

**WEST MIDLANDS FORESTRY FRAMEWORK**  
ANNUAL REPORT 2009-2010

**SUMMARY**

Growing our Future, the West Midlands Forestry Framework published the updated rolling three-year Delivery Plan guiding actions for 2008-2011 in June 2009. This set out detailed activities spread across the eleven themes, each with targets and success indicators identified for monitoring performance at twelve monthly intervals.

This, the sixth monitoring exercise since 2004, has again been very encouraging with an excellent level of responses in geographical and sectoral terms. Lead partners responding include:

- Advantage West Midlands (AWM)
- English Heritage
- Environment Agency
- Forestry Commission
- Government Office West Midlands
- Lantra
- Local Authorities – Herefordshire Council, Shropshire Council, Stoke City Council, Staffordshire Council, Warwick District Council
- National Forest Company
- Natural England
- West Midlands Biodiversity Partnership
- West Midlands Regional Assembly/West Midlands Leaders Board
- West Midlands Woodland & Forestry Forum & Task Groups
- Woodland Trust

We particularly welcome the responses from the many others including: Abbey Forestry, AONB Cannock Chase, AONB Malvern Hills, AONB Shropshire Hills, AONB Peak Park, BASC, Bede Howell, Burwarton Estates, Butterfly Conservation, CLA, ConFor, Deer Initiative, Forestry Commission Public Forest Estate, Forest of Mercia, Forest Schools, Green Wood Centre, Grow with Wyre, Heartwoods, Hereford College of Technology, Herefordshire Sustain, LBAPS [Birmingham & Black Country; Herefordshire; Staffordshire; Worcestershire], Lockhart Garratt, National Trust, North Shropshire Coppice Creation Project, Prees Heath Forest Nurseries, RSPB, Severn Gorge Countryside Trust, Shropshire Council Hedge Fund, Shropshire's Veteran Trees, Small Woods Association, Woodland Initiatives Network, Woodworks West Midlands, Wye Wood Project.

This year, we include the findings from the Regional Forestry Economic Baseline for the West Midlands 2009. Commissioned by AWM and designed to update the 2003 baseline and support the refresh of the Regional Forestry Framework, this detailed the timber and non-timber components of the woodland and forestry economy in the West Midlands. The study carried out by Ekosgen, in conjunction with Lockhart Garratt, identified the resource, surveying businesses, micro-businesses and the self-employed along the length of the wood supply chain and quantified supporting activities, details of business size, location, annual turnover, future prospects and the main challenges to success.

Now over five years into the implementation phase of the West Midlands Regional Forestry Framework, the significant buy-in and engagement of those who seek to realise the benefits that trees, woodland and forestry can bring to the region continues apace. It is through their individual activities, projects and influence that any progress has been charted and future plans incorporated into both the refresh of the Forestry Framework and the three-year rolling Delivery Plan 2010-2013.

The tree, woodland and forest industries in the West Midlands have a unique and powerful contribution to make to everyone's economic, social and environmental well being. They do so best from a platform of commercial viability and environmental sustainability. Economic forces, regulation and bureaucracy however continue to hold dangers particularly for the private woodland sector.

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Headline findings in respect of the 11 themes and the overarching Delivering the Framework assessment are described below. Of course, this Report refers to the period prior to the Refresh of the Framework and prior to the parliamentary elections. Inevitably, this means that there is some referral to government policy existing 2009-2010 which may or may not be carried forward into the coming year. Once again, because of the space constraints in this document some acronyms have been used – please refer to the website [www.growingourfuture.org](http://www.growingourfuture.org) for the glossary of terms if need be.

