

GROWING OUR FUTURE

WEST MIDLANDS FORESTRY FRAMEWORK



BRIEFING - WEST MIDLANDS WOODLAND & FORESTRY FORUM

DECEMBER 2010: ISSUE 12

WOODLAND & FORESTRY FORUM

Worcestershire Wildlife Trust was the venue for the November Forum meeting. There was a full agenda with presentations on the likely implications of the Spending Review on trees woods and forestry, the Woodland Carbon Code, successor arrangements for the West Midlands Woodland & Forestry Forum and Framework, the National Tree Planting Programme, and the launch of the Social Forestry Good Practice Guide. Twenty eight members were in attendance. Papers and full presentations can be obtained from:

Julia.hall@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

WHAT THE SPENDING REVIEW MEANS FOR TREES WOODS AND FORESTRY

- Cuts to the Forestry Commission's budget in England over four years of 30% plus (including the 5% already planned for this year)
- Defra Arms Length Body Review announces FC to be retained but substantially reformed (also Natural England and Environment Agency)
- Public Bodies Reform Bill enables Government to bring in changes to FC structure in due course
- The Public Forest Estate in England is also expected to change - a consultation on options for future ownership of the Public Forest Estate early next year
- Asset sales look set to continue
- FC EWGS grants programme likely to be maintained at current level (and possibly some increases) to 2013/14
- Natural Environment White Paper may help to shape forestry policy
- FC priorities could include :- Protection of the Resource (including biosecurity and improved climate change adaptation); Sustainable Forest Management; Expansion of woodland area; Support for enterprise, economic activity and employment in the forestry sector; Empowering and Enabling
- Trees and woodland do appear to be a key part of the Government's environmental agenda and the forestry industry is clearly regarded as important

THE BIG TREE PLANT

The National Tree Planting Campaign has been launched to increase tree planting in towns and cities throughout England. Ministers have set a target of 1 million additional trees by 2015. Defra is leading the organisation of the

campaign, supported by the FC and a range of national partner organisations. Grants totalling £1 million each year for four years will be delivered by the FC and administered centrally. Local organisations and groups, with support from Local Authorities and others, can apply for funding for planting in locations such as parks, schools, NHS premises, streets and gardens. Applications which focus on areas of deprivation and relatively treeless built up areas where the local community will clearly benefit will receive priority.

Local Groups who wished to engage with this campaign are encouraged to contact the National Tree Planting Campaign Project Team: www.direct.gov.uk/thebigtreeplant and Forum members who wish to become involved perhaps by raising awareness or facilitating local groups are also welcomed.

SOCIAL FORESTRY GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE

Developed by the West Midlands Woodland & Forestry Forum's Social Forestry Task Group the Guide sets out the policy framework, considers the development of an activity programme from the aspect of the woodland owner or project manager and describes how an agency might start to connect with a local programme, including a full list of social forestry projects in the West Midlands. For more details: <http://www.greenwoodcentre.org.uk/Latest.htm>



Launch of the Social Forestry Good Practice Guide, with (from left to right), Judy Walker, Bill Heslegrave and Judith Webb.

FORUM & FRAMEWORK SURVEY

Our Woodland and Forestry Forum, together with the Framework and Delivery Plans has been acclaimed as a leading example across England. The recent survey of Forum and Task Group members confirmed this highlighting the value and strong wish to continue the good work.

From analysing the responses received, the strength of the Forum has been the range of participants and the inclusivity; networking and sharing of information and intelligence; raising the profile and importance of trees, wood and forestry with the opportunity to influence both policy and practice. We have had a number of useful suggestions on how we could do things better and the Steering Group are now busy looking at them and hope to report early in the new year.

The full survey results are available from
s.roberts@wmcouncils.gov.uk

WOODLAND CARBON CODE

The potential for woodlands to soak up CO₂ from the atmosphere whilst providing a host of other benefits for society and biodiversity is becoming increasingly recognised. But before investing in such projects people want to know that schemes will actually deliver the carbon savings they claim.

The Woodland Carbon Code will provide that assurance – encouraging a consistent approach and offering clarity and transparency to customers about the carbon savings that their contributions may realistically achieve. Up until April 2011 the Code is being piloted across the UK after which it will be rolled out. Want to know more? www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode

BIRMINGHAM TREES FOR LIFE

Birmingham Trees for Life is a project devoted to promoting awareness and understanding throughout the City of the value and importance of trees. BTFL is a partnership between Birmingham Civic Society and Birmingham City Council and have access to land and resources to plant and maintain trees and woodland in Birmingham's parks and open spaces.

They have successfully involved businesses, schoolchildren, local communities and run a tree sponsorship programme. It is anticipated that they will play a leading role in delivering for the Big Tree Plant in and around Birmingham. For further information, www.btfl.org.uk

WOODWORKS III - £200,000 FOR TRAINING

Funds of up to 80% are available to support training for raising skills levels and engaging new entrants in the forestry industry, upskilling the workforce and contributing to sustaining jobs. They are aimed at those already working in the industry, contractors, woodland owners/managers and farmers with woodland wanting to extend their skills to maintain economic activity.

For further information contact Cindy Joule,
Tel: 01939 262154 or email l.joule@wnsc.ac.uk

WORCESTERSHIRE WOODLAND GUIDELINES

Giving guidance on biodiversity and landscape aspects of tree planting in Worcestershire, and can be accessed at: <http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/environment-and-planning/woodland-guidelines.aspx>

RECENT FC PUBLICATIONS

Climate change: impacts and adaptation in England's woodlands <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/newsrele.nsf/WebPRByCountryLang/0DDE0B9892E3E466802577C2003C4F54>

The Case for Trees: a FC publication aimed at people involved in urban planning and development. <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-87YEK2>

EWGS UPDATE: WEST MIDLANDS REGION DECEMBER 2010

The Prospectus 2010 information sets out the full grant provisions and application periods for Claim Years 2011/12 and beyond. Up to date information on the remaining funds available can be found at: <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/forestry.nsf/byunIQUE/infd-7f4dzj>

GRANT TYPE	2011-2012	2012-2013
Woodland Assessment	OPEN	OPEN
Woodland Planning	OPEN	OPEN
Woodland Improvement (Bio, Bird, Access, SSSI and NI197)	OPEN	OPEN
Woodland Management	OPEN until 28.02.2011	OPEN FROM 28.02.2011
Woodland Regeneration	OPEN	OPEN
Woodland Creation	OPEN	OPEN

The 2010/11 Claim Year has been fully allocated within England, so any new applications are being directed to 11/12 and beyond. For more information please contact your local FC Woodland Officer or bob.evans@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

NATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL STANDARDS

Sector Skills Council, Lantra is embarking on another round of National Occupational Standards reviews, starting in January. Four separate areas will be looked at: forestry, arboriculture, greenwood trades and social forestry. Members were encouraged to keep an eye on <http://www.lantra.co.uk/Standards-and-Qualifications/NOS/Trees-and-Timber-NOS.aspx>

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 11 JANUARY 2011:** Tress Woods & Forestry Biodiversity Task Group Meeting (Worcester)
- 28 JANUARY 2011:** Forestry Commission West Midlands Agent Seminar
- 29 JUNE 2011:** Woodland & Forestry Forum Meeting
- 9 SEPTEMBER 2011:** South West Woodland Show, Longleat

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE FORESTRY FRAMEWORK, WOODLAND & FORESTRY FORUM AND THE TASK GROUPS CONTACT:

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WE WISH YOU A VERY
HAPPY CHRISTMAS
AND A PROSPEROUS
NEW YEAR