

West Midlands Wood-fuel Update – September 2009

Regional Grants seminar

- A regional grants seminar was held at Hawford YFC on 3 September – this update includes a summary of the information presented

Heartwoods (www.heartwoods.co.uk)

- The WM Woodfuel Supply Chain RDPE project contract has been issued and recruitment of new project staff (Manager, Project officer, administrator) is underway – closing date 24/9 – www.smallwoods.org.uk
- The project will:
 1. Offer advice to woodland owners, managers and businesses on producing and using woodfuel
 2. Produce Woodland Investment Plans to support woodland management and business investment in processing
 3. Commission technical feasibility studies for installing woodfuel boilers
 4. Support applications for capital grants
- Heartwoods are looking to recruit more Woodfuel Champions across the region
- Stewart Scull, Heartwoods Development Officer is co-ordinating queries in the meantime and can be contacted at:

Stewart Scull
Heartwoods Development Officer
Green Wood Centre
Station Road
Coalbrookdale
Telford
TF8 7DR

Tel: 01952 432769
Email:
stewartscull@smallwoods.org.uk

RDPE – Rural Enterprise Grant

- Upto 40% grant available for rural businesses includes installing woodfuel boilers and woodfuel storage as part of diversification into non-agricultural activities (http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/business/business_support/36147.asp or tel Herefordshire Council on 01432 383616 or 01432 260662)
- **maximum** grant £62 500
- new **Woodland Enterprise Grant** to support investment by woodland owners and rural forestry businesses (with less than 10 full time employees and EU2m turnover) in wood production and supply (upto primary processing, ie sawmilling)
- contact Heartwoods - stewartscull@smallwoods.org.uk or 01952 432769

RDPE – Strategic Investment Grant

- new woodland investment and forestry processing grant – <http://www.advantagewm.co.uk/working-with-us/rdpe/how-do-i-apply/sig-bidding-rounds-and-grants.aspx>
- Upto 40% grant available for rural businesses includes post felling wood processing and supply equipment and forest recreation infrastructure
- **Minimum** grant £62 500
- Contact Jamie Inglis – jamieinglis@advantagewm.co.uk or 0121 380 3500

RDPE - Training

- LandskillsWM (<http://www.lantra.co.uk/businesses/england/west-midlands/landskillswestmidlands/trainingprovider/general-proposals/>) run by LANTRA

issues calls for training for land-based businesses – further info from Emma Tregear (project manager) – emma.tregear@lantra.co.uk or 02476 696996

- **Woodworks2** was recently approved and is a 2 year forestry upskilling project that includes technical training and mentoring – further info from Phil Ridley – p.ridley@wnsc.ac.uk or 01939 262154

RDPE – Leader

- 8 Leader projects across the WM, focusing on social and community support
- there is opportunity for forestry in many of them

RE:Think Energy (www.rethinkenergy.org.uk)

- Funding for businesses for advice, feasibility and renewables installations in the Rural Regeneration Zone
- Delivered by Shropshire Council and MEA Marches Energy Agency– contact Kate Millbank (01743 277130 or kate.millbank@mea.org.uk)
- Re:Think Energy Staffordshire offers grants, events and support for renewables - <http://www.rethinkenergy.org.uk/staffordshire>
- RTE Staffs has set up a demonstration woodfuel depot in Staffordshire using wood supplied by FC (<http://www.rethinkenergy.org.uk/staffordshire/main/biomass-capacity-building-programme>)
- Certified woodchip is available – contact James Cartwright (j.cartwright@staffs-wildlife.org.uk)

Bioenergy West Midlands (www.bioenergywm.co.uk)

- A range of successful training/networking events in biomass installation, anaerobic digestion, biofuels and a study tour to Sweden on woodfuel
- Details on website, including a register of grants available

EU Funding

- EU Connects are a dedicated service to help you find European funding and partners (http://www.wmra.gov.uk/Europe/EU_Connects/EU_Connects.aspx)
- You will need to complete a simple project proforma with your idea – contact Katherine Shephard - k.shepherd@wmleadersboard.gov.uk or 0121 678 1036

Upcoming events

- BioenergyWM/RE:Think Staffordshire wood heat fuel workshop 6 October
- RESCO (renewable supply chain company support project) launch 6 October
- Biofuels/REA conference – 8-10 October @ Stoneleigh
- National woodfuel suppliers event, stoneleigh 8 October
- AWM Forestry Economic Baseline workshop, Hallow Village Hall, 9 October

Simon West
Sep 2009