- KEY:**
- ☺ Substantial Progress
  - ☹ Some Progress
  - ☹ Little or no progress

**PERIOD** **APRIL 2008 – March 2009**

<b>Woodland Coverage:</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>Regional Headlines</b> <b>Case Studies: <a href="http://www.growingourfuture.org">www.growingourfuture.org</a></b>
	☺☹☹	
WC 1 To increase significantly regional woodland cover linked to the Regional Spatial Strategy	☹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EWGS £445k (478k) approved woodland creation a total of 331 Ha;</li> <li>• ESS woodland options: 384 agreements woodland &amp; wood-pasture creation options;</li> <li>• ESS contributing to health/survival of hedgerow or infield trees: 25 (125) agreements</li> <li>• NFC 11 Ha (25Ha) in Staffordshire part of the National Forest</li> <li>• 9,700 (15,500) trees planted under Woodland Trust’s Trees for All Project; 12Ha planted under MOREwoods project</li> </ul>
WC 2 To collaborate in developing more precise targeting for woodland creation	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woodland Opportunities Map (WOM) used to define future woodland creation opportunities</li> <li>• Increased RDPE funding for creation</li> <li>• Joint meetings between partners/funders to ensure consistency of approach</li> <li>• Ongoing encouragement to consider woodlands as strategic opportunities for health, recreation, social inclusion, economics and biodiversity</li> </ul>
WC 3 To develop the landscape characterisation process, mapping the character of woodlands	☹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embedding and increasing skill base for the delivery of landscape and geodiversity – building on landscape characterisation work</li> <li>• Woodland Trust/Ancient Tree Forum ongoing</li> <li>• Ongoing county-based historic landscape characterisation (HLC) projects in Worcestershire and Warwickshire; extension to other areas</li> <li>• Continuation of Forest Design Planning for Public Forest Estate of 12,750Ha made up of 80 discreet blocks</li> </ul>

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<p>WC 4 To raise the profile of trees and woodlands in relation to the historic environment</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extension of HLC projects in other areas analysing the sensitivity and capacity of the landscape to accommodate development</li> <li>• Wyre Forest Project ongoing: landscape restoration scheme and LiDAR (Light, Detection &amp; Ranging) project activity</li> <li>• Restoration activity, heritage trails, open days, field meetings, training, walks and talks across the region</li> <li>• Publication of WM Historic Environment Strategy, Putting the Historic Environment to Work</li> </ul>
<p>WC 5 To actively promote the contribution that woodland and forestry makes to the culture of those living in the West Midlands</p>		<p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People engaged in health walks and coppicing activities as part of Wye Wood Projects</li> <li>• Public Forest Estate promoting forestry and local communities via education teams based at Cannock and Wyre</li> <li>• Press releases, Public talks, Wood Fairs, Visits and Walks across the region</li> <li>• Initiatives, project and community engagement, e.g. Grow with Wyre, Trees of Knowledge, Coppice Creation, Wye Wood and many more</li> </ul>
<p>WC 6 To promote woodland and forestry in support of regeneration and development</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AWM funding the £2m Natural Assets Programme: Wyre Forest, Joy's Wood, Moseley Bog &amp; Sandwell Valley</li> <li>• Landscapes for Living and WOM informing the development of RSS Phase Three Options</li> <li>• Contributing to Green Infrastructure Strategies relating to Growth Points; particular attention to East Staffordshire and Burton National Exemplar Project</li> <li>• Working with local authority partners to embed trees and woodlands into Local Development Frameworks and meet LAA targets</li> <li>• Continued FC support and development of National Forest, Forest Of Mercia, Wyre Project and other partnership projects</li> </ul>

