



Progress update October 2008

Foreword

Northwest Forestry Framework

Progress report for 2008

“The idea that green issues evaporate at the first touch of economic hardship betrays a misunderstanding of the environmental agenda. The necessity to build a sustainable economy is not just a ‘green issue’. It is just as much an economic one; ‘business as usual’ is clearly unsustainable in the long term.”

Are these the words of a green think tank or Friends of the Earth director? No. They are lines taken from a letter to the Financial Times by Peter Ainsworth MP, Shadow Secretary for the environment.

I've included them here because as we review the activities of the woodlands and forestry sector in England's Northwest, it is important to hold one, fundamental truth in mind: if times are hard then it is now more than ever that we have to deliver the opportunities, benefits and inspiration that our sector can unlock more than any other.

We've made yet more progress over the last 12 months. Of the actions identified in our 'Agenda for Growth' plan, 95% are going according to plan or are ahead of schedule; from green infrastructure or land remediation to biomass, climate change or health, we are getting things done and starting to hit our targets.

Particular high points for me include our form>wood conference, which helped us to launch a programme of engagement with architects and designers around the sustainability and desirability of timber. I'm also pleased that we've started to really tackle the issue of urban trees, their monitoring, and the possibility that in some of our towns and cities we are simply not doing enough to make sure that we green up our streets and urban areas as quickly and as effectively as possible.

There will be more on timber as a design solution and on our urban trees work at our Forum day on 6th October and in the update areas of the blog area of iwood.org.uk.

There are some clear challenges still outstanding. Related to our work on urban trees, the Framework's delivery group is grappling with the issue of whether we genuinely have the data available to ensure that we are not seeing a net reduction in tree cover in the region; are we certain that there is not a slow but steady decline in cover as planting levels fail to keep up pace with felling or removal?

We also want to work harder than ever to engage the forestry and timber industry, which is why we're really pleased to have a presentation from Confor as part of the central running order for our 6th October Forum. Working together with the industry is vital, particularly if we are to show just how great the economic opportunities offered by the sector are.

We also need to draw together all of our climate change related work into a much more coherent package; from the region's new work on biomass to a renewed regional focus on climate change adaptation, the role of trees and woodlands in tackling the greatest threat facing the world today cannot be ignored or overstated.

And finally we need to refresh our plan of action, particularly in light of the imminent release of a new, national delivery plan based around the objectives set out in Defra's England's Trees, Woodlands and Forestry. Having been engaged in the drawing up of this new national plan we are more than certain that our activities in England's Northwest fit perfectly against national priorities, but we should revisit and refresh our plan nonetheless, to ensure that all of our partners, across the public, private and voluntary sectors, are doing all they can to deliver a greener, healthier and more prosperous region.

So I'd like to thank the delivery group that I chair for all of the great work they have done in reviewing the region's progress for another 12 months and for acting as catalysts for action where we discovered that elements of our Framework were not being delivered. I'd also like to thank you - the thousands of people working for woodlands and forestry in our region - for being part of making a real difference.

Steve Connor

Chair - Forestry Framework Delivery group

Introduction

The NW Regional Forestry Framework (RFF) Action Plan was launched in August 2006 after 2 years of development and consultation. The RFFs enable each region to start to develop programmes of activity that meet their needs.



This update provides information on how much progress has been made over the past 18 months, it is a straightforward assessment of progress indicating in clear terms where progress has been made, where there are difficulties in delivery and providing information on some of the issues and opportunities that will impact on the delivery of the final 18 months of this Delivery Action Plan.

In the final year of the action plan (2008/9) there will be a process put in place to refresh the Action Plan. This will particularly focus on the impacts of new regional arrangements, the new DEFRA Trees, Woodlands and Forests Strategy and the delivery plan in response to this new strategy.

The Delivery Action Plan has six action areas, each with a lead from the original RFF Steering Group. This update is based on the report on progress and activity.

Progress at a glance

In the second year of delivery 44 of the 47 actions in the Action Plan are underway. (I am still checking this bit !)

<p>95 % are progressing according to plan or are ahead of schedule</p>	
<p>5 % are behind schedule</p>	

The following sections provide more details on progress in each action area.

