



Seeing the Wood for the Trees E News - November 2007

Forestry and Woodlands Partnership - Working together for

England's most wooded region

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www.seeingthewoodforthetrees.org.uk

Contents

- Ancient Woodland inventory revision progresses
- The cultural heritage of woodlands in the South East
- Britain's biggest butterfly conservation project in the South East!
- South East timber well recognised in the Wood Awards
- Chilterns Woodland Awards
- Wood for Gold
- Funding Opportunities
- Publications and Resources
- Policy
- Events
- Focus - Wealden Ancient Tree Project

Introduction

There is a lot of positive work going on in the region for woodlands at present. Below are a number of stories that highlight work going on in ancient woodlands and recognising ancient trees in the region. On the funding front, there are a number of upcoming routes for woodland businesses to gain support - mainly through the Rural Development Programme for England with a particular focus on improving economic return from woodlands. The next few months and years will offer a great opportunity for the forest industry to develop its business and demonstrate the environmental credentials of using wood. I will be going on maternity leave from the end of November, but the RFF work will be covered by colleagues from the Forestry Commission South East Region.

Jane Hull

Ancient Woodland inventory revision progresses

The Weald and Downs Ancient Woodland Survey has recently published the revised Ancient Woodland Inventory for Tunbridge Wells Borough, supported by the local authority, the High Weald AONB, the Forestry Commission, Natural England, and the Kent and Medway Biological Records Centre. It includes woodlands less than two hectares for the first time. With the revision, the area of ancient woodland has risen from 4,719 hectares to 5,391 hectares, a gain of 672 hectares. Overall, the total ancient woodland cover in Tunbridge Wells has risen from 14.24% to 16.27%, one of the highest proportions of all local authorities in the region.

The Weald and Downs Ancient Woodland Survey has also appointed new surveyors for a two year project to revise the Ancient Woodland Inventory in Sussex and Kent. Victoria Hume, based at Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre, will be working with local authorities in West Sussex. Philip Sansum, based at the High Weald AONB, will be working with local authorities in East Sussex and Kent.

The cultural heritage of woodlands in the South East

A new book focusing on woodland heritage has been published by the Forestry Commission, Natural England, and AONB partners. The book will shortly be available on the FC South East region website. To obtain a printed copy, please contact Heather Pettitt on 01420 23337 or heather.pettitt@forestry.gsi.gov.uk.

Britain's biggest butterfly conservation project in the South East!

Many of the region's woodlands have become neglected leading to much reduced woodland butterfly numbers. Butterfly Conservation's South East Woodlands Project will be focusing on three woodland landscapes, to demonstrate how appropriate woodland management can reverse wildlife declines. The public will also be encouraged to understand the need for good woodland management through events and training. The woods are at Rother Woods near Rye in East Sussex, at Denge Woods near Canterbury in Kent, and at Tytherley Woods on the Hampshire/Wiltshire border. This project is supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Tubney Charitable trust. For further information see http://www.butterfly-conservation.org/article/9/7/biggest_butterfly_project_yet_to_halt_decades_of_decline.html Dr Dan Hoare (Project Manager) dhoare@butterfly-conservation.org or 01730 823810



Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary Photo: Forest Life Picture Library

South East timber well recognised in the Wood Awards

The 2007 Wood Awards winners have recently been announced, and the region was well represented with 9 entries in the shortlist. The category "Best use of British Timber:" was won by the Gridshell Roof over the Orangery, Chiddingstone Kent, (also shortlisted for 2 other categories). The Orangery used finger jointed laminated Sweet Chestnut beams from InWood Development, This category has the largest number of shortlisted buildings so competition was stiff. Minstead Study Centre, built for Hampshire County Council using local oak and Douglas fir, was also shortlisted. For further details see <http://www.woodawards.com> 2008 entries will be open from March to May.

Chilterns Woodland Awards

The Chilterns Woodland Awards were given out at the annual Chilterns Forum on 9th November. Woolman's Wood at Hedsor near Bourne End was the winner, owned by Mr and Mrs J Rushworth and managed by Rik Pakenham. It is an excellent example of the restoration of native woodland on an ancient woodland site formerly planted with conifers. Common Wood owned by Penn and Tylers Green Residents' Association and Walkwood and Coneywood owned by Dr and Mrs J McAnuff have received Highly Commended awards. These were both managed by John Morris of the Chilterns Woodland Project.