**The Woodland and Forestry Industry:**





**Progress**

**Regional Headlines**

**Case Studies:** [www.growingourfuture.org](http://www.growingourfuture.org)

<p>WFI 1 To improve the efficiency and viability of the woodland and forestry sector</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Felling licences issued for over 102,000m<sup>3</sup> (106,000) of timber on clear fell sites and a further 110,000m<sup>3</sup> (100,000) for thinning</li> <li>• 16,740Ha (12,500) in EWGS management grants receiving annual payments on 2009-2010</li> <li>• WFI Task Group combining Wood Energy Group to form Heartwoods Steering Group &amp; improve engagement with the private sector</li> <li>• Regional Forestry Economic Baseline for West Midlands commissioned and completed to inform economic interventions, support prioritisation and refresh the WMRFF</li> </ul>
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<p>WFI 1 To improve the efficiency and viability of the woodland and forestry sector (cont)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Forest Estate promoting predictable and stable certified timber supplies (80,000m<sup>3</sup> per annum) making reasonable provision for local and specialist markets</li> <li>• Partnership funding for sub-regional initiatives e.g. Marches Deer Project, Wyre Forest, Heartwoods, National Forest Woodland Economy, Shropshire Hills AW pilot</li> <li>• Work with AWM to secure RDPE funding for Heartwoods, Woodland Enterprise Grant &amp; Woodworks West Midlands</li> <li>• RDPE and other investment in specialist machinery helping to better utilise timber</li> </ul>
<p>WFI 2 To achieve exemplary management of assets through UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management Plans based on the UKWAS Standard produced by AONBs, Woodland Trust, Wildlife Trusts, National Trust, ConFor members and other woodland owners across the region</li> <li>• Forestry Commission Public Forest Estate successfully maintained by in house monitoring and independent auditing</li> </ul>
<p>WFI 3 To develop new opportunities</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RDPE potential for funding a wide range of forestry projects linked to wood fuel processing, supply chain development and skills</li> <li>• Two coppice, four forestry and one horse logging apprenticeships within West Midlands</li> <li>• Wyre Wood Fuel Champions working as a supply chain cluster/info hub with businesses networking more effectively</li> <li>• Heartwoods: Woodfuel processing and supply chain developments; advice on skills and training needs; and grants availability</li> </ul>
<p>WFI 4 To develop sustainable woodland and forestry markets, products and enterprises</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited RDPE funding for investment for new initiatives and existing businesses available yet; 5 applications for Woodland Enterprise Grant</li> <li>• Heartwoods Wood Fuel Project to facilitating options for increased markets for wood products, particularly wood fuel</li> <li>• Developing internal and local markets; new projects under development</li> <li>• FE production forecast updated to ensure smooth supply and even volumes to market</li> </ul>
<p>WFI 5 To encourage effective use and interaction with advice and incentive mechanisms, and adaptation to working within a changing policy, regulation and incentive network</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EWGS updates nationally and regionally; agents seminars in 2009 and Spring 2010</li> <li>• Ongoing but patchy alignment and business planning between FC and Natural England partners</li> <li>• Business Link's service linkages with Heartwoods</li> <li>• Woodland Initiatives Network provide a co-ordinated networking and advisory service</li> <li>• Sub regional Green Infrastructure working groups with NE, local authorities, EA and NGOs</li> <li>• Heartwoods Prospectus detailing grant funding</li> </ul>

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		opportunities
WFI 6 To secure the integration of agri-environment, woodland and forestry and rural delivery mechanisms	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular meetings of RDPE Delivery Partners to ensure integration and maximise opportunities</li> <li>• Level of integration through woodland, environmental stewardship and other grant schemes – still more could be done</li> </ul>
WFI 7 To raise the levels of skills and knowledge to enable exemplary woodland management	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lantra, colleges and training providers promoting skills training and careers within the trees and timber sector</li> <li>• ConFor/RFS/CLA/NFU/FWAG field and technical meetings</li> <li>• Specialist training – Woodworks West Midlands</li> <li>• Pilot Apprenticeships in the West Midlands</li> <li>•</li> </ul>

**Wood Energy:**

**Progress**

**Regional Headlines**

**Case Studies:** [www.growingourfuture.org](http://www.growingourfuture.org)

WE 1 To improve awareness, understanding and support for wood energy	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major and increasing interest by local authorities, woodland owners and processors in the potential for wood fuel and role of wood energy</li> <li>• Wood Energy Task Group merged into Heartwoods Steering Group</li> <li>• Workshops, training, demonstrations and open days throughout the region; media coverage</li> <li>• Suppliers list regularly updated</li> <li>• Heartwoods activity and increasing role: Start November 2009, 5 awareness raising events and wood fuel champions</li> <li>• Two regional demo projects for biomass/wood energy [Eccleshall Biomass and Anaerobic Digestion, Lulow]</li> </ul>
WE 2 To develop the wood energy industry	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wood energy industry emerging. Support for firewood and woodchip business through grant facilitation and delivery; Heartwoods supporting 34 wood energy businesses since November</li> <li>• Successful supply of wood chip fuel to boilers throughout the region; expanding network of fuel depots (7 to date) covering the whole region</li> <li>• Continually increasing numbers of sources of wood for processing on a commercial (not subsidised basis) and number of Woodfuel feasibility studies and strategies growing across the region.</li> <li>• £67,000 Wyre Woodland WIG to improve access (258Ha) for extracting wood fuel</li> </ul>
WE 3 To help new initiatives and share knowledge	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three rural wood fuel clusters/wood energy initiatives: Wyre, Warwickshire and Staffordshire</li> <li>• RE:think Energy Biomass Capacity Project stimulating confidence in market place – quality woodchip biomass fuels can be produced locally</li> <li>• Published information and further case studies</li> </ul>