Action Area 1 - Developing and supporting our woodland and forestry businesses

Lead	David Hunter - NWDA
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Priorities for Action

- a) The range of employment options and diversity of skills needed in modern forestry has widened substantially from the requirements of traditional forestry. These new career paths need specialist training provision to meet the specific needs of the sector in the North West.
- b) Existing business advice services need to provide, and be seen to provide, support that meets the specific requirements of the woodland and forestry sector.
- c) The timber sector in its broadest sense will benefit from increased cooperation, both within and beyond the region, to enhance its value to the North West.
- d) A strategic programme is needed to build on the environmental credentials of the sector. Particular efforts should be made to develop the true potential of wood energy and the opportunities offered by marketing of regional forest products with a view to influencing the development of local and regional timber product purchasing policies.

Progress to date

Action	Lead	Update
<p>1 Create an accurate and comprehensive regional database of businesses in the sector</p>	<p>NWDA FC</p>	<p>Forest Initiatives and industry bodies databases will form the basis of a comprehensive regional database to be completed by April 09.</p>
<p>2 Build an adequate profile for forestry and timber sector skills issues</p>	<p>National School of Forestry SSPA/Lantra</p>	
<p>3 Encourage land-based SSPA to undertake audit of forestry sector skills needs, focussing on business support and distinguishing likely universal (as well as more targeted) needs of the sector</p> <p>Develop Forestry Centre of Excellence (COVE) and its linkages with other sectors</p>	<p>NSF land-based SSPA /LANTRA NWDA</p>	<p>The National School of Forestry and Myerscough College in Preston, have been jointly awarded Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) status for the North West by the Learning and Skills Council.</p>
<p>4 Influence lead regional partners (Rural Development Programme for England & Rural Business Support Group) to ensure adequate future support for forestry and timber businesses</p>	<p>NWDA Forest, timber and paper industry sector</p>	<p>Significant input by partners to ensure the forestry sector is well represented in each of the sub regional RDPE plans.</p> <p>Specific focus on forestry as part of NWDA consultation on RDPE.</p> <p>Work on developing a potential region-wide proposal to RDPE for the forest sector.</p>
<p>5 Explore how professional</p>	<p>NWDA</p>	<p>NWDA made initial contact with ICF to explore how professional bodies</p>

	bodies can provide the technical expertise and specialist business support needed in this sector	NSF Forestry representation bodies	can provide the technical expertise and specialist business support.
6	Work with wood promotion bodies to bring more national timber promotion events to the North West and identify opportunities for joint activity	CFNW Other woodland initiatives	The form >wood conference has been successfully delivered with keynote speech from Mr Ted Cullinan, winner of the RIBA Gold Award 2008. A large number of architects attended, with a great deal of interest in how to source more timber that is specified for construction. www.formwood.org.uk
7	<p>Develop a pilot Forestry Sector Leadership Programme to promote networking and assist in the development of a sector leadership group.</p> <p>Cluster development through England Forest Industries Partnership North West (EFIPNW) that share knowledge/skills</p> <p>Develop a market-led, rather than supply-led approach</p> <p>Link with the Scottish and Welsh campaigns' Action Plans to promote framework</p> <p>Link to national wood for good campaign</p>	NWDA FC Private Sector/Industry Education establishments	<p>Met with key representatives of the forestry sector in Preston in November 2008 to explore ways of taking the sector forward and gauge commitment of sector within region to take a lead role.</p> <p>Changes within England Forest Industries Partnership and a lack of an EFIP regional presence have made progress at the regional level difficult.</p> <p>The North West region will work with ConFor/EFIP to identify action for the North West by December 2008.</p>

	Signpost markets for high quality timber and work to develop markets for poor quality timber ,e.g. wood fuel		
8	Establish and develop a North West woodlands portal- www.lwood.org.uk	NW RFF Delivery Group	Site now up and running with material added through the year to update on progress of the RFF. The site also has an interactive blog.

Action Area 2 - Using woodlands and forestry to promote and improve the image of the region

Lead	Paul Nolan - The Mersey Forest
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Priorities for Action

- a) A coherent and ambitious programme of gateway and transport corridor greening across the region will provide a major improvement to 'first impressions'.
- b) Our region should be strategically and practically promoting our woodland-based and woodland-linked tourism destinations to extend and enhance the visitor experience in the North West.
- c) Building on the North West's reputation as a leader in this area, more can be done to promote our work on woodlands as a viable tool in the regeneration and reclamation of derelict land.
- d) Influencing the planning system and providing advice and guidance to planners will encourage the integration of trees and woodlands into development schemes.

