

# Rural Development Programme for England

Supporting forestry projects  
in the Rural Northwest  
March 2010



## Rural Development Programme for England

### What is the Rural Development Programme England?

The Rural Development Programme for England (or RDPE for short) is a joint European and National Government fund. Running between 2007 and 2013, it helps to support projects that make our rural environments, communities and economies more sustainable and competitive. Worth £3.9 billion nationally, RDPE has £374 million allocated for rural projects in the North West of England, including support for forestry and related activities.

### How does RDPE support the forestry sector?

RDPE has a range of criteria for funding, which means a whole host of rural forestry projects can access its funding. From the purchase of large pieces of machinery or the provision of training or support to set up micro enterprises, RDPE rewards innovative approaches and new ideas. RDPE can also support woodland management and planting, but rather than supporting 'business as usual', RDPE looks for high quality, new projects that will make a business more competitive or sustainable.

### How does RDPE in the North West work?

Each county in the North West has an allocation of the economic RDPE money to distribute across its rural areas, and there are slight differences in what's available from place to place. As well as these local funds, there is some North West-wide funding, which is available for specific types of project. RDPE can support your rural forestry project in different ways. There are direct grants and also training and advice (although you will need to find money from elsewhere, to 'match' against the RDPE support).

### Who delivers RDPE in my area?

The rural areas across the North West have been mapped and priority areas and activities have been decided. Eight of these rural areas have formed 'Local Action Groups' (or LAGs for short). Each LAG is in charge of managing RDPE for projects within its area.

### Are there other ways to access RDPE support?

Although the eight LAGs manage a large part of the RDPE fund, the Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA), deliver some area funding directly as well as some bigger project funds. In addition, The Forestry Commission and Natural England offer grants for wildlife and access in woodlands. The NWDA website gives further information: [www.nwda.co.uk/rdpe](http://www.nwda.co.uk/rdpe)

### How do I know if I can access RDPE?

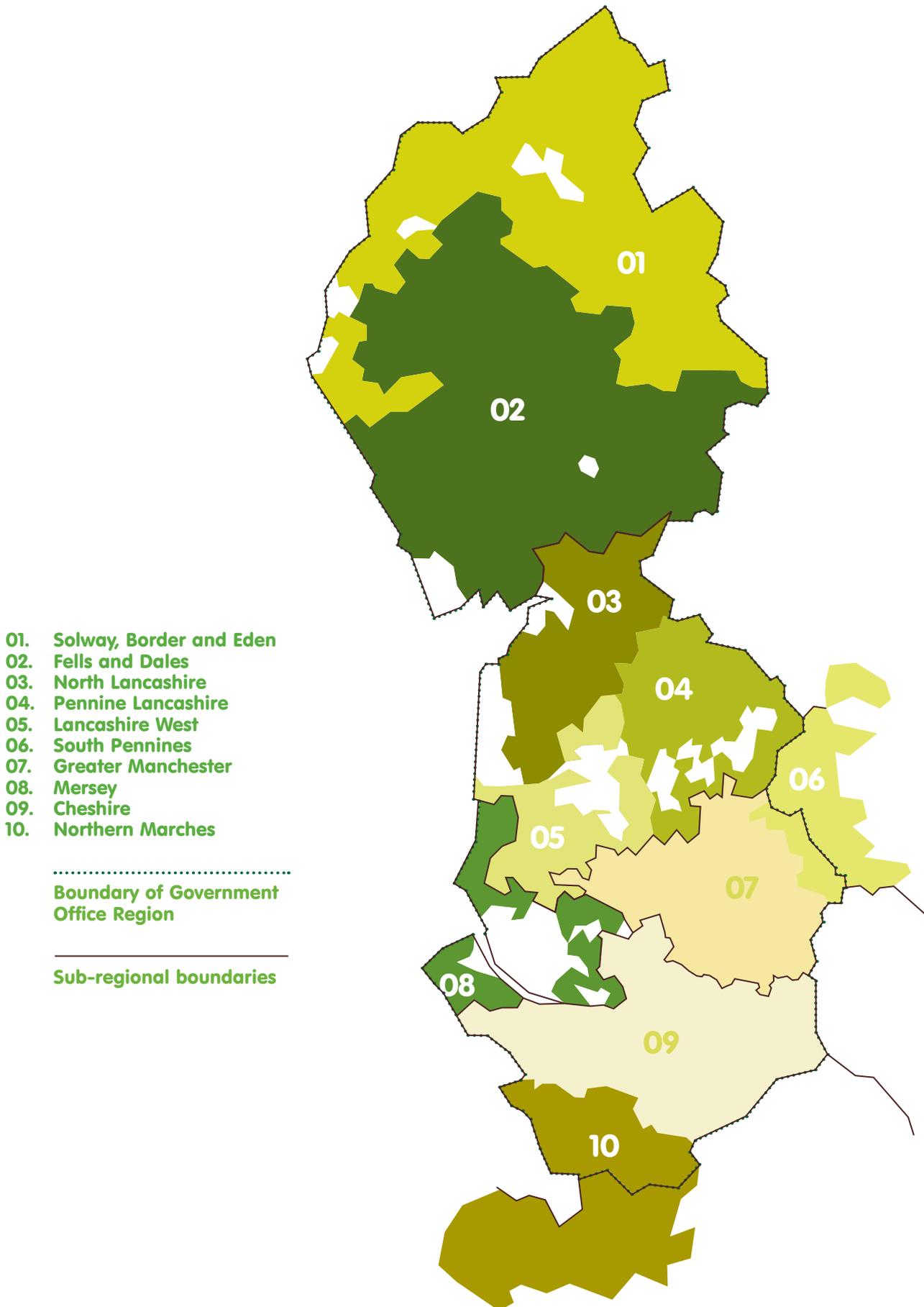
You can email or telephone the contact for your area; they will tell you if your project is within a rural area and if it is applicable for RDPE funding. They will also tell you how to access the funding, training or advice offered by RDPE.