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**Recycling:**

**Progress**

**Regional Headlines**

ReC 1 To gather and share information



- Wood Fuel suppliers list include recycling companies

ReC 2 To develop opportunities to promote waste minimisation and recycling



- Increasing sub-regional activity – Local Authorities, Forestry Commission, Health Trusts, carbon-neutral communities
- Engagement with WRAP and AWM promoting funding opportunities for recycling businesses including wood and sawmill waste

ReC 3 To develop recycling activity



- Increasing sub-regional activity with more recycling centres separating timber/ green waste
- Increasing number of stakeholders leading by example within own offices and work places

**Recreation and Tourism:**

**Progress**

**Regional Headlines**

**Case Studies:** [www.growingourfuture.org](http://www.growingourfuture.org)

RT 1 To agree and secure a commitment to work towards a standard and priorities for local community access



- Natural England: accessible greenspace and routes mapping with regional highways authorities
- Evaluation of “Outdoors for All” programme
- Woodland Trust submitted 19 responses to Local Development Framework Consultations

RT 2 Embed the Framework in regional cultural and tourism strategies



- Strengthening relationship between WMWFF and tourism and cultural stakeholders; including RSS Phase 3 Revision

RT 3 To develop tourism opportunities



- Sub-regional exemplars noted, including:
- New cycle trails at Cannock extending stay and visitor spend
  - Concerts increase local spend as do Go ape courses at Cannock and Wyre
  - RDPE supporting enterprises develop tourism opportunities through Destination Management Partnerships
  - Guided and themed walks, attractions and publications

RT 4 To take up opportunities for long term access



- Forest of Mercia undertaken 22,880m of access improvements and created 700m new footpaths
- £66k (54k) WIG Access Grant committed; 100 Ha (80) private sector woodlands
- Medium to longer distance/circular routes identified in ROWIPs, Parish Plans and AONB Management Plans

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**Health and Wellbeing:**

**Progress**

**Regional Headlines**

**Case Studies:** [www.growingourfuture.org](http://www.growingourfuture.org)

HW 1 To maximise the use of woodland and forestry to deliver a healthier region (both physically and spiritually)



- Continued delivery of Route to Health, Walking for Health, improved cycling opportunities for all abilities, outreach activity including free training, lady only events, etc.
- Sub regional initiatives increasing:
- Forest of Mercia's Common Ground Project helping those with mental health issues; Twiglets with over 230 people from families in deprived areas
  - 30 health professionals engaged in signposting individuals to Wye Wood
  - Grow with Wyre outreach work with doctor's surgeries
  - Route to Health sculpture trail completed 8<sup>th</sup> year
  - Telford Access to Nature Partnership
  - National Forest's Get Active project involved 8,000 this year

HW 2 To develop further links between wooded green space and health



- Living Well: £6.8million Big Lottery Funding 33 projects in urban and rural West Midlands, including Green Gyms
- Health and Wellbeing – one of 6 themes of the Black Country Living Landscapes Project
- Use of Public Benefit Recording System (PBRs) to demonstrate health benefits of trees and woodland
- Expansion of the Walk for Health Scheme and 2012 challenge routes; revised National Forest walks pack launched
- Evidence of increasing linkages with GPs, PCTs, Community Mental Health Trusts, Schools and community groups
- Wye Wood evaluation completed and published

