



# Seeing the Wood for the Trees

## E News—October 2005

South East England Forestry and Woodlands Partnership

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<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/southeastengland>

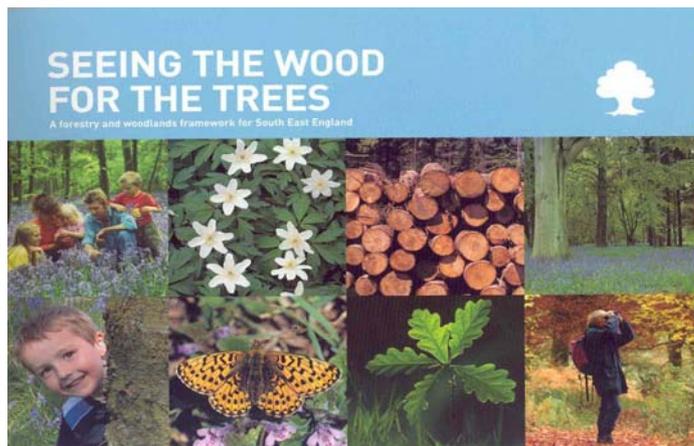
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### Introduction to the first 'Seeing the Wood for the Trees' Newsletter

Welcome to the first 'Seeing the Wood for the Trees' Newsletter.

'Seeing the Wood for the Trees' is the South East England Regional Forestry and Woodlands Framework and it shows both what forestry can do for the region, and also what the region can do for its trees. It sets priorities, agreed across a wide partnership, as to how we can work together to secure these benefits. We live and work in England's 'most wooded' region, with over 40% of England's Ancient Woodlands. It has been estimated that the forests and woodlands contribute more than £1 billion per year to the region's economy - for more details see



<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/southeastengland>, where you can also see the Framework document.

The Framework was launched nearly a year ago. As part of making the strategy happen, we have identified a role for the Framework to take an overview of the region as a whole. The region is large and in the forestry sector we often have loyalty to particular counties and landscapes, for example the Chilterns, the Weald and the Blean. However in order to work more effectively together, this regular newsletter will act as the focal point in the region where you can find out about the things we need to know to make change happen. This includes highlighting new sources of funding, pointing to consultations where we can make the voice of the sector heard and showcasing best practice which delivers the Framework.

The Framework was developed and is still overseen by South East England Forestry and Woodland Partnership. The Steering Group Partners are the Countryside Agency, English Nature, the Environment Agency, the Forestry Commission, the Forestry and Timber Association, Government Office South East, South East England Development Agency (SEEDA), South East Regional Assembly (SEERA) and the Woodland Trust.

We would welcome your comments on and contributions to this newsletter - are there things going on that you feel others should know about or others who want to receive this newsletter?

Please contact me, Jane Hull, on 01296 696543 or [jane.hull@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:jane.hull@forestry.gsi.gov.uk)

## England Woodland Grant Scheme rolled out

The England Woodland Grant scheme has started to roll out. The grants currently available are:

- Woodland Planning Grant
- Woodland Assessment Grant
- Woodland Regeneration Grant

For all the details see <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs>



Seminars on the Woodland Management Grant and Woodland Improvement Grant will be happening around the region on 8th, 9th and 10th November. For more details see the Events section. The Forestry Commission has published guidance on how applications for these grants will be managed.

See EWGS Information Note 2 is at

[http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/ewgs-info2-aug05.pdf/\\$FILE/ewgs-info2-aug05.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/ewgs-info2-aug05.pdf/$FILE/ewgs-info2-aug05.pdf)

Applications for this year's Woodland Creation Grant closed on 30th September 2005.

A pilot Harvesting, Processing and Marketing Grant is also available in Kent, East Sussex, The New Forest and the Isle of Wight. For guidance on applications see <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-6dzh93> or contact Richard Everett on 01580 211123 or [richard.everett@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:richard.everett@forestry.gsi.gov.uk)

## Keepers of Time - new policy on ancient woodland

On 29<sup>th</sup> July Forestry Commission England launched its policy on ancient woodland. This policy will benefit the South East with 40% of England's Ancient Woodlands.