### I have an idea, but it's not a full project yet – is there any help for this?

Business Link (the nationwide business advice and support service) can help you to develop any new ideas, which could, in the future, be funded by RDPE. You can contact the Business Link team on: 0845 0066 888  
[info@businesslinknw.co.uk](mailto:info@businesslinknw.co.uk)  
[www.businesslinknw.co.uk](http://www.businesslinknw.co.uk) or [www.businesslink.gov.uk/northwest](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/northwest)

## Rural Development Programme Areas

---



## Greater Manchester (Greater Manchester area and South Pennines LAG)

There are two ways that you can access RDPE funding for rural forestry projects in Greater Manchester. Projects within Greater Manchester can apply for support from the Greater Manchester RDPE allocation, which at the moment is being managed directly by the NWDA. Alternatively if your project is in Oldham or Rochdale and it has a community focus you can apply for funding from the South Pennines LAG as well (South Pennines LAG also extends into Yorkshire).



### What's available in the Greater Manchester and South Pennines LAG areas?

**Direct grants** – Funding is available for a range of rural forestry projects. You might have an idea to use your woodland for a new or unusual purpose (a location for extreme sports, a sculpture trail or campsite, for example). Or you may need support to develop new processes or technology to make you more sustainable and profitable. You might even have an idea for a micro enterprise but need support to make it a reality. RDPE's forestry funding can support all these kinds of projects.

**Training, advice and support** – The Greater Manchester training programme is currently being developed. In the future, it may include traditional training courses as well as alternatives like demonstration events, seminars and business clubs.

### Who do I contact to take this further?

**If you are in Greater Manchester and would like further details you can contact:**

The NWDA RDPE team: 01768 861306/861321 [rdpe@nwda.co.uk](mailto:rdpe@nwda.co.uk)

### Is your project in Oldham or Rochdale?

**If you have a community-focused project, and would like to know if it is applicable for RDPE funding from the South Pennines LAG, you can contact:**

Ruth Hair: 01422 846049 [ruth.hair@pennineprospects.co.uk](mailto:ruth.hair@pennineprospects.co.uk)

## Cheshire (Cheshire and Northern Marches LAG)

Two projects cover the Cheshire area; Cheshire (which includes most of the county) and Northern Marches LAG, which covers South West Cheshire and North Shropshire. If your project is within the Northern Marches LAG area, you can apply to either Cheshire or Northern Marches for RDPE support.