**Education, Learning and Skills:**

**Progress**

**Regional Headlines**

ELS 1 To increase public knowledge of woodland and forestry by education and raising awareness



- FC Forest Schools Challenge Grant: £47k to 12 new sites; £500 one-off payments to existing forest schools across the region
- FC: Numerous events on PFE; hosting visits, evening talks and public open events
- 40,000 school children involved in environmental education activity across National Forest
- Training of education professionals in Forest School Level 3 Leadership
- Many examples of volunteer programmes increasing public knowledge; seasonal learning events, surveying and introducing to the benefits of trees and woodland

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<p>ELS 1 To increase public knowledge of woodland and forestry by education and raising awareness (cont)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many examples of educational visits, guided walks, open days, improved interpretation, involvement of schools and communities detailed including many from the private sector</li> <li>• Woodland Trust's "Tree for All" continues: 1,408 (874) hedge and copse planting packs sent out to schools and youth groups in West Midlands</li> </ul>
<p>ELS 2 To maintain the woodland and forestry workforce and encourage new entrants</p>	<p align="center">☺</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woodworks West Midlands: 15 courses to 67 people: 185 training days</li> <li>• Year1 14-19 Land-based Diploma using WM developed prospectus</li> <li>• Encouraging and supporting new entrants in the forest industry-Week in the Woods</li> <li>• Year 1 of Apprenticeship Pilot for forestry</li> <li>• Year 3 Coppice Apprenticeship</li> <li>• Year 1 Horse Logging Apprenticeship</li> <li>• RDPE Lantra Landskills &amp; Woodworks WM live</li> <li>• Over 160 students studied forestry as part of Higher Education courses at Harper Adams</li> <li>• A number of examples of education and volunteering initiatives leading to employment or further training</li> <li>• Supporting England Forest Industry Partnership</li> </ul>

**Fostering Social Inclusion:**

**Progress**

**Regional Headlines**

**Case Studies:** [www.growingourfuture.org](http://www.growingourfuture.org)

<p>FSI 1 To set a regional target for percentage of tree/woodland cover as a quality of life indicator</p>	<p align="center">☺</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpretation of Read Report on combating climate change: 1,500 Ha creation per year in West Midlands</li> <li>• Input into the development of the RSS Phase III Revision Policy Options: Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity, Landscape, Forestry and Renewable Energy</li> <li>• Embedding the benefits of trees, woods and forestry into Local Development Frameworks and Local Area Agreements</li> </ul>
<p>FSI 2 To promote examples and inspire people about the benefits for trees and woodlands and secure community involvement in establishing trees for local communities</p>	<p align="center">☺</p>	<p>Very proactive Social Forestry Task Group with busy work programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing best practice guidelines for owners, practitioners and beneficiaries</li> <li>• Database of pan-regional activities published and case studies prepared</li> </ul> <p>Regional and sub-regional exemplars include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FC support for Country Parks for All enabling BME communities to access wooded landscapes</li> <li>• Work of Woodland Initiatives, Forest of Mercia, National Forest, Coombes Valley &amp; Churnet RSPB, Community Tree Schemes, National Trust,</li> <li>• Guided walks and "teach by example" for local groups</li> </ul> <p align="center">Community involvement in seed gathering, surveying and tree planting events</p>

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FSI 3 To identify and/or provide some funding incentives	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FC Partnership funding for SWA Social Forestry Programme</li> <li>• AONB's Sustainable Development Fund to support local woodland initiatives</li> <li>• SITA funding for woodland/environmental work</li> <li>• BIG Lottery Funding; Heritage Lottery Fund for Wyre Forest Project</li> <li>• AWM support for Care Farming West Midlands and</li> <li>• AWM Natural Assets Programme; RDPE and REG grants</li> <li>• First stage development of Social Forestry Woodland Improvement Grant Pilot</li> </ul>
FSI 4 Develop a programme of specific initiatives for hard to reach groups	☺	<p>Several examples detailed in the responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Forest school and education projects for excluded groups</li> <li>○ 15% of adults and children involved in National Forest-related activities are from socially excluded/minority groups</li> <li>○ Woodland work with older people, NEETS, probation service/young offenders/mother and toddler groups</li> </ul>
FSI 5 Link private and other woodland owners to develop access initiatives for excluded groups	☺	<p>Sub-regional examples highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Work with West Mercia Probation Service based in privately owned Shropshire woodland</li> <li>○ Links with Duchy of Cornwall over use of Aconbury Wood for apprenticeships and coppicing projects</li> <li>○ Forest School sites in private woodland</li> <li>○ Forest of Mercia – use of local private woodlands for special needs group</li> </ul>