It focuses on reducing threats to ancient woodlands, with gradual restoration of Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites. It shows how these actions will provide a wide range of public benefits - ecological, social and cultural. In the South East there is already much work going on to protect and enhance ancient woodlands, through the Forestry Commission/English Nature Ancient and Native Woodlands Programme, which supports owners of these woodlands through providing management plans. The action plan also notes the innovative work occurring in the Weald to provide a full inventory of ancient woodlands.

The policy can be downloaded at <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/keepersoftime#ancient>



## Woodland flora decline

A re-survey of 103 woodland sites in Great Britain has shown substantial decline in the range of woodland flora. Long term ecological change in British woodland (1971-2001), found around a third of all species had declined. This included a decline in three quarters of the ancient woodland indicators.

A number of different causes were seen to be influencing this situation:

- Woods becoming more shady due to reduced management;
- Increasing nutrient levels in soils from atmospheric pollution and fertilisers
- The effects of climate change
- Deer browsing of vegetation.



Interestingly the study plotted the 1987 storm path which showed many sites in SE England having an increase in plant diversity, in contrast to the national decline.

The Defra News release is at <http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/2005/050811b.htm> The report can be downloaded from <http://www.english-nature.org.uk/pubs/publication/PDF/653.pdf>

## Planning Policy Statement Protects Ancient Woodland



OPDM have published PPS9 - Biodiversity and Geological Conservation. This national policy statement has to be taken into account by both regional planning bodies and local authority planning departments. It includes a specific paragraph on ancient woodland and aged trees. Local planning authorities should identify any areas of ancient woodland in their areas that do not have statutory protection (e.g. as a SSSI). They should not grant planning permission for any development that would result in its loss or deterioration unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location outweigh the loss of the woodland habitat. Aged or 'veteran' trees found outside ancient woodland are also particularly valuable for biodiversity and their loss should be avoided. Planning authorities should encourage the conservation of such trees as part of development proposals. For more details see:

[http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm\\_planning/documents/page/odpm\\_plan\\_039821.pdf](http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_planning/documents/page/odpm_plan_039821.pdf)

## Task Force recommends focus on Biomass for heating

The Biomass Task Force has been considering the contribution of burning biomass to renewable energy. The Task Force has published its draft recommendations, prior to a final report (to be presented to Government in October). One key barrier they note is the focus on renewable electricity, which places no carbon reduction value on the use of biomass in heating. Their recommendations include measures to develop the supply chain, consideration of forestry material from all types of forest management, including short rotation forestry. They also consider that there is need for incentives for developing heat networks, not just individual installations. They also recommend a capital grant to help with the cost of boiler installations, rather than a Renewable Heat Obligation certificate.

The draft recommendations can be seen at:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/farm/acu/energy/biomass-taskforce/index.htm>

## Record response to South East Plan consultation

Over 64 000 responses were received by the South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA) in relation to the South East Plan. The full Assembly agreed the regional and sub-regional policies on 13<sup>th</sup> July and it was presented to Government on 29<sup>th</sup> July. The plan includes regional policies on woodland and biodiversity conservation. The woodland policies remain largely unchanged and reflect the themes of the Regional Forestry and Woodlands Framework. The biodiversity policies include targets for improvement of a wide range of important habitats, including woodland.

