

WEST MIDLANDS REGIONAL FORESTRY FRAMEWORK ANNUAL REPORT 2007-2008

SUMMARY

Growing our Future, the West Midlands Regional Forestry Framework launched the rolling three year Delivery Plan guiding actions for 2007-2010 at the end of June 2007. 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 fourth monitoring exercise since 2004, has been very encouraging with again an excellent level of responses in geographical and sectoral terms. Lead partners responding include:

- Advantage West Midlands
- Department of Health West Midlands
- English Heritage
- Environment Agency
- Forestry Commission
- Government Office West Midlands
- Lantra
- Local Authorities – Shropshire, Staffordshire, Worcestershire, and Telford & Wrekin
- National Forest Company
- Natural England
- Physical Activity Network West Midlands
- West Midlands Biodiversity Partnership
- West Midlands Regional Assembly
- West Midlands Woodland & Forestry Forum & Task Groups
- Woodland Trust

We particularly welcome the responses from the many others including: Abbey Forestry, AONB Wye Valley, AONB Malvern Hills, AONB Shropshire Hills, BASC, Black Country Living Landscapes, Burwaton Estates, Butterfly Conservation, ConFor, David Lovelace, Deer Initiative, Encraft, Forestry Commission West Midlands Forest District, Forester Services, Forest of Mercia, Forest Schools, Green Wood Centre, Heartwoods, Herefordshire Sustain, Midlands Wood Fuel Ltd, RSPB, Severn Gorge Countryside Trust, Small Woods Association, Sport England, Staffordshire Renewables Project, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, Woodland Initiatives Network, Worcestershire Wildlife Trust, Wye Wood Project.

For the first time we also include the findings from the West Midlands Trees, Woods & Forestry Business Health Check 2008. Surveying 72 businesses, micro-businesses and the self-employed along the length of the wood supply chain and supporting activities, details of business size, location, annual turnover, future prospects and the main challenges to success were collected and collated. This valuable source of baseline evidence has fed into the larger West Midlands Regional Report being compiled and will be available in the autumn.

Just over three years into the implementation phase of the West Midlands Regional Forestry Framework, the significant buy-in and engagement of stakeholder individuals and organisations who seek to realise the benefits that trees, woodland and forestry can bring to the region continues. It is through their individual activities, projects and influence that any progress has been charted and future plans incorporated into the three-year rolling Delivery Plan 2008-2011.

Woodland growers and managers are delighted that there has been a marked increase in prices for quality timber and that demand for energy wood has been a significant factor in driving up the demand and prices for small roundwood. However input costs are rising rapidly, largely driven by high oil costs and we hope this will not dampen the enthusiasm for the Regional Forestry Framework and ambitions remaining for what it can and will deliver. Headline findings in respect of the 11 themes and the overarching Delivering the Framework assessment are described overleaf.

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

PERIOD

APRIL 2007 – March 2008

Woodland Coverage:	Progress ☺☹☹	Regional Headlines
WC 1 To increase significantly regional woodland cover linked to the Regional Spatial Strategy	☹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EWGS £125k (320k) approved woodland creation • ESS woodland options promoted; 8 (42) agreements containing woodland creation options; 6.4 (30)Ha • ESS contributing to health/survival of hedgerow or infield trees: 15 (55) agreements • NFC woodland gained through development planting, minerals restoration and landscaping: 4.3Ha (119Ha across total forest area) • Formal responses incorporating woodland creation and green infrastructure into work on Growth Points, RSS Phases II, WMES and Delivery Framework. RSS Phase III Topic Group
WC 2 To collaborate in developing more precise targeting for woodland creation	☹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woodland Opportunities Map Version 2 comprising 6 maps [Woodland Creation, Ancient Woodlands Restoration, Landscape, Access, Biodiversity & Cultural Heritage] launched • Regional Grants prospectus produced June 2007 • Representation on the West Midlands Biodiversity Partnership's Landscapes for Living Group, is helping to ensure maximum synergy between WOM and their Landscapes for Living mapping processes • NFC developed forest-wide landscape connectivity system (GIS based)
WC 3 To develop the landscape characterisation process, mapping the character of woodlands	☹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work proceeding on the development of "Landscapes for Living" with a 50-year vision; aiming to co-ordinate and summarise all the associated work on biodiversity that is going on, promoting the concept at regional and local • Woodland Trust/Ancient Tree Forum launched Ancient Tree Hunt: 652 ancient & veteran trees recorded to date in West Midlands
WC 4 To raise the profile of trees and woodlands in relation to the historic environment	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing county-based historic landscape (HLC) characterisation projects in Worcestershire and Warwickshire – once completed will provide full regional coverage of HLC in shire counties • English Heritage input on environmental stewardship agreements, FC consultations and Scheduled Monument Agreements • Wyre Forest Project, supported by HLF, ongoing landscape restoration scheme and LiDAR (Light, Detection & Ranging) project activity • Restoration activity, heritage trails, field meetings, walks and talks across the region
WC 4 To raise the profile of		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of WM Heritage Training Group to

