



Wildfire 2003 - a blazing success!

News In Brief

- 151 people have signed up to Forestry Forward Northumberland so far – beating our targets with 4 months left to go.
- Congratulations to George and Libby Cripps of Woodland Regeneration, Blyth, on becoming the first business in the Region to secure finance from a unique loan fund that has been set up to help small and medium businesses in the environment sector. More information on the Environment Micro Loan Fund can be found on page 2...
- The Regional Forestry Strategy, which is being produced by the Forestry Commission in partnership with a host of other Regional organisations, is soon to be issued for consultation. The RFS will shape the future of forestry in the Region - more in the next issue.

Wildfire 2003 - a training day run by Northwoods and the FCA to promote and share good practice in forest and wildfire management was an "extremely successful and worthwhile event" to quote one participant.

Following an enquiry from a forest management company requesting helicopter familiarisation flights for its employees, the ball started rolling and we soon realised that many people throughout Britain are completely unprepared for the event of a serious wildfire.

It's a misconception that wildfires are something that Southern Europe and the rest of the world suffer from each summer. In the first few weeks of spring this year well over 300 000 acres of moorland and forest were seriously damaged by fire - in the UK!

Combine an extremely dry spring and summer with



increased access to the outdoors, with global warming and changes in moorland and forest management and we have the perfect recipe for a serious wildfire - like those witnessed in Portugal, Italy and Spain this summer.

Wildfire 2003 brought fire behaviour experts, land-managers, moorland managers, fire-brigades and land agencies together with an audience made up of 130 land managers and owners from across Britain.

An international set of machine manufacturers were also present to demonstrate their equipment and the latest developments in fighting wildfires.

The day was a great success for both the FCA and Northwoods, having been shown on BBC Look North and on Radio Newcastle that evening.

Our thanks go to all those who gave their time and expertise on the day.

Ever considered getting certified?



Certification Seminars

Wednesday 1 October

Helme Park Hotel
Tow Law
County Durham - 2pm

The George Hotel
Chollerford
Northumberland - 7pm

Find out what all the fuss is about with 2 free seminars covering certification on 1 October.

Like it or not, forestry certification is here to stay. Over a million hectares of woodland in the UK are now certified, and more and more businesses and small woodlands are joining the trend. Companies ranging from harvesting businesses and flooring contractors, through to woodfuel suppliers and charcoal burners are following the certification route.

With the help of Andy Dugan, Certification Officer with Yorwoods, and David Ogg of Independent Forestry, these seminars will give an overview of forest certification and of Independent Forestry's Group Certification Scheme. The seminars are open to all woodland owners, contractors, sawmills - in fact, if you work with wood, then these seminars are for you!

Places are limited to 25 per seminar, so contact the Northwoods office to book your place now.

FCA Training - Time is Running Out!

A reminder to all those who applied for training grants through the FCA training project Forestry Forward Northumberland. This project has just 4 months left to run, so if you have already signed up for training grants but not yet taken the training, there is a chance that you may not be able to claim the grant you are entitled to. Please contact Ben at Northwoods to discuss your training needs and the courses running in the next few months.

What is Northwoods?

Northwoods is a partnership organisation that works to support businesses that rely on the extension, enhancement and sustainable management of Northumbria's woodlands. Put simply, we assist anyone in the Region - Northumberland, County Durham, Tyne and Wear and the Tees Valley - that is working, or wants to work, with woodland products.

We support businesses working in fields as diverse as commercial forestry, charcoal production, arboriculture, speciality mushroom growing and furniture manufacture. All with the aim of creating and sustaining jobs in forestry and its allied trades in the Region.

At the moment, we're focussing on business support and training activities, but are also working hard to bring additional projects to support businesses in the North East. The old adage *if you don't ask, you don't get* also rings true - if there's something you think you need to make your business more successful, profitable, whatever, then drop us a line to see if we can help. We have a small, dedicated team of forestry and rural development specialists, as well as a growing network of consultants that can help you and your business.

Call the Northwoods office for an informal chat and to find out how we can help you.



Kielder Village - Swimming in Hot Water?

The foundations are now in place for the North East's first wood-fuelled district heating scheme in Kielder Village. Powered by the co-products from mainstream forestry activities in Kielder Forest, a single wood heating plant will be connected up to provide central heating and hot water for a number of new houses that are to be built in the village. The plant will be a first for the Region, and if it's a success, could become a common site across the North East, creating a valuable local demand for low quality timber, co-products and waste wood.

Wood-fired heating schemes are already commonplace in Scandinavia and other northern European countries, with Britain lagging some way behind in the use of this technology. In Denmark in particular, biomass satisfies a huge proportion of the country's energy requirements, and not just in the countryside. Copenhagen is home to the Avedore power plant, which generates heat for 200,000 homes and 840 megawatts of electricity for 1.2 million. Along with natural gas and energy crops, the plant consumes 300,000 tonnes of wood pellets and operates at 94% efficiency.



Improve your profitability with HarvestBase

At the end of last month, Mark Page, an independent forestry consultant based in the Scottish Borders very kindly came down to the Northwoods office to demonstrate the latest version of his HarvestBase software package. This is what we saw... HarvestBase is designed to help harvesting contractors keep track of their machines and product when working on multiple sites. It does this by taking the information recorded on the operators timesheet or invoice and the self billing invoices raised by the purchaser, and combining this with site data and historical information. HarvestBase then compiles the data and does the sums automatically to produce reports and forms to give the owner/manager an up-to-date picture of how harvesting sites and haulage are progressing.



HarvestBase also generates a host of other reports and summaries to help monitor timber flows and profitability. The program produces Operator Square Ups, Rate for Site summaries, SBI Summary Forms and the quantities of timber remaining at stump, at roadside and what's left to be felled - pretty much everything you need to know in fact!