**Enhancing Biodiversity:**

**Progress**

**Regional Headlines**

**Case Studies:** [www.growingourfuture.org](http://www.growingourfuture.org)

EB 1 Meet national targets for SSSIs and the priority habitats and species of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forum's Trees, Woods and Forestry Biodiversity Task Group – 4 meetings and active work programme</li> <li>• SSSI Target sits at 92%</li> <li>• EWGS WIG SSSI: 380Ha, £124k committed</li> <li>• EWGS WMG Bio: 1674Ha, £41k committed</li> <li>• EWGS WIG Bio: 1167Ha, £137k committed</li> </ul> <p>Ongoing planned activity restoring the region's SSSIs to favourable condition, For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Butterfly Conservation ongoing work for 9 UK BAP Priority species</li> <li>• Marches Deer Management Programme bringing 1000Ha into recovering condition</li> <li>• RSPB management for moths and fungus</li> <li>• Environment Agency work on River Clun and Hurcott &amp; Podmore SSSI</li> </ul>
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<p>EB 1 Meet national targets for SSSIs and the priority habitats and species of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (Cont)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woodland Trust MORE woods project contributing to UKBAP native woodland expansion target</li> <li>• Native woodland restoration in SSSI woodlands in Woolhope Dome</li> <li>• Local Authorities progressing work for NI 197</li> <li>• All 13 SSSIs within FC PFE have achieved favourable/unfavourable – recovering status</li> </ul>
<p>EB 2 Protect and enhance ancient and/or semi-natural woodland, including through the creation of new native woodland in targeted locations to create networks and increase semi-natural woodland cover</p>	<p align="center">☺</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuing woodland programme: FE restoration equivalent to 100 tonnes of conifer timber removed from ancient woodland sites every working day of the year</li> <li>• Ancient, veteran &amp; notable trees recording ongoing</li> <li>• ESS Woodland Maintenance &amp; restoration 679 (1776)Ha; 128 agreements</li> <li>• Shropshire Hills AONB Ancient Woodland Pilot</li> <li>• Woodland Trusts' WoodWatch campaign continues: currently 15 (8) under threats, 8 previously saved, 5 lost and 2 partially lost; further 539 trees added to Ancient Tree Hunt inventory</li> <li>• Several examples of native woodland creation, maintenance and restoration</li> </ul>
<p>EB 3 To develop a programme for the improvement and restoration of plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS)</p>	<p align="center">☺</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shropshire Hills AONB AW Pilot underway</li> <li>• Increased take up of EWGS Woodland Grants linked to PAWS restoration – intervention rates increased</li> <li>• FE Forest Design Plan for 2500 Ha PAWS; thinnings from 500 Ha per year</li> <li>• Increased number of scoping activities and woodland management plans for identified ancient woodlands</li> <li>• Ancient woodland restoration work continuing on a number of sites throughout the West Midlands</li> </ul>
<p>EB 4 To target action through landscape-scale improvements</p>	<p align="center">☺</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landscape scale approach advocated via Woodland Opportunity Mapping and Landscapes for Living</li> <li>• Butterfly Conservation: Midlands Fritillary Project, further woodland habitat restoration</li> <li>• Landscape scale deer management exemplars include: Wyre Forest, The Doward, Woolhope Dome, Needwood and Mortimer Forest</li> <li>• FC PFE forest design planning</li> <li>• NFC: 204 Ha added towards landscape-scale connectivity – woodland cover raised to 18.5%</li> <li>• SGCT: landscape-scale approach to 265Ha holding within World Heritage Site</li> <li>• Grow with Wyre: restoration of habitats on landscape scale</li> <li>• Forest of Dennis – Creation of new native woodland</li> </ul>

