



northwoods
annual report 2009 to 2010

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2009 to 2010 saw the 10th birthday celebration for Northwoods. A decade of delivering thousands of hours of business support, advice, guidance, training and sector development.

The strength of Northwoods comes from delivering demand led projects and from the partners that provide Northwoods with the support needed to in turn provide the forest industry and wider rural economy with a host of benefits.

Core to Northwoods activities remains the support of the trees, timber and forestry sector of the North East. However, as any successful rural business knows, diversification is often key to a successful future. So the Northwoods team has continued to expand into wider rural development - delivering innovative rural resilience projects and supporting the North East Rural Affairs Forum.

Whilst some Northwoods staff move on, others keep coming back for more - 2009/10 said goodbye to Jennifer Hewitson and Ethan Bigelow and hello to Jill Platten and Darrin Woods. In January 2010 Northwoods Director - Dave Clubb moved on to the European Environment Agency with a renewable energy remit and passed the role of Project Director to myself.

I've come back to Northwoods and found a fantastic team and unwavering support from our partners. I look forward to delivering worthwhile, exciting programmes in the years ahead.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "B. Tansey." The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Ben Tansey

northwoods the partnership...



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selected 2009 to 2010 milestones...

Northumberland Fire Group - moves into it's fourth year of operation. The model rolls into Cumbria, North Yorkshire and possibly Co Durham.



Northwoods move of- fice - from Cockle Park - home for a couple of years - but expanding numbers of staff prompt a move to The Old Stables, Morpeth.

Newheat biomass sector development programme continues until September 2009. All targets hit - feasibility studies delivered, advice given and events delivered.



Lynne Dunleavy starts as Project Manager for the Northumberland Community Flooding Partnership.



Northwoods co-ordinate the North East Biomass Forum's response to the Governments Heat and Energy Savings Consultation.



Northwoods 10th birthday a few glasses were raised on the 11th of August.

Northwoods staff participate in a Project Management training course.

Northwoods staff attend BEn meeting in Poland, representing the North East's biomass sector.

Northwoods staff working on the BEn project start a SWOT analysis of the North East's biomass sector.



Renew commission Northwoods to carry out a report looking at biomass markets across the north east.



bioNErgy funded equipment

Northwoods successfully delivers the Lantra Landskills forestry training pilot - providing cost effective technical training to the forestry sector.

Northwoods says goodbye to Jennifer Hewitson who leaves to take up an appointment with Northumberland National Park and Jill Platten joins the Northwoods team to take the lead on the bioNErgy project.

ForStart NE - Northwoods New Entrant project launched - the recruitment process for 6 new entrants begins.

NULogs organise Swedish Study Tour for a dozen log suppliers to find out best practice from the European experts.



Northwoods launches nulogs - a UK first - a dedicated package of support for log producers across the Northumberland Uplands.



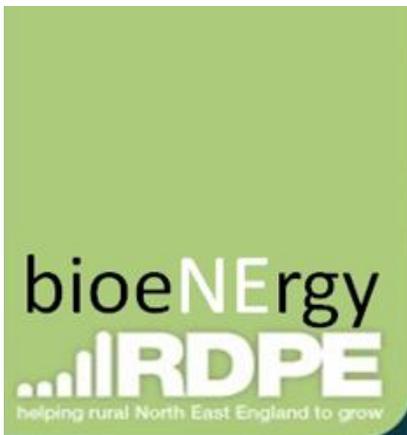
Northwoods / RDI are awarded the contract to deliver secretariat support services to the North East Rural Affairs Forum - a voice for rural citizens and businesses across of the North East.



Working Week in the Forest

Dave Clubb leaves Northwoods to take up an appointment at the European Environment Agency in Copenhagen, Ben Tansey returns to Northwoods as project Director after three years with Wood Energy Ltd.

northwoods woodfuel and biomass sector development



The RDPE bioENERgy support programme has progressed successfully over 2009/2010.

Delivering much needed capital support to the Forestry sector, the broad aim of the programme is to strengthen and develop biomass supply chains throughout the North East to meet the rising demand for woodfuel products.

£1.1 million of RDPE sourced funding is available over the two

year lifespan of the project to match fund investments across the forestry and woodfuel industries.

Principal outcomes to be achieved include a network of sub-regional biomass processing and storage hubs, an increase in collaborative projects and a developed woodfuel supply chain that maximizes the use of locally sources fuel for wood heat installations across the North East.