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trees and woodlands in relation to the historic environment <i>(continued)</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • address imbalance in traditional craft skills • Establishment of WM Rural Heritage Group
WC 5 To actively promote the contribution that woodland and forestry makes to the culture of those living in the West Midlands	☺	<p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People engaged in health walks and coppicing activities as part of Wye Wood Projects • Forest Enterprise promoting forestry and local communities: Deer evenings at Ludlow; Nightjar & Snake walks at Cannock • Public talks, Wood Fairs, Visits and Walks e.g. 497,000 visiting Queenswood Country Park & Herefordshire Woodland Project on butterfly conservation
WC 6 To promote woodland and forestry in support of regeneration and development	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributing to Green Infrastructure Strategies relating to Growth Points; particular attention to East Staffordshire and Burton Exemplar Project • Working with local authority partners to embed trees and woodlands into Section 106 agreements and Local Development Frameworks • Continued FC support and development of National Forest, Forest Of Mercia, New Leaf and Wyre Project

The Woodland and Forestry Industry:

Progress

Regional Headlines

WFI 1 To improve the efficiency and viability of the woodland and forestry sector	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WFI Task Group formed to improve engagement with the private sector; 3 meetings • Business Health Check Survey completed • Management & growth of Heartwoods website and on-line directory • England Forest Industries Partnership Study completed; West Midlands Report developed • Partnership funding for sub-regional initiatives e.g. Marches Deer Project, Regional Wood Energy Programme, Heartwoods • Formal responses made to WMES Delivery Framework, England's Trees, Woods and Forests Strategy and Delivery Plan, RDPE Regional Implementation Plan consultations (RIP)
WFI 2 To achieve exemplary management of assets through UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS)	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • Heartwoods setting up Chain of Custody Certification for small wood-using businesses • Forestry Commission Woodlands successfully audited by FSC • Habitats Directive Seminar, Autumn 2007
WFI 3 To develop new		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RDPE RIP & Action Plan development led by

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opportunities	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AWM, FC and Natural England • ETWF Delivery Plan development • England Woodfuel Strategy Delivery Plan development
WFI 4 To develop sustainable woodland and forestry markets, products and enterprises	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited FC EWGS funding for investment for new initiatives and existing businesses • Exploring potential for new mill near Stafford • Wood Energy Task Group facilitating options for increased markets for wood products, particularly wood fuel • Improving the viability and connectivity of the wild venison supply chain in the Marches • FE production forecast updated to ensure smooth supply and even volumes to market
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	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing alignment and business planning between FC and Natural England partners • Business Link's new Gateway and Brokerage service launched; linkages with Heartwoods • Woodland Initiatives Network provide a co-ordinated networking and advisory service • Natural England's advice and incentives for tree and woodland owners/managers deployed through county Land Management Teams – single contact point (nominated officer) for all business.
WFI 6 To secure the integration of agri-environment, woodland and forestry and rural delivery mechanisms	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition of forestry and woodland in the RDPE RIP and Action Plans • Level of integration through woodland, environmental stewardship and other grant schemes – reduced uptake: cause for concern
WFI 7 To raise the levels of skills and knowledge to enable exemplary woodland management	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lantra promoting skills training and careers within the trees and timber sector through new websites and the Land-based Sector Skills Agreement (for Trees & Timber) • LSC land-based sector skills assessment to address imbalances across the sector • ConFor/RFS/NFU field and technical meetings • Specialist training, e.g. Veteran Tree Master Classes, Deer Management, Using Wood To Tackle Climate Change, Woodworks VTS, Continuous Cover Forestry, Arboricultural Techniques, etc.