### What's available in Cheshire and Northern Marches?

**Direct grants** – Grants are available for rural projects in Cheshire that will add value to existing forestry work, possibly through the purchasing of new equipment that will transform a process, or the development of new methods of working that will make you more sustainable and profitable. RDPE in Cheshire and Northern Marches also supports the setting up of micro enterprises and co-operative working projects and it could even help you to use your woodland for non-traditional purposes like tourism, sports, education or health. However, remember that your project must have an 'economic outcome' like creating jobs, increasing turnover or boosting profitability.

**Training, advice and support** – In Cheshire and North Marches area, RDPE can provide training for those in forestry, so you could access courses, demonstration events or networking support.

### Who do I contact to take this further?

If you think your project is within the Cheshire rural area, please contact:  
Mandy Sibthorpe: 01270 616 465 [mandy.sibthorpe@reaseheath.ac.uk](mailto:mandy.sibthorpe@reaseheath.ac.uk)

If you think your project is within the Northern Marches LAG area, please contact:  
David Boyce: 01244 973297 or 07734 132405 [david.boyce@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:david.boyce@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)



## Merseyside (Mersey Rural LAG)

Merseyside's rural areas are covered by the Mersey Rural LAG. This covers the rural part of Liverpool, Sefton, Knowsley, St Helens, Halton and Wirral.

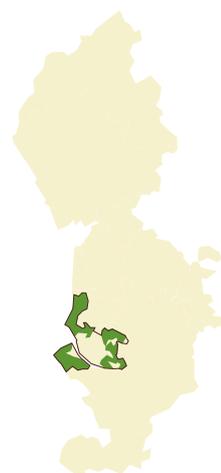
### What's available in Merseyside?

**Direct grants** – Financial support through RDPE is available for forestry projects in rural Merseyside. In particular, Mersey Rural LAG is looking to support innovative projects that use woodlands for woodfuel, like developing a woodchip supply. RDPE could also help you to set up new forestry micro enterprises, introduce new technologies to your business, develop your woodland into a tourist attraction or change the way you use your woodland.

**Advice and support** – In the Mersey Rural LAG area, RDPE provides a dedicated forestry advisory service (From May 2010) which has a specific focus on woodfuel.

### Who do I contact to take this further?

If you want to know if your project is within the Mersey Rural LAG area, please contact:  
Jonathan Jackson: 0151 443 2297 [jonathan.jackson@knowsley.gov.uk](mailto:jonathan.jackson@knowsley.gov.uk)



## Cumbria (Fells and Dales LAG and Solway, Border and Eden LAG)

RDPE support is split between two different LAGs in Cumbria; Fells and Dales, and Solway, Border and Eden.

### What's available in rural Cumbria?

**Direct grants** – Financial support is available throughout Cumbria for a whole host of rural projects relating to forestry. From schemes that diversify the use of woodland for non-traditional and tourism related activities (like sculpture trails or craft workshops) or purchasing new equipment. Logging equipment, bandsaws and firewood processors have all been bought with RDPE support. RDPE support can also be used to encourage new partnerships between organisations or setting up micro enterprises.

**Training, advice and support** – In Cumbria, RDPE will provide a specialist forestry advice service, as well as training on a range of forestry-related issues. This doesn't just mean the traditional training courses. It can also mean attending demonstration events, or being given the chance to explore best practice, which might help to improve your own business.

### Who do I contact to take this further?

If you think your project is within the Fells and Dales LAG area, please contact:

Adrian Banford: 01768 869533 [adrianbanford@fellsanddales.org.uk](mailto:adrianbanford@fellsanddales.org.uk)

If you think your project is within the Solway, Border and Eden LAG area, please contact:

Sam Bramwell: 01697 349212 [sambramwell@sbeleader.org.uk](mailto:sambramwell@sbeleader.org.uk)



## Lancashire (North Lancashire LAG, Lancashire West LAG and Pennine Lancashire LAG)

There are three different LAGs that together cover all the rural areas of the Lancashire county.

### What's available in Lancashire?

**Direct grants** – Financial support is available for rural projects in Lancashire that are looking to diversify the use of woodlands or timber. Examples of diversification could include using a woodland for educational sessions, setting up a sculpture trail or fishery or establishing a furniture business. But there are many opportunities and RDPE rewards imagination and innovation. Grants could also be used to develop new forestry products or processes, to buy new equipment, to develop forestry-related tourist attractions or to set up micro-enterprises.