Grant aid is available for capital items, facilities and infrastructure for the harvesting, processing, storage and distribution of woodfuel. The programme has had strong outputs in terms of jobs created and safeguarded in businesses across the North East, private sector match funding generated, and also wider outputs including CO₂ emissions displaced and woodlands brought into active management.

Several business have been awarded multiple grants, promoting continued growth and diversification.

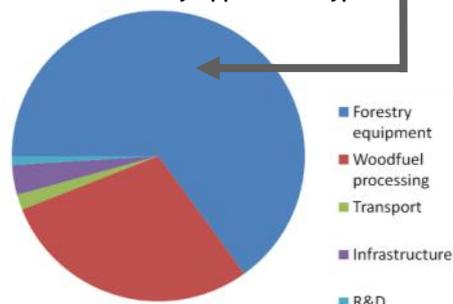
Interest in the scheme continues to rise, with many applications currently proceeding and new enquiries on a weekly basis.



Forestry equipment

bioENERgy outputs - to the end of March 2010	
Grant aid claimed	£660,076
Private sector match funding generated	£1,107,063
Number of projects	34
Number of business beneficiaries	27

Grant Allocation by Application Type



Jill Platten - jill.platten@northwoods.org.uk





The European BEn project continues to build excellent networks within the North East and to the European partner countries. RDI hosted BEn partners in the NE in January. The project meeting was combined with a short tour around some of the regions biomass installations including Egger and Battlesteads Hotel.

Within the North East, BEn network meetings are regularly organised often jointly with the North East Biomass Forum (NEBF). BEn has assisted with the growth of the North East biomass forum - pro-actively extending the network with the active involvement of several Local Authorities and increased the network to include the North East Bio-fuels network and involvement with NEPIC.

As part of the formation of the Biomass Masterplan for the North East a comprehensive SWOT analysis has been carried out covering the entire North East biomass sector. GIS based mapping continues, but to date has revealed 145 stakeholders based in the NE with work continuing on this work package.

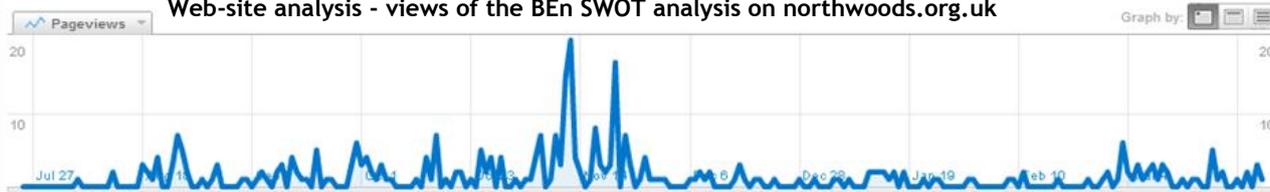


Content Detail:

/regional-swot-analysis

Jul 25, 2009 - Mar 31, 2010

Web-site analysis - views of the BEn SWOT analysis on northwoods.org.uk



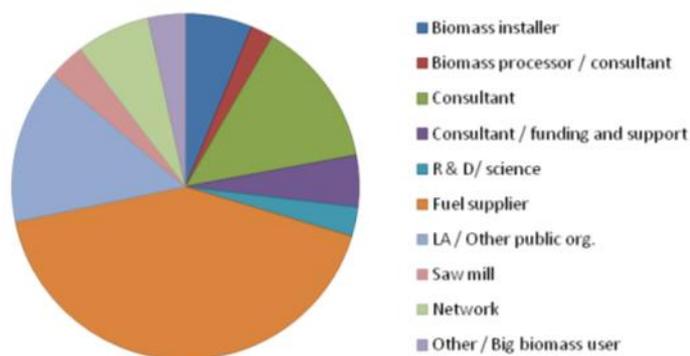
This page was viewed 328 times



newheat

2009 saw the tail-end of the One NorthEast funded newheat biomass acceleration project delivered by Northwoods across the North East of England. Training, advice and support was delivered to over 350 businesses.

Stakeholders in the North East biomass sector by business type

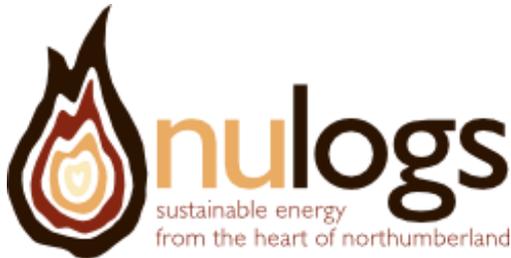


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forestry sector - training and market development



NULogs is an innovative approach to linking local under-managed woodlands to local markets. A UK first, NULogs overall aim is to improve the quality of firewood reaching the market. Firewood suppliers (or those who want to get into the sector!) benefit from training and technical business support, available for businesses within the NULeader area.