Wood Energy:

Progress

Regional Headlines

WE 1 To improve awareness, understanding and support for wood energy	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major and increasing interest by woodland owners and processors in the wood fuel market • Wood Energy Task Group providing updates on regional events, best practice, networking opportunities and business opportunities
WE 1 To improve awareness,		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops, demonstrations and open days

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<p>understanding and support for wood energy (<i>continued</i>)</p>		<p>throughout the region; media coverage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-energise Wyre Project under development; Wyre Woodfuel Pathfinder Phase 1
<p>WE 2 To develop the wood energy industry</p>	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exponential growth in the number of wood heating installations (fastest growing alternative energy provision in the West Midlands) • Successful supply of wood chip fuel to boilers throughout the region; expanding network of fuel depots covering the whole region • Continually increasing numbers of sources of wood for processing on a commercial (not subsidised basis) and number of Woodfuel feasibility studies growing across the region. • Commissioning of Eccleshall 2.5MW biomass power station • Worcester CC bringing forward proposals for 2.5MW Power Station at Tenbury Wells
<p>WE 3 To help new initiatives and share knowledge</p>	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warwickshire Biomass Support Group & Rural Hub Supply Group under development • BIG funding secured by Midlands Woodfuel Ltd and continuing investment in processing and delivery equipment • Published information and further case studies • Wood Energy Task Group examining issues and impacts of new England Wood Fuel Strategy

Recycling:

Progress

Regional Headlines

<p>ReC 1 To gather and share information</p>	☹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wood Recycling Task Group stood down
<p>ReC 2 To develop opportunities to promote waste minimisation and recycling</p>	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing sub-regional activity – Local Authorities, Forestry Commission, Health Trusts, carbon-neutral communities • FC Greenerways Project started: database of energy costs, timer switches introduced • Heartwoods encouraging wood-using businesses to utilise bi-products to supply on-site heat
<p>ReC 3 To develop recycling activity</p>	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing sub-regional activity with more recycling centres separating timber and green waste • Increased volume of waste wood recycled; WM businesses encouraged to segregate waste and recycling rates of wood products • Increasing number of partners and stakeholders leading by example within own offices and work places

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Recreation and Tourism:

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

☺

- Woodland Opportunities Mapping process – Version 2 launched including access map
- Formal input to Local Development Frameworks, Rights of Way Improvement Plan Consultations and regional land use consultations

RT 2 Embed the Framework in regional cultural and tourism strategies

☺

- Strengthening relationship between WMWFF and tourism and cultural stakeholders.
- Promotion of woodlands as a tourist destination, as detailed in WM Visitor Economy Strategy; revised and published March 2008

RT 3 To develop tourism opportunities

☺

- Sub-regional exemplars noted, including:
- Herefordshire Woodlands Project & BBC Local Radio Springwatch event
 - Green Wood Centre opened to public April 07 as a woodland interpretation centre, attracting 5000.
 - Cycling initiatives continue to draw visitors at Cannock and other Marches FC venues
 - National Forest and Beyond campaign
 - Blue Remembered Hills 38mile bridleway opens

RT 4 To take up opportunities for long term access

☺

- All FC freehold land dedicated under CRoW Act for right of access in perpetuity; all new woodlands in National Forest registered on purchase
- £23k (£2.4k) WIG Access Grant committed; private sector unable/unwilling to carry out improvements at substantial cost with little gain
- Medium to longer distance/circular routes identified in draft ROWIPs and Parish Plans

Health and Wellbeing:

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

☺

- Estimated 4 million visitors to FC Woodlands in the region – the vast majority involve some form of physical activity and mental stimulation/relaxation
 - Involvement in development and consultation of the Regional Health & Well-Being Strategy and the monitoring and evaluating physical activity interventions
- Sub regional initiatives increasing
- Wye Wood the Wider Wood being run as a national rural pilot with evaluation
 - Route to Health sculpture trail completed third year of new sculptures
 - New cycling trails constructed on Cannock Chase
 - Telford Green Gym GP referral scheme

HW 2 To develop further links

- Living Well: £6.8million Big Lottery Funding 33

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between wooded green space and health

☺	<p>projects in urban and rural West Midlands, including Green Gyms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Wellbeing – one of 6 themes of the Black Country Living Landscapes Project • Provision of free pedometers to encourage local people to get healthy using the natural environment on the doorstep in Forest of Mercia • Herefordshire Environmental Ambition Group promoting role of woodlands in delivering health benefits • Evidence of increasing linkages with GPs, PCTs, Community Mental Health Trusts, Schools and community groups • Series of national Case Studies led or supported by Forestry Commission prepared – 4 West Midlands examples
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Education, Learning and Skills:

Progress

Regional Headlines

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

☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FC Forest Schools Challenge Grant Launch: 27 successful bids obtaining £90k across the region • FC: 50 Press releases resulting in newspaper, TV and Radio take up; 30 evening talks • Delivery of programmes on environmental education in the National Forest to 40,000 schoolchildren • 10,000 visitors to RSPB Coombes/Churnet Valley with interpretation on woodland management • Many examples of educational visits, involvement of schools and communities detailed including many from the private sector • Woodland Trust's "Tree for All" continues: 503 hedge and copse planting packs sent out to schools and youth groups in West Midlands
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ELS 2 To maintain the woodland and forestry workforce and encourage new entrants

☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional VTS programme; 123 people trained; 841 training days • Green Wood Centre Apprenticeship developed to support new entrants in the coppice industry • Apprenticeship to support new entrants in the forestry industry under development. Drivers include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills shortage in the industry Woodfuel Strategy-additional 2,000,000t ETWF & Delivery Plan Getting private sector buy-in • Developing new vocational diploma for 14-19 age range in environment and land-based sector
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Fostering Social Inclusion:

FSI 1 To set a regional target for percentage of tree/woodland cover as a quality of life indicator

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

FSI 3 To identify and/or provide some funding incentives

FSI 4 Develop a programme of specific initiatives for hard to reach groups

FSI 5 Link private and other woodland owners to develop access initiatives for excluded groups

Progress

Regional Headlines

☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of Environment monitoring indicators for Regional Spatial Strategy reviewed and refreshed • Responses to RSS Phase II Consultation, the development of the Phase III Revision • Response to England Trees, Woods and Forest Strategy and England Woodfuel Strategy Delivery Plan development • Responses to Local Development Frameworks and Local Area Agreements
☺	<p>Regional and sub-regional exemplars include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FC support for Country Parks for All enabling BME communities to access wooded landscapes • Work of Woodland Initiatives, New Leaf, Forest of Mercia, Coombes Valley & Churnet RSPB, Community Tree Schemes, etc. • Guided walks for local groups • Community involvement in seed gathering and tree planting
☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FC Partnership funding for Wye Wood the Wider Wood, Country Parks for All, Forest of Mercia, GWC Marches Coppice Project • AONB's Sustainable Development Fund to support local woodland initiatives • SITA funding for woodland/environmental work • BIG Lottery Funding; Heritage Lottery Fund for Wyre Forest Project • National Grid funding for veteran tree and hedgerow management Wye Valley AONB
☺	<p>Several examples detailed in the responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Forest school for excluded groups ○ Supplying free roundwood to young offenders for wood turning and furniture making as part of rehabilitation process ○ 15% of adults and children (24,000) involved in National Forest-related activities are from socially excluded/minority groups ○ Woodland work with older people, probation service/young offenders/mother and toddler groups ○ Severn Gorge Countryside Trust working closely with PCT and Telford Green Gym
☺	<p>Sub-regional examples highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Work with West Mercia Probation Service based in privately owned Shropshire woodland ○ Links with Duchy of Cornwall over use of Aconbury Wood for coppicing projects ○ Forest School pilot at the Catton Estate ○ Forest of Mercia – use of local private woodlands for special needs group