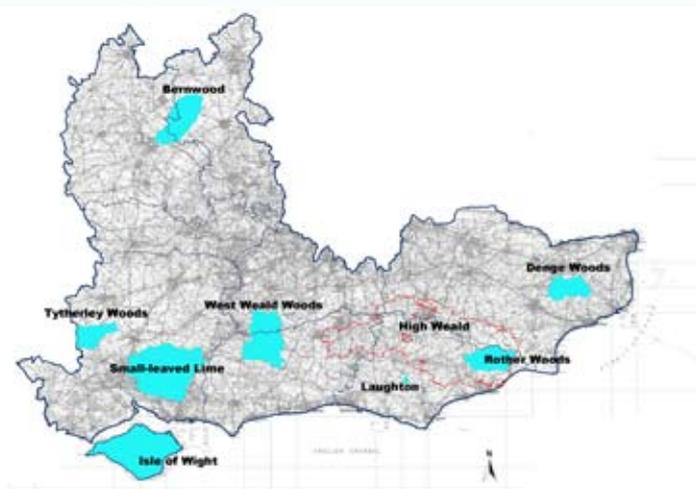
Wood for Gold

The Wood for Gold campaign continues apace, using the London Olympics to promote the use of wood and wood products. Initial awareness raising with key politicians and the Olympic authorities is now being followed by targeting involved architects and construction companies. A recent update from Charles Trevor (wood for good) can be seen at http://www.woodforgood.com/Newsletter_Oct07/Comment.htm with the campaign site at <http://www.bellendenpublicaffairs.co.uk/woodforgold>. Business opportunities emerging from the Olympics can be seen at: <http://www.london2012.com/get-involved/business-centre/index.php>

Funding Opportunities

England Woodland Grant Scheme

Woodland Improvement Grants are now available at a rate of 80% of standard costs for specific operations in targeted areas within the south east of England. These areas are the Bernwood, Tytherley Woods, a small area in South Hampshire focusing on small leaved lime, the Isle of Wight, the West Weald woods, High Weald AONB, Laughton, Rother Woods, Denge Woods. A map and further information can be found at <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/inf-d-757hev>. There is £200,000 to spend on a first come, first served basis, by the end of 2007-08 financial year. All other EWGS grants are currently open for applications apart from Woodland Creation Grant. Fund availability can be checked at <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/inf-d-73uc3p>. Closing dates for all applications are 29th February 2008.



Woodland Sector Opportunities in Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE)

The RDPE, which should open in early 2008, offers great opportunities for the woodland sector to strengthen its economic contribution to the region. The Forestry Commission are working closely with SEEDA to ensure that the sector will have good access to RDPE funding. For the first time grants are available for forestry's economic as well as environmental contributions to rural development. Priorities for funding include woodfuel and adding value to woodland products. Chris Jankiewicz has been appointed to facilitate RDPE funding on behalf of the sector, working with the Forestry Commission. He would be keen to hear of potential projects.

His contact details are chris.jankiewicz@forestry.gsi.gov.uk or telephone: 01296 696543 / 07770 598020.

LEADER

Around 80% of the region is currently covered by potential LEADER groups. They are busy preparing their Local Development Strategies - their bid to SEEDA for funding. These will be submitted in January. There are great opportunities to ensure forestry projects are supported, by going along to local LEADER meetings. For contact details for each group see: http://www.seeda.co.uk/Work_in_the_Region/Rural_Issues/Rural_Development_Programme_for_England

South East Woodland and Timber Fund

The Forestry and Woodlands Partnership are pleased to announce that SEEDA have agreed to support the South East Woodland and Timber Fund with £250,000 over the next two financial years (FY). This fund is available to support the timber supply chain in activities that are not generally eligible under RDPE. As a guide, these are activities 'beyond the forest gate'. £38,000 has been open for applications in this FY. The Forestry and Woodlands Partnership have received 18 applications, totalling over £100,000, which are now under consideration. For further information on this fund contact Chris Jankiewicz on chris.jankiewicz@forestry.gsi.gov.uk 01296 696543 or 07770 598020.

European Social Fund (ESF)

ESF, which focuses on skills and training, was launched nationally on 29th October. SEEDA is managing ESF here and has launched a tender for projects from 2007 to 2010. There is support for Enterprise Start up, for Environmental technology in the South East (specifically renewable energy and biofuels) and management and leadership. The round 1 tender closes on 30th November 2007. See

http://www.seeda.co.uk/Work_in_the_Region/European_Initiatives/European_Social_Fund

Publications and Resources

Forestry Commission Practice Notes and Information Notes

The Forestry Commission has published the following guides recently:

- Forestry Commission Practice Note 14 - Managing the Pine Weevil on Lowland Pine
- Forestry Commission Practice Guide 18 - Raising Trees and Shrubs from Seed
- FCIN85 - Evaluating biodiversity in fragmented landscapes: applications of landscape ecology tools
- FCIN86 - The Role of Forest Genetic Resources in Helping British Forests Respond to Climate Change
- FCIN88 - Ten Years of Intensive Environmental Monitoring in British Forests

For further information see - <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/HCOU-4VXJ5B>

TRADA - Frequently Asked Questions

Trada's first FAQ covers Strength Grading and Structurally Graded Timber. More will follow.