→ **For log suppliers** - the NULogs project offers technical advice on equipment available, business support to those wanting to expand, funding advice and support, bespoke training, help sourcing timber and any other help their business should need. This support included organising a study tour to Sweden in March 2010.



→ **For woodland owners** who are looking to get their woodlands managed, nulogs offers a signposting service. We actively approach woodland owners with information about the benefits of management and the economic opportunity that firewood presents. The idea is that we can match woodland with firewood suppliers, who may be able to carry out the work or at least provide a market for the firewood grade products. Up to the end of March 2010 we have provided support to 10 supply firewood businesses and 4 woodland owners.

→ **For log consumers** in Northumberland wanting to source local firewood we have a searchable map of log suppliers in the area. At present there are 26 suppliers on the map.



John Farquhar - john.farquhar@northwoods.org.uk



Working Week in the Forest

In March 2010 Northwoods successfully delivered Working Week in the Forest. The first of its kind in the UK, the event comprised a programme of activities and field visits which aimed to provide prospective entrants with a broad introduction to the growing and vibrant forestry sector in the North East.

The week offered experience of careers across the broad spectrum of the forestry sector - from planting, growing and managing trees, to timber harvesting and processing. Based from the National Trust Gibside Estate, the programme of events included classroom based sessions and field visits across the region.

Operational site visits, tours and demonstrations were delivered by:

- Forestry Commission
- UPM Tilhill
- David Oliver's Tree Services
- Trees Please
- Egger (UK) Ltd
- Maurice Pyle
- Wentworth Leisure Centre - biomass boiler installation
- Ward Timber Ltd

28 Delegates attended and provided very positive feedback. Field visits gave delegates the opportunity to meet and talk to a range of employers and find out first hand what various career paths involve.

The businesses who volunteered their time gave excellent support, playing a key role in the success of the week. The programme also introduced the role of forestry in nature conservation and amenity.

ForStart North East



Contractors are vital for the future health and wellbeing of the Regions trees, woodlands and forests. However, the industry continues to face significant recruitment and retention problems which are widely recognised as barriers to growth and survival.

Seven new entrants supported by five forestry businesses have signed up to ForStart: NE. Individual training plans have been put in place, with funding of up to £3,300 each to pay for training and assessments which are specifically targeted to suit the individuals and the requirements of their supporting business. PPE is also provided up to the value of £250.

The supporting businesses receive a wage subsidy: 50% of minimum wage over the year. The supporting forestry business also receives assistance to retain new members of staff with a training budget allocated to the business, providing them with Training Techniques skills.

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ForStart North East, Working Week in the Forest and Northwoods Forestry Skills training courses are funded by LandSkills North East as part of the Rural Development Programme for England. LandSkills North East is managed by Lantra on behalf of One NorthEast.



Training for forestry businesses has continued through the delivery of the LandSkills Technical Training and Knowledge transfer projects.

A range of courses have been delivered by the Northwoods team - from

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basic chainsaw operation and maintenance through to Forestry Specific First Aid courses and ASNW and PAWS courses. Over 300 training days have been delivered to over 150 individual trainees during nearly 50 different courses.



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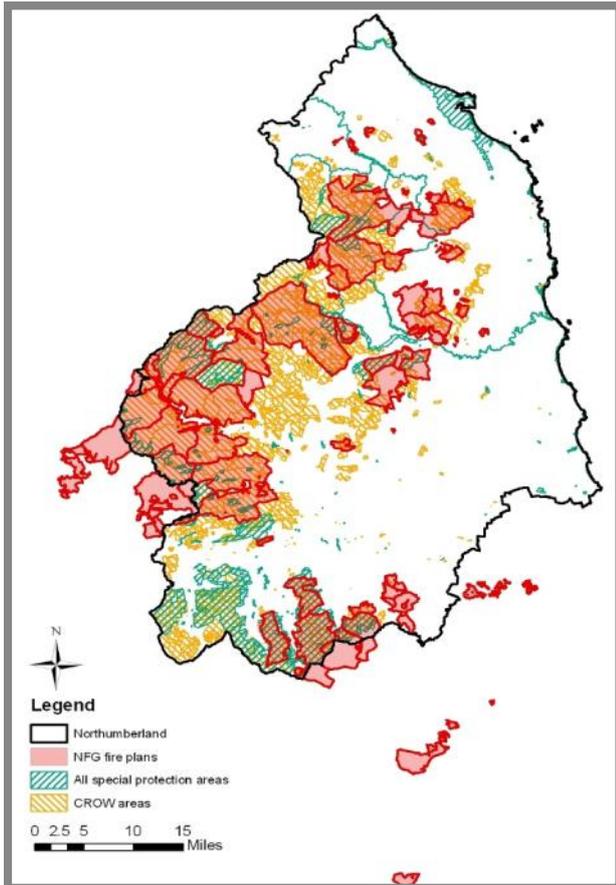
rural resilience projects and rural affairs



The Northumberland Fire Group continues to deliver its core objectives - increasing the areas of coverage of fire plans and to increase the skills and resilience of those dealing with wildfire incidents in Northumberland.