**Training, advice and support** – At present, Lancashire's training offer is still being developed, but it will be available in the future.

### Who do I contact to take this further?

If you think your project is within the North Lancashire LAG area, please contact:

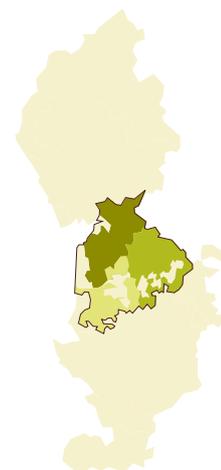
Sharon McGuinness: 01254 300 469 or 07875 185 531 [smcguinness@lancashire-ep.org.uk](mailto:smcguinness@lancashire-ep.org.uk)

If you think that your project is within Lancashire West LAG area, please contact:

Karen Kerrigan: 01254 300 481 or 07875 185 532 [kkerrigan@lancashire-ep.org.uk](mailto:kkerrigan@lancashire-ep.org.uk)

If you think your project is within Pennine Lancashire LAG area, please contact:

Rick Patterson: 01254 300 496 or 07875 185 533 [rpatterson@lancashire-ep.org.uk](mailto:rpatterson@lancashire-ep.org.uk)



## Case studies



**Danny Frost, Wigton, Cumbria**

Danny Frost runs two complementary businesses; a sawmill operation and furniture making business, which has been transformed through the provision of grants and support. Danny initially needed advice to enable him to see the potential that existed within his small operation, which runs out of a former dairy farm. Following the advice, Danny was able to access funding to purchase equipment and make his processes more efficient. This support has enabled Danny to treble his turnover in six years, employ more staff and, importantly, establish a highly efficient supply chain, from woodland right through to finished products that enables more value to be added in-house.



**Julian Graves, Derwent Charcoal and tree services, Keswick, Cumbria**

Julian Graves' charcoal and tree surgery business was given a significant boost through grant support, which allowed him to buy a second charcoal kiln, and dramatically increase his output (Julian expected to see a 20 tonne output in his first year; it turned out to be 50 tonnes). Julian's integrated business model is completely sustainable and competitive; he uses the wood from his tree surgery activity for the charcoaling process, meaning he has a green waste stream that adds hundreds of pounds of value to his business each week.



**Sue Wrennall, Kingrigg Livery, Carlisle, Cumbria**

Sue Wrennall ran a livery stables in Carlisle, but she had ambitions to transform the business and make it more profitable and appealing to her customer-base. Using grant support, Sue turned an area of ordinary woodland adjacent to the stables into a trail for riders; offering them a safe but challenging place to hack, and helping Kingrigg to stand out from competitors. Sue admits that this first step has been the catalyst for big changes within her business; using the woodland in this non-traditional way has helped her to see the potential in other areas, and the livery is continuing to go from strength to strength.

## Other ways to get support for your project ideas through RDPE

### Rural Carbon Challenge Fund

#### Do you have a micro renewables project that you'd like funding for?

RDPE has funding for micro renewables projects across the North West, including woodfuel schemes. RDPE is keen to support large-scale projects that are innovative, unusual or which have brave aspirations to change the energy and heat supply of whole communities. The RDPE Rural Carbon Challenge Fund is being managed by Envirolink and the Energy Savings Trust on behalf of the Northwest Regional Development Agency.

**If you have a big woodfuel idea, and you'd like to know if RDPE can support you, please contact:  
Lee Allman at Envirolink: 01925 813200 l.allman@envirolinknorthwest.co.uk**

### The English Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS)

#### Are you looking for support to plant or manage woodland?

The English Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS) is another RDPE fund managed by the Forestry Commission, and provides grant support to hundreds of forestry projects in the North West each year. As well as helping to support the planting of new woodland and the management of existing areas for wildlife, EWGS can provide grants to improve public access within your woodland. EWGS can be used to complement (but not match) other RDPE funding.

**For more information, please contact:  
01524 565 800 northwest.fce@forestry.gsi.gov.uk www.forestry.gov.uk/northwestengland-grants**



Above: Creation of new woodland, Kidburngill Farm in Cumbria

Supported by



The European Agricultural  
Fund for Rural Development:  
Europe investing in rural areas

Front cover image: Shank Wood Log Cabin, Cumbria