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<p>EB 5 To increase contributions and commitment to wildlife gain</p>	<p align="center">☺</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in the resource to make improvements to SSSIs – increasing the area for native species and open space in all Forestry Commission Forest Design Plans</li> <li>• EWGS Bird WIG: 61 Ha, £52k committed</li> <li>• West Midlands Biodiversity Pledge aimed at local authorities gaining further support and buy-in</li> <li>• National Forest created/brought into management 59Ha parkland, grassland, wetland habitats</li> <li>• RSPB improving woodland understorey and structure for target bird species</li> </ul>
<p>EB 6 To increase public awareness and participation</p>	<p align="center">☺</p>	<p>Events programmes and training days throughout the region:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Volunteer days of work, interpretation, talks and meetings</li> <li>○ Outreach work on NNRs and other projects involving children and adults</li> <li>○ Ancient Tree Project involving individuals and community groups, wardens and volunteers</li> <li>○ Numerous walks, talks, events and newsletters</li> <li>○ Grow with Wyre – Landscape partnership scheme encouraging local participation</li> <li>○ FC PFE continue to raise awareness via education teams based at Cannock and Wyre Forest</li> <li>○ Increasing number of websites and interactive projects</li> </ul>
<p>EB 7 To raise the levels of skills and knowledge to enable exemplary biodiversity management</p>	<p align="center">☺</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Task Group input on Wood Pasture and Parkland data collection – results awaited</li> <li>• Case studies on best practice developed by Task Group</li> <li>• 2000 conservation volunteer work days and training events throughout National Forest</li> <li>• Training for butterfly, moth and reptile identification and surveying</li> <li>• Training for woodland monitoring and evaluation</li> </ul>
<p>EB 8 To improve information to support ecological sustainability and biodiversity enhancement</p>	<p align="center">☺</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National guidance/literature available through Natural England and Forestry Commission websites</li> <li>• Development of landscape character assessment websites which contain detailed ecological profiles increasing access to ecological information in the public domain</li> <li>• Updated Regional Action Plans, local EAPs, habitat surveys and risk assessments</li> <li>• Regional Biodiversity Data project continuing; a baseline of BAP priority habitats for the region</li> <li>• EPS advice, training and presentations at agents' seminars</li> </ul>

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**Natural, Cultural and Environmental Benefits:**

**Progress**

**Regional Headlines**

<p>NCEB 1 Include woodland and forestry issues in the revision of Regional Spatial Strategy</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement in the review process for the RSS revision, raising the awareness of the benefits of trees and woodland in terms of the Quality of the Environment and Culture Sport and Tourism</li> </ul>
<p>NCEB 2 Clarify and develop the role and effectiveness of trees in reducing flood risk and flood management</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EA/FC and Defra Agenda Group meetings acknowledging woodlands can have a positive effect on floodwater control – reducing surface run-off, increasing flow attenuation and provide opportunities</li> <li>Woodland Trust, EA &amp; FC Workshop on trees and flooding</li> </ul>
<p>NCEB 3 Actively promote the significance of woodland and forestry to landscape, historic, biodiversity and other environmental designations</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defra Agenda Group identifying priorities in support of national targets for the natural environment</li> <li>Ongoing liaison between EH, county archaeologists and FC on historic environment input to Woodland Opportunities Mapping</li> <li>Woodland and landscape management actively promoted through ESS and EWGS encouraging integrated approach to land management</li> </ul>
<p>NCEB 4 To gain a clearer understanding of the impacts of climate change in relation to trees and woodlands</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active partnership within regional Climate Change Office engaged in adaptation and mitigation work including the role of trees and woodland</li> <li>NFC initiated a tree provenance and climate change initiative</li> </ul>
<p>NCEB 5 Clarify the contribution of the woodland and forestry sector to air quality both nationally and locally</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data capture patchy across the region and across the public/private/other sectors</li> <li>Launch of FC Climate Change Pack</li> </ul>
<p>NCEB 6 Maintain soil quality and prevent soil erosion, reduce flood risk, protect water quality and conserve water resources through appropriate woodland creation and management</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EA considering matches between Water Framework Directive and Biodiversity Priority Areas</li> <li>EA delivered WM Soils Group Project: farmer-managed soils group in each county- workshops, visit and specialist seminars</li> <li>Soils integral to Campaign for Farmed Environment: target area Warwickshire</li> <li>Low levels of creation and sustainable management of wet woodlands reported</li> <li>Use of continuous cover forestry in the steeply wooded Ironbridge Gorge helps prevent soil erosion and landslip</li> <li>New EWGS creation/restoration grants scoped and agreed using ancient woodland and creation priority areas</li> </ul>

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**Supporting the regeneration of the West Midlands:**

SR 1 Develop a regional greenspace strategy (urban & rural) with a strategic approach to forestry for regeneration integrated with woodland opportunities

Progress	Regional Headlines
☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NE and FC working closely to develop a regional strategic approach to green infrastructure work</li> <li>• Defra Agenda Group working on strategic environmental infrastructure project</li> <li>• Growing number of local authority green infrastructure plans: particularly for Growth Points and Impact Investment locations</li> <li>• FC led GI debate feeding into WMRO Conference</li> <li>• National exemplar supported: Burton/East Staffordshire alongside National Forest and East Staffordshire Borough Council</li> </ul>

SR 2 Encouraging woodland as an afteruse on mineral and waste management sites

☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FC partnership support for with Green Infrastructure Steering Group led by Black Country Consortium including Public Benefit Recording System liaison in respect of brownfield land strategy</li> <li>• Input into LDFs and responding to planning and aftercare proposals particularly for minerals and waste management sites</li> <li>• National Forest woodland creation of 3Ha earmarked</li> </ul>
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SR 3 Join-up activity and share good practice, identify gaps in knowledge, agree priorities to target public resources

☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defra Agenda Group considering initiatives that will add value in terms of joined-up delivery</li> <li>• Sub-regional instances of better networking and opportunities for raising awareness</li> </ul>
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**Delivering the West Midlands Regional Forestry Framework:**

DS 1 To adopt a broad-base partnership approach attracting maximum support from all the stakeholders for the Framework

Progress	Regional Headlines
☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thriving Woodland &amp; Forestry Forum and Task Groups: Woodland Opportunities Mapping, Heartwoods, Trees Woods and Forests Biodiversity and Social Forestry.</li> </ul>

DS 2 To align the Framework and co-ordinate plans that will inform and assist, reinforce and support the RSS, WMES and the RSDF

☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forestry Framework refreshed and website updated</li> <li>• Input to RSS Phase Three Revision Policy Statements and Recommendations</li> <li>• Regional Forestry Economic Baseline to inform economic interventions and support prioritisation within the West Midlands Economic Strategy</li> </ul>
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DS 3 To performance manage the Framework and the Delivery Plans effectively to ensure that regional added value is achieved

☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Monitoring Report 2008-2009 published</li> <li>• Updated Delivery Plan 2008-2011 published</li> <li>• Quarterly Progress Reports throughout 2009-2010 period</li> <li>• 4 Steering Group Meetings</li> <li>• 2 Woodland &amp; Forestry Forum Meetings</li> </ul>
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DS 4 To ensure that funding streams and incentives are properly co-ordinated and integrated to deliver the agreed regional RFF priorities

☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with Natural England and other partners to ensure ESS and EWGS are effectively delivered and explore how best to assist delivery of ETWF and England Woodfuel Strategy</li> <li>• Forestry Commission, Natural England, West Midlands Regional Assembly/West Midlands Leaders Board and Government Office West Midlands continue to support the WMRFF and its delivery</li> </ul>
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DS 5 To ensure that future decision making is informed by best practice from both within and outwith the region

☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• England Forest Industry Partnership activity and support</li> <li>• WMRFF refresh – Best practice examples collated with full geographical and thematic spread</li> <li>• EWGS Seminar for regional representatives</li> </ul>
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Sara Roberts  
 Delivery Plan Manager  
 West Midlands Regional Forestry Framework  
 June 2010