Action	Lead	Update
<p>9 Map the main gateways and produce a map of key target areas</p> <p>Put funding in place for this</p>	<p>FC/NWDA</p>	<p>Limited progress on this action in 2007/8. The gateways have all been mapped and cross -checked against the sub regional strategies.</p> <p>Assessment of existing initiatives that could assist in delivery of aspects of greening gateways underway.</p> <p>2008/9 will see an assessment of what exactly Forestry can do to assist in each of the gateway areas and who are the key contacts for initiatives in each of the gateways.</p>
<p>10 Develop links to Liverpool Capital of Culture 2008</p>	<p>CFNW</p>	<p>Good progress on Capital of Culture. We have had;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Green Spot at the Bluecoat centre and Alder Hey ▪ Forest Fever – Festival celebrating art in the Forest ▪ “Take a Bough” - Exhibition by NW timber users using timber from the Mersey Forest and surrounding area (www.merseyforest.org.uk/takeabough.asp) ▪ Form>Wood (see AA1 above) <p>A celebratory woodland is also being planned for planting this season.</p> <p>All events and campaigns have been well received.</p> <p>2009 is Year of the Environment as a follow up to Capital of Culture and there are plans developing for the forestry sector to input into this.</p>
<p>11 Continue to deliver Newlands and targeted programme of improved image for the region</p>	<p>FC</p>	<p>Both programmes now underway, more detailed progress reports available from project manager.</p> <p>Newlands 1 is delivering two sites in 2008 – Brickfields in St Helens and Town Lane in Sefton. Brockholes in Preston is progressing as are a number of other sites in the Newlands 2 programme. Newlands is now a £59 m programme extending to 2013 for</p>

			the capital programme with commitment by the Forestry Commission to 2112. It is targeting the reclamation of over 800ha of derelict land. The programme has been recognised nationally as best practice. (www.newlandproject.co.uk)
12	Input into Green Infrastructure Guide	NWRA	<p>The Green Infrastructure Guide was completed last year. Since then there has been a dramatic increase in activity across the region and GI appears to be well embedded in policy and is starting to shape delivery of projects.</p> <p>The Natural Economy Northwest programme and all the partners involved in that programme have helped to get GI on the agenda of the NWDA and other regional players.</p> <p>The approach taken by the North West to GI is again seen as being at the forefront of GI planning.</p> <p>The Green Infrastructure Unit set up by Natural England and the two North West Community Forests is supporting the development of GI in the region.</p>
13	Key Facts for Developers and Planners Toolkit	NWRA	Limited progress in 2007/8
14	Development of network of expertise in land remediation	EnviroLink	<p>Network is now established - 2 Advisory board meetings, launch event on 9th October, and a website is up .</p> <p>Regular meetings and training events have been held, coordinated by EnviroLink.</p>
15	Identify potential for Forest Parks that in the future may become visitor destinations	Tourist Boards	<p>Forest Parks identified at St Helens, Sefton. Mersey Valley, Northwich and Frodsham. All progressing, but at different speeds.</p> <p>Need to set criteria and look at Forest Park opportunities elsewhere in the region.</p>

Action Area 3 - Maximising the benefits that trees and woodland bring to our region's biodiversity and landscape

Lead	Clare Mumford – Natural England
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Priorities for Action

- a) A joint agenda for agriculture and woodlands will deliver continued improvements for trees and woodlands, and schemes will be supported that bring benefits to our region's landscape, biodiversity and to forestry businesses.
- b) The linkage and expansion of existing areas of woodland, if carried out sensitively, will create more functional and biologically diverse habitats, addressing the effect of our fragmented woodlands.
- c) Consistent engagement with policy makers will ensure that the importance of trees and woodlands is fully appreciated and is visibly included in the key regional policies and strategies that will shape the future of the North West.
- d) Targeting key woodlands for entry into management schemes and providing protection for ancient woodlands and important trees will meet landscape and biodiversity objectives in the North West. Tree and woodland management should also contribute to the achievement of Habitat and Species Biodiversity Action Plan targets.