See <http://www.trada.co.uk/faq>

Wood for good Online Learning

Phase one of wood for good's learning facility has been completed. It offers free courses and is becoming recognised as a significant CPD resource for architects (including RIBA), specifiers and the trade. Modules include: Building sustainably with wood, The properties species and science of wood, Engineered wood products, Wood protection, Timber for exterior cladding, Certification, procurement and specification, Hardwood, The use of structural timber in construction and roofing.

See <http://www.woodforgood.com/index.html>

Calculating the carbon footprint of building materials

The Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Management (ECCM) has launched a software tool for architects and building materials specifiers to assess the carbon intensity of different materials. This independently proves that wood is our most sustainable building material. Users enter quantities of materials planned for use in their buildings and see the impact they make by changing the combination of different materials on the building's carbon footprint.

See <http://www.eccm.uk.com>

Forests' Role in Flood Management

Focused on Scotland, but of interest given the weather over the summer - WWF Scotland has published "Flood Planner - A Manual for the Natural Management of River Floods". This highlights the role of forests and woodland in managing flood risks, as part of using natural techniques on a whole-catchment basis. Their proposals include extensive riverbank planting and restoration of native woodland to slow the flow and stop erosion.

See http://www.mountain-environments.co.uk/lmenu/flood_planning_consultation_papers.asp

Policy

Regional Economic Strategy

The draft Implementation Plan consultation occurred over the summer. The Forestry and Woodlands Partnership and the Forestry Commission submitted responses. SEEDA have produced an overall Implementation Plan, but will continue to engage with partners to review the detailed Action Plans alongside the consultation comments by April 2008. See http://www.seeda.co.uk/res/RES_Implementation_Plan. The detailed Rural actions will be combined with the South East Rural Delivery Framework to form one Rural Action Plan for the region.

Regional Sustainability Framework

The RSF (previously the Integrated Regional Framework) sets a common vision, goals, priorities and 24 objectives to help guide sustainable development. All regional strategies and policies should follow RSF principles to ensure the actions of all organisations contribute consistently to our sustainable future. This consultation is currently open until 26th November. See http://www.southeast-ra.gov.uk/our_work/planning/sus_dev/rsf.html. The Forestry and Woodlands Partnership will be putting in a response.

South East Plan

The inspectors' report from the Examination in public was published by the Government Office for the South East on 29 August 2007. NRM 5 Woodland Policy was not covered in the Inspectors report. We hope this means it will be adopted unchallenged. The report is published for information only. See http://www.southeast-ra.gov.uk/southeastplan/plan/inspectors_report.html

Events

22nd November - TV Energy Tree Station Launch - Wexham, nr Slough. Berks/Buck's first wood fuel station is launched, with tour and speakers. For more details and to book a place contact TV Energy on 01635 817420.

24th November - Chilterns Special Trees and Woods Project - Main speaker Tony Kirkham, Head of Kew Arboretum. The event will celebrate the work of the project to date. Over 170 people are already coming! To book a place contact Liz Manley on 01844 355 525 or lmanley@chilternsaonb.org

29th November - Habitat Regulations Workshop - Alice Holt, nr Farnham. **NOW FULLY BOOKED** Changes have been made to Habitats Regulations. The Forestry Commission has been developing means of implementing these changes and embedding them within the forestry sector. This workshop will advise on the legislation and how to ensure management and operations are compliant in areas where protected species are present. To book your place please contact heather.pettitt@forestry.gsi.gov.uk or 01420 23337. The latest guidance on this and details of other regional seminars can be found at <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-protectedspecies>

Winter 2007 - Woodnet are running a series of woodland training events, covering topics such as Forestry First Aid, Developing a Woodland Management Plan and Continuous Cover Forestry - See <http://www.woodnet.org.uk/Training%20Schedule.htm>

Focus - Wealden Ancient Tree Project

The Wealden Ancient Tree Project is setting out to map and photograph fascinating ancient trees in Wealden District. As the years go by they provide the perfect homes for thousands of species of plants, animals and fungi, including many rare and threatened species. Many ancient trees are vulnerable and unrecognised, with a lack of awareness as to their importance for wildlife and our heritage. The project is looking for enthusiastic volunteers, both with or without existing skills to help record these trees. Training will be provided at ancient tree sites, and then recorders can work individually or in groups during specific meetings. Owners of ancient trees will also be able to get advice on management of these trees.

For further information on the project and to download Recording Forms please visit: <http://sxbrc.org.uk/projects/ancient-tree-project/>. If you are interested in being a volunteer recorder, attending a training day, have information about an ancient tree or would like a survey carried out on your land contact Ali Wright, alisonwright@sussexwt.org.uk or 01273 492630. The Wealden Ancient Tree Project started in September 2007, with support from Heritage Lottery Awards for all, Wealden District Council Community Grants Programme and Sussex Wildlife Trust, Sussex Biodiversity Partnership.



Photo: Broadstone Warren Beech - A Wright