Details can be found at: [http://www.southeast-ra.gov.uk/southeastplan/plan/view\\_plan.html](http://www.southeast-ra.gov.uk/southeastplan/plan/view_plan.html)

## Funding Opportunities



### Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Sustainable Development Funds

AONBs currently have funding available for projects that will contribute to the conservation and enhancement of their areas. Individuals, groups and organisations can apply with up to 75% funding provided. The work must be completed by the end of this financial year. For more details contact your local AONB. Direct links to some AONB further details are below:

Chilterns Conservation Board Sustainable Development Fund:

<http://www.chilternsaonb.org/caring/sustainabledevfund.html>

South Downs Sustainable Development Fund - <http://www.vic.org.uk/pro/wnews.htm>

## GROW

This new fund is a €7.5 million Interreg IIC programme, launched in June 2005 and running to December 2007. It links 5 regions of Europe which are High Growth Areas, including South East England. It will be supporting projects in areas of Green Growth, Business Growth and Strategic Growth, which will contribute to the sustainable development of these regions. Specific themes include Sustainable Construction, Brownfield Regeneration and Resource Management. For more details see: <http://www.grow3c.com>

## Funding Opportunities...



### SITA Environmental Trust - Enriching Nature

This fund will support projects that contribute to biodiversity targets within 10 miles of registered landfill sites. It has been developed in partnership with the Regional Biodiversity Forums. It has two funding levels: Small - for projects up to £25,000 and Large - for projects up to £175,000. The next dates for applications is 20<sup>th</sup> December 2005. For more details see <http://www.sitatrust.org.uk/nature>

### Policy Consultations

#### Local Development Frameworks

Most Local Authorities have started preparing documents that will become their Local Development Framework. This framework is the replacement for their Local Plan under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004). You can find out more on the Planning Section of your local authority's website. Most woodland issues and monitoring indicators are linked to biodiversity policies.

### Recent Publications and Resources

#### New Forest 'Out and About' Guides - PROGRESS



Four new codes have been prepared for New Forest visitors to help protect the area - a general 'Out and About' guide, plus separate codes for dog walkers, horse riders and cyclists. They contain information about looking after the forest, with explanations for why actions, such as staying on tracks during the ground nesting bird season, are recommended. Cartoons illustrate the main points to help conserve the forest. The guides will be available in local outlets and are available to download online from

<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/newforest>.

#### Recent Research Information Notes include:

FRIN 65 Water Use in Trees - Tom Nisbet      FRIN 68 Shoot Diseases of Pine - Anna Brown and Grace Macaskill  
FRIN 69 Climate Change and British Woodland - Mark Broadmeadow and Duncan Ray

They can be downloaded from <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/publications> - click on What's New.

### Events

9<sup>th</sup> October 2005 - **Archaeology & Veteran Trees in the Blean Woodlands, nr Canterbury** - Small Woods Association, with Dr. Nicola Bannister (author of Woodland Archaeology in Surrey) and Ted Green MBE (President of the Ancient Tree Forum). Blean Woods are the largest in Kent covering over 3,000 hectares. The woodland is both ancient and Site of Special Scientific Interest. £10 per person. For more details contact Mary Lewis 01952 432769

20<sup>th</sup> October 2005 - **Chilterns Woodland Project** - Visit to Flowercroft Wood near Rotherfield Peppard For more details contact John Morris on 01844 355503.

**Forestry Commission EWGS Seminars** - Find out details on the Woodland Management Grant and the Woodland Improvement Grant.

8<sup>th</sup> November 2005 - Berks, Bucks and Oxon - Great Milton Village Hall

9<sup>th</sup> November 2005 - Hampshire, Surrey, Isle of Wight and West Sussex - The Millers Kitchen, Farnham

10<sup>th</sup> November 2005 - Kent and East Sussex - Bewl Water Visitors Centre

For details and an invitation please contact Heather Pettitt on 01420 23337 or [heather.pettitt@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:heather.pettitt@forestry.gsi.gov.uk)

**Focus - In future editions of this newsletter we would like to focus on a project or issue in the South East that contributes to 'Seeing the Wood for the Trees'. If you would like to be featured, contact Jane Hull - [jane.hull@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:jane.hull@forestry.gsi.gov.uk)**