Action Area 3 Update

Action	Lead	Update
16	Initiate, support and implement landscape scale projects & their promotion	<p>NE / FC</p> <p>Restructuring of Ennerdale, Cumbria, upper valley - extensive areas of conifers have been removed and replanted with native broadleaf. Pilot just starting now, to demonstrate positive cattle grazing in woodlands.</p> <p>Cumbria Wealth of Wildlife upland woodlands restoration - new planting on Caldbeck Common, Mungrisedale Common, and Thirlmere. Some fencing issues have been resolved. Landscape issues have been taken into account in particular areas. Restoration of montane willow population in Helvellyn is under way.</p> <p>A new project funded by NE, Bassenthwaite Treescapes (mapping for veteran trees and wood pasture), has been completed. See 24 below.</p>
17	Identify geographical gaps using Joint Character Areas (JCAs) or other spatial divisions as appropriate, where new projects are needed to achieve objectives & build ecological networks	<p>NE/FC</p> <p>Work done via Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) targeting with EWGS - HLS/EWGS work on Buttermere Common, Keskadale Oaks for natural regeneration and stock exclusion on National Trust land. Growing awareness that upland woodlands are missing from landscapes, eg Bampton Common, Cumbria.</p> <p>HLS application has included a large area for potential woodland.</p> <p>NE and FC looking to see where HLS/EWGS should apply.</p>
18	Review Woodland Visions across the region	<p>Woodland initiatives / local authorities</p> <p>No progress to date.</p> <p>Lancashire Woodland Vision relatively new and being used.</p> <p>Cumbria Woodland Vision being discussed: will wait for ETWF delivery plan to be published to ensure good fit.</p>

19	Increase tree planting in urban areas	Local Authorities	<p>Community Forests delivering tree planting for local authorities in the Mersey Belt area.</p> <p>The Community Forests are also strongly influencing other agencies (eg via regeneration plans & programmes) on delivery.</p> <p>Local authorities are acting elsewhere, but no good mechanism yet to share information at regional level on what is happening.</p> <p>In response to 2007 RFF Forum event, the delivery group set up a project to look at how to improve the monitoring of the urban trees situation across the region. This report is available on iwood.org.uk. This is ongoing work.</p>
20	Continued support & management of the Deer Management Groups	Deer initiatives	<p>A new South Cumbria project is up and running, funded by Forestry Commission and Natural England, and managed by Cumbria Woodlands. Alistair Boston is the project contact.</p> <p>Deer population monitoring and project awareness work has been undertaken within three targeted areas of Duddon Valley, Rusland Valley and Longsleddale.</p>
21	Map all the Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) ancient & semi-natural woodland areas in North West	FC/NE	<p>New regional BAP targets have been confirmed for the region. There are targets for native woodland; wood pasture and parkland (now including upland wood pasture for first time); and hedgerow trees.</p> <p>Activity to deliver the targets is being discussed and coordinated by North West Biodiversity Forum and local BAP coordinators. Action will cover maintenance, restoration of condition, and expansion of habitat.</p> <p>No specific action on area mapping.</p>
22	Provide incentives through proactive targeting & appropriate	NE / FC	<p>Environmental Stewardship Higher Level Schemes targeting statements have woodlands & ancient trees incorporated into them.</p>

	scoring/weighting of England Woodland Grants Scheme (EWGS) and Environmental Stewardship schemes		EWGS Woodland Creation Grant is targeted for catchment sensitive area (Bassenthwaite), Index of Multiple Deprivation map areas, and existing ancient woodland expansion. NE and FC are currently reviewing HLS/EWGS regional accord in light of national work.
23	Provision of advice & long-term woodland planning assistance to give landowners more confidence to manage their woodlands sustainably for biodiversity	FC / NE	Ongoing work via woodland initiatives and NE and FC advisors. Cumbria Woodlands PAWS (plantation on ancient woodland sites) restoration work ongoing with Woodland Trust funding.
24	Introduce a veteran tree scheme for the North West Promote veteran tree management through Environmental Stewardship Promote & utilise Ancient Tree Hunt findings	NE	The Bassenthwaite Treescapes project started in January as a pilot to map and assess the condition of veteran trees and wood pasture, as a first step in reviewing options for future management. This pilot is now complete and future steps are being considered by NE. Ancient trees are part of Environmental Stewardship HLS targeting statements. Woodland Trust activity on Ancient Tree Survey - 995 trees recorded so far, of which 279 verified and 47 are ancient. Eight verifiers and 10 partner verifiers for the region; first regional working group set up in Cumbria, which meets three times a year. Lake District National Park Authority is carrying out a survey on their estate.

Action Area 4 Using woodlands to improve our health, well-being and quality of life

Lead	Penny Oliver – Forestry Commission
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Priorities for Action

- a) We must work with woodland owners to develop a multi-purpose woodland management approach that caters for the needs of different recreational users, and engage with tourism and leisure bodies to increase the promotion of accessible woodlands.
- b) Targeted woodland creation and management would deliver enhanced access to woodlands near areas of high population density and significant quality of life benefits.
- c) Policies linking woodlands and health to local authority planning must be encouraged, while hospitals and other healthcare establishments can lead the way by developing woodlands and green space within their grounds. The ongoing development of schemes such as GP referrals for exercise must be encouraged.
- d) The region should take every opportunity to develop woodlands and associated activities that utilise them as outdoor classrooms in which to build life skills.

Action	Lead	Update
<p>25 Map woodlands against need and opportunity including existing programme, accessibility and barriers</p>	<p>CFNW FC</p>	<p>TEP completed Phase 1 of woodland access database which contains about 2000 woodlands in region. This has built on the Woods for People information, adding detail on facilities available.</p> <p>RFF Delivery group and partners (FC and NE) have approved funding for Phase 2 to make the database available on iwood by end of 2008.</p>
<p>26 Targeted woodland creation and management using mapping (see above) that will identify gaps and priority places and people</p>	<p>FC Woodland Initiatives WT NE</p>	<p>Following approval from RAC and National Office to review targeting in Prospectus 08, new woodland creation target maps were produced focusing the regional points on woodland creation for health and education.</p> <p>Plan to take further for creation and access improvement grants in Prospectus 09 using outputs from action 25.</p> <p>Input into workshops for targeting review of HLS for access as well as other scheme priorities.</p>
<p>27 Collect and promote best practice for practitioners, landowners and agents on access, recreation opportunities, engagement and health, using information from current pilot projects</p>	<p>NE Woodland initiatives</p>	<p>The good practice directory on health and woodlands was compiled by partners in environment and health sectors with some funding from FC and NE.</p> <p>The first version of the searchable Good Practice Directory has been launched on iwood. Ongoing updates will be required.</p> <p>Use directory in promotion (28) and advocacy work (29).</p>
<p>28 Promotion of woodlands as a resource to deliver existing health, sport and physical</p>	<p>Woodland initiatives NE</p>	<p>Raised awareness of RFF work through NHS/SHA SD Summit.</p> <p>Input RFF activity into regional Healthy Weight strategy and helped</p>

	activity schemes		<p>organise workshop for Place Cluster of the new PA Alliance.</p> <p>In Cumbria, woodland opportunities were inputted onto Active Cumbria website and features were commissioned in monthly supplements.</p> <p>Met with NE health steering group and agreed to work closely together to take forward AA4 health actions. Running joint workshop with NE on green exercise at annual Health and Physical Activity conference in November.</p> <p>Hospitals – Presentation of mapping at NHS/SHA Green Summit on 14th December where contact was made with Alder Hey CEO. Penny Oliver invited by SHA to sit on Alder Hey Design Review Panel. Keith Jones has developed the relationship with Alder Hey and he has formed a Sustainable Development group to advise on new hospital. Penny made link for NE with University Hospital of South Manchester and several other hospitals are now interested in the approach taken at Alder Hey.</p>
29	Advocacy and influencing of decision makers	FC	<p>Good relationship with key contacts in the Department of Health, GONW, NHS estates and SHA.</p> <p>Involved in new regional Physical Activity Alliance and new Places cluster.</p> <p>Met key health staff in Cumbria and working on proposal for Barrow and surrounding area.</p> <p>Sit on PA forum and currently have a proposal submitted to fund more woodland access leaflets.</p> <p>During the year, worked on LAAs with other Defra agency health leads, the Woodland Initiatives and GONW.</p>

			Made links into BIG Lottery wellbeing regional project as it developed .
30	<p>Assess pilot Forest Schools in region, promote approach and establish training capacity.</p> <p>Investigate links with other schemes such as eco-schools and healthy schools, using school grounds and local woodlands as a resource</p>	NSF	<p>National School of Forestry (Newton Rigg) has continued to lead on training elements.</p> <p>Update from Ashleigh Miller-Kirkpatrick; <i>In the summer, as part of the University of Cumbria, the National School of Forestry validated an updated level 4 Forest Schools Practice course and associated with the level 4 and 5 Bushcraft courses which aim to develop these more specific outdoor learning skills. These were set up following the success of the Forest Schools training already run and will enable progression for the learners involved in the Forest Schools Practice Course. The courses still take place on campus, at the Early Years centre Forest School site and at our Eden Brows woodland close to the campus.</i></p> <p><i>NSF are looking to create a cluster with previous participants now running Forest School programmes. There have also been a number of examples of successes; one with the large school, Beaconside Primary in Penrith who have supported 6 