We were very impressed with the outputs and ease of use of HarvestBase, and with the benefits that it could bring to any harvesting business. Reports from those that have bought HarvestBase in the North East are overwhelmingly positive so far, so to arrange for a free demonstration visit and to get your business that extra edge, contact Mark on 01835 850718 or 07775 817776.

Horse Loggers Head for the North East

The British Horse Loggers Specialist Group are heading for Northumberland this Autumn. Horse logging is one of the lowest impact methods for extracting timber from sensitive sites, with horses able to get to places other harvesters can only dream of!

The public can see the horse loggers in action at the Bellister Estate near Allen Banks on Sunday 5th October between 10am and 12.30pm. Anyone who is interested in working in horse logging or contracting a local horse logger for some work is also more than welcome to come along and see the horses in action.

British Horse Loggers,
Bellister Estate 5 October



Chopwell Festival

Northwoods flew the flag for the North East's woodfuel suppliers at this summer's Chopwell Forest Festival. An eye-catching display (kindly paid for by the North East Renewable Energy Group) formed a focal point for the stand, which also featured 3 wood-burning stoves on loan from Stanegate Stoves and a very noisy Japa firewood processor!

Biomass - A Burning Issue

The future's bright - the future's biomass! Or so we think anyway...

Northwoods are actively involved in making sure that the forestry and woodland businesses of the Region are represented on the Biomass Implementation Group, a body which has been set up by One NorthEast through the Environmental Industries Federation. This group is leading the development of biomass capacity in the Region, stimulating demand, developing the supply chain, promoting wood and other biomass as fuel alternatives and dealing with the various technical issues that arise.

In future issues of Northwoods News we'll be keeping you up to date with developments in biomass in the Region and any funds or business opportunities that arise from this exciting

Calling all harvesting contractors!

Are you looking for a new member for your team? Northwoods have an enthusiastic potential employee looking to get into the world of harvesting in Northumberland. We have significant funding available for his training and a wage subsidy whilst he learns the ropes. Contact the Northwoods office for more details.

Employment Issues

Are you thinking of taking on someone new? Is your business expanding too fast and you need another set of hands?

We're running a one day course to help small businesses navigate the minefield of legislation, and identify the steps to taking on new staff.

Subjects including keeping and parting with employees, sub-contracting and administration and paperwork will be covered.

Places are limited, and we envisage a high uptake for this course - this is an invaluable opportunity to receive training from one of the Region's leading business consultants. If you are interested in the course, which is running on the 3rd of October, then please contact Northwoods.

Now recruiting...

The Environmental Industries Federation, based at Newburn, are currently recruiting for someone to fill the newly created post of Biomass Project Co-ordinator (that's wood fuel to you and me!). A salary of £15k is available for the right candidate, who must be a self-starter that can work without supervision and with a wide variety of individuals and organisations. Oh, and you'll need to know a thing or two about biomass! More details are available at www.calibre-recruitment.co.uk, and the closing date is the 30th of September.

Need to advertise a vacancy? Give Northwoods a ring to discuss recruiting via Northwoods News.

New Micro Loan Fund for Environment Sector Businesses

A new loan fund has been set up to assist small and medium sized businesses in the Region. The *Environment Micro Loan Fund* has been established by One North East through the Environmental Industries Federation. Loans of up to £15,000 are available to new and young businesses with a minimum of bureaucracy. Contact the Environmental Industries Federation on 0191 229 1824 for more information.



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Supporting Northumbria's forestry and woodland businesses

Advertise with Northwoods News

Northwoods News is distributed free to around 400 companies, individuals and organisations across the North East of England.

Advertising with Northwoods News could help your company or organisation reach hundreds of small businesses working in forestry and allied trades in the Region. Our readership includes hauliers, harvesting contractors, charcoal burners, timber merchants, woodfuel suppliers, establishment contractors, arboricultural businesses and many, many more.

To discuss your advertising requirements and our very reasonable rates, please give us a call at the Northwoods office.

HAVE WE GOT YOUR DETAILS RIGHT?!

If you're wondering why you've been sent this issue of Northwoods News, it's because we think you'll be interested!

Have we got your name and address right? Please send any changes or corrections to the address above.

If you'd rather not receive future issues, then please let us know either by emailing : news@northwoods.org.uk, phoning the office, or by dropping us a note.

Training & Events in Brief

Certification Seminars - find out what it means to be certified with our free seminars, one in Northumberland and one in County Durham. Vital for anyone working with wood, whether felling, processing or selling.	1 October 2003 2pm, Helme Park Hotel, Tow Law 7pm, George Hotel, Chollerford
Employing People Workshop - specially tailored for those wanting to take on employees or expanding in size. See article on page 2 for more details.	3 October 2003
Horse Logging See horse logging in action when the British Horse Loggers come to Northumberland in October	5 October 2003
Forestry First Aid - first aid courses set in a forestry context. The ever popular course continues.	Autumn 2003
Health & Safety in the Forest Keep up to date with the latest information on Risk Assessments and Health and Safety.	Autumn 2003
Opportunities in Biomass Linking up with a local business park and woodland management contractors to look at the opportunities provided by wood heating.	October 2003 Rennington, N'land
Marketing Your Business - how to sell yourself, your products and your business. This course will be of particular interest to businesses with products and/or services to sell to the public.	County Durham 4 Nov 2003 Northumberland 6 Nov 2003
Woodland Management We're planning to cover woodland improvement, grant schemes, etc... Contact the office for more details.	Autumn/Winter 2003

www.northwoods.org.uk

Northwoods - here to support your business

Northwoods is the Northumbria Woodland Initiative - supporting businesses all along the wood supply chain.

Northwoods is funded by :