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Enhancing Biodiversity:	Progress	Regional Headlines
EB 1 Meet national targets for SSSIs and the priority habitats and species of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan	☺	<p>Establishment of the Trees, Woods and Forestry Biodiversity Task Group – 3 meetings and action plan developed</p> <p>Ongoing planned activity restoring the region’s SSSIs to favourable condition, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marches Deer Project bringing 1000Ha into recovering condition • AONBs mapping of BAP priority habitats • SITA funding secured for new pasture woodland in Staffordshire and re-establishing and managing of SSSI woodlands in Herefordshire • Progress achieved achieving national targets for a number of Lepidoptera species, snakes, dormice and bats • Native woodland restoration in SSSI woodlands in Woolhope Dome BEA
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	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FE restoration equivalent to 100 tonnes of conifer timber removed from ancient woodland sites every working day of the year • Involvement with the development of Landscapes for Living Mapping process • Woodland Trusts’ “Woods under Threat” initiative continues: 2 new cases in West Midlands • ESS Woodland Maintenance & restoration 155 (194)Ha; Woodland fencing 97 (216) agreements • EWGS WMG/WRG/WIG SSSI and Biodiversity: 478Ha (441 Ha) • Joint Wye Valley/Woodland Trust event for “Woodlands of the Lower Wye”
EB 3 To develop a programme for the improvement and restoration of plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS)	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased take up of EWGS Woodland Regeneration Grants linked to PAWS restoration – budget for WRG increased • FE Forest Design Plan for 2500 Ha; Thinnings from 500 Ha per year • Increased number of woodland management plans for identified ancient woodlands
EB 4 To target action through landscape-scale improvements	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 BEA pilots continuing: Cannock Chase to Sutton Park (on hold) and Woolhope Dome • Biodiversity sensitivity maps included in Woodland Opportunity Mapping Version 2 and Landscapes for Living Project • Countdown Funded Project, conserving moths and butterflies at a landscape scale in the Midlands • Landscape scale deer management exemplars include: Wyre Forest, The Doward, Woolhope Dome, Needwood and Mortimer Forest
EB 5 To increase contributions		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in the resource to make improvements

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and commitment to wildlife gain	☺	<p>to SSSIs – increasing the area for native species and open space in all Forestry Commission Forest Design Plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitats Directive Seminar Autumn 2007 • New Lepidoptera and coleoptera surveys underway in Herefordshire and Shropshire • Launch of the West Midlands Biodiversity Pledge aimed at local authorities
EB 6 To increase public awareness and participation	☺	<p>Events programmes and training days throughout the region:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ RSPB volunteer days of work, interpretation, talks and meetings ○ Worcestershire Ancient Tree Project involving individuals and community groups volunteers ○ Sustainable Development Grant supported coppice apprenticeship: Malvern Hills AONB ○ Numerous walks, talks, events and newsletters
EB 7 To raise the levels of skills and knowledge to enable exemplary biodiversity management	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task Group Workshop on Wood Pasture and Parkland • Training of contractors in woodland management and hedge-laying skills • 2000 conservation volunteer work days and training events throughout National Forest • Training for butterfly, moth and reptile surveying
EB 8 To improve information to support ecological sustainability and biodiversity enhancement	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National guidance/literature available through Natural England and Forestry Commission websites • Development of landscape character assessment websites which contain detailed ecological profiles increasing access to ecological information in the public domain • Launch of National Conservation Strategy for Lepidoptera – May 2007 at Wyre • Habitat surveys: ancient woodlands, riparian sites, fresh-water pearl mussels

Natural, Cultural and Environmental Benefits:

Progress

Regional Headlines

NCEB 1 Include woodland and forestry issues in the revision of Regional Cultural Strategy	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural environmental economy work highlighting sustainable management of the environment; increasing investment in wooded areas promoting heritage, leisure, recreation, tourism and cultural assets
NCEB 2 Clarify and develop the role and effectiveness of trees in reducing flood risk and flood management	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • River Trent Catchment Flood Management Plan in place acknowledging woodlands can have a positive effect on floodwater control – reducing surface run-off, increasing flow attenuation and provide opportunities • River Teme Catchment Management Project ongoing; River Severn Catchment Flood Management Plan under development
NCEB 3 Actively promote the		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assisting with RSS Phase III development and

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<p>significance of woodland and forestry to landscape, historic, biodiversity and other environmental designations</p>	☺	<p>consultation on WMES Delivery Framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape, Biodiversity, Access and Cultural Heritage themes further developed as part of Woodland Opportunities Mapping Version 2 and through Landscapes for Living Project • Woodland and landscape management actively promoted through ESS and EWGS • National Forest launch “Exemplar of Sustainable Development” – June 2007
<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"> • WFI Task Group developed a Climate Change Guide for woodland owners and managers – May 2007 • Woodland Trust publication “Adapt or Die” – climate change and woodland
<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"> • Data capture patchy across the region and across the public/private/other sectors • Air pollution monitoring site set up with Forestry Commission
<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"> • Water Framework Directive: FC representation on both Severn and Humber River Basin Liaison Panels • Catchment Sensitive Farming Initiative: Advice and delivery in the catchments of the Rivers Lugg and Teme, Shropshire Meres and Mosses • Low levels of creation and sustainable management of wet woodlands reported • Use of continuous cover forestry in the steeply wooded Ironbridge Gorge helps prevent soil erosion and landslip
<p>Supporting the regeneration of the West Midlands:</p>	Progress	Regional Headlines
<p>SR 1 Develop a regional greenspace strategy (urban & rural) with a strategic approach to forestry for regeneration integrated with woodland opportunities</p>	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Infrastructure Planning Task Group stood down; awaiting lead from Natural England • Active promotion of the Green Infrastructure Prospectus with local authorities and Growth Points. • Regional evidence base reviewed: March 2008 • Response to Local Delivery Frameworks and land use consultations
<p>SR 2 Encouraging woodland as an afteruse on mineral and waste management sites</p>	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site Opportunities Phase 2 completed and Phase 3 scoping finalised. Funding package for Public Benefit Recording System being developed and now focussed on Black Country Green Infrastructure-related work • Responding to planning and aftercare proposals particularly for minerals and waste management sites

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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"> • Promoting RegenWM awards amongst Woodland Initiatives: National Forest used as Case Study • Sub-regional instances of better networking and opportunities for raising awareness
Delivering the West Midlands Regional Forestry Framework:	Progress	Regional Headlines
DS 1 To adopt a broad-base partnership approach attracting maximum support from all the stakeholders for the Framework	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thriving and pro-active Woodland & Forestry Forum and Task Groups: Woodland Opportunities Mapping, Woodland & Forest Industries, Wood Energy, Workforce Development, and Trees Woods and Forests Biodiversity.
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"> • High level monitoring indicators for RSS reviewed and refreshed • Consultation responses for WM Economic Strategy & Delivery Framework, Spatial Strategy Phase II Preferred Option; England Trees Woods and Forests Strategy & Delivery Plan; WM Regional Health & Wellbeing Strategy
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"> • Annual Monitoring Report 2006-2007 published • Delivery Plan 2007-2010 published • Quarterly Progress Reports throughout 2007-2008 period • 4 Steering Group Meetings • 2 Woodland & Forestry Forum Meetings
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"> • Working with Natural England partners to ensure ESS and EWGS are effectively delivered • Forestry Commission, Natural England, West Midlands Regional Assembly and Government Office West Midlands continue to support the WMRFF and its delivery
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"> • RFF Co-ordinators Meetings in Bristol and Manchester sharing information and good practice • Health & Wellbeing – Best practice examples collated by Forestry Commission with full geographical and thematic spread • Habitats Directive Seminar at Worcester for both regional and national representatives

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 July 2008