A series of seminars and exercises were organised to bring the skills of those involved in incidents up to date and Northwoods recruitment of international wildfire specialists has assisted with the knowledge transfer across continents.

The map to the left shows areas covered by fire plans to date, with GIS mapping of the areas continuing to be a priority for future activity. Specific events have been organised in conjunction with the Glendale Trust on the Linhope Estate and the Allenheads Estate.



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During the final months of 2009, Northwoods were awarded the contract to deliver the secretariat service for the North East Rural Affairs Forum (NERAF).

Unique to the North East, the citizen based rural affairs forum provides a voice for rural businesses, communities, organisations and stakeholders. An early action was to carry out a comprehensive re-

view of NERAF over the past few years and to look at the future role of the citizen based rural forum in delivery of Defra priorities in the future.

Members of the Northwoods team have been providing secretariat services, plus assistance with delivering the strategic goals of NERAF.

Pam Baker - pam.baker@northwoods.org.uk

northwoods rural resilience - flood work

The Northumberland Community Flooding Partnership was established in May 2009 and saw the engagement of the project manager at the end of July 2009. So far work has been undertaken in 13 communities with 8 groups established.

Two of the groups are now progressing to writing their Community Emergency Flood plans. The groups are working closely with the emergency planning section of the County Council to define their roles and establish where the volunteer groups

can make the most difference. A new list of communities is being compiled and work will start in the summer of 2010 to work with further communities and establish more groups.

The map below shows all of the communities that have been contacted those that have formed groups are coloured blue, those that did not want to form a formal group are coloured white and those who are still considering forming a group are shown as grey.



Lynne Dunleavy - lynne.dunleavy@northwoods.org.uk



On the 25th Feb 2009 the NCFP received a **Highly Commendable** award from the Evening Chronicle Environment Awards 2009. The Project Manager Lynne Dunleavy was presented with the certificate by Adrian Hilton from Climate North East and Trai Anfield, weather presenter and broadcaster for the BBC.





northwoods the year ahead...

Over the next year, Northwoods will continue to bring support to the forestry, timber and wider rural sectors across the North East. With tough economic times ahead, the wider benefits forestry and the rural sector offer present opportunities for the sector.

Northwoods remains focussed on the economic development needs of those involved with trees, timber and forestry. Training and skills development are key to the support activities Northwoods deliver and projects such as the ForStart NE new entrant projects are making a real difference to the sector providing deeper engagement with a number of growing companies.

Whilst it's vital to maintain income generated by the projects that Northwoods manage, it's also important to be able to provide the complete package of assistance that Northwoods staff offer to our clients. Staff activity provide information, advice and guidance during regular face to face meetings and telephone conversations.

The climate change agenda continues to gather pace and we look forward to working with our partners to ensure continued mitigation, adaptation and resilience to the rural sector in the future. To summarise Northwoods proposed future activity:

- Maximising the benefits to the North East forest industry of the growth in the biomass and wood fuel sectors.
- Ensuring that those working along timber supply chains in the North East are aware of emerging opportunities and have the relevant skills to gain maximum benefit.
- Continuing to explore opportunities for rural development across the wider rural community and economy.



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The North East's Woodland Initiative

northwoods the team...

who's who...

Ben Tansey - Northwoods Project Director

Darrin Woods - Project Officer

Jill Platten - Project Officer

John Farquhar - Project Officer

Kasia Zielewska - Project Manager

Kirsty Robb - Project Manager

Lynne Dunleavy - Project Manager

Pam Baker - Assistant Project Officer

our contact details...

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northwoods management...



Northwoods is managed by **Rural Development Initiatives Ltd. (RDI)**. RDI works at the forefront of sustainable rural development, in partnership with and under contract to local and national public, private and charitable bodies across the UK and other parts of the EU, and delivers programmes which make a significant difference to the rural economy, the environment and the fabric of rural society.



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The North East's Woodland Initiative