoodlands.co.uk](mailto:clare@cumbriawoodlands.co.uk)  
or Rural Skills Cumbria <http://www.ruralskillscumbria.co.uk/>. Tel: 01539 566 987 Email: [emily.maclean@sac.co.uk](mailto:emily.maclean@sac.co.uk)

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### The Mersey Forest

The Mersey Forests delivers targeted woodfuel advice and training to forest owners/businesses on behalf of the Mersey Rural LAG.

For more information – Website: [www.merseyforest.org.uk/advice](http://www.merseyforest.org.uk/advice). Tel: 01925 816217.

### Small Woods Association

The Small Woods Association is delivering a project focusing on the restoration of ancient and semi-natural woodlands in the Northern Marches LAG area (southern Cheshire and northern Shropshire) in conjunction with the promotion of timber markets - in particular the wood-fuel supply chain.

For more information contact John Powell, project officer, at [john.powell@smallwoods.org.uk](mailto:john.powell@smallwoods.org.uk) Tel: 01952 435862 Website: [www.smallwoods.org.uk](http://www.smallwoods.org.uk)

### Woodland Initiatives

All the NW woodland initiatives provide support to woodland owners and managers in accessing grants, especially EWGS.

#### **Red Rose Forest**

Website: [www.redroseforest.co.uk](http://www.redroseforest.co.uk) Tel: 0161 872 1660

#### **Lancashire Woodlands Project.**

Website: [www.lancashirewoodlands.co.uk](http://www.lancashirewoodlands.co.uk) Tel: 01772 533917

#### **Pennine Edge Forest**

Website: [www.pennineedgeforest.org.uk](http://www.pennineedgeforest.org.uk) Tel: 01706 924234

#### **Cumbria Woodlands**

Website: [www.cumbriawoodlands.co.uk](http://www.cumbriawoodlands.co.uk). Tel: 01539 822140/822439

#### **The Mersey Forest**

Website: [www.merseyforest.org.uk](http://www.merseyforest.org.uk) . Tel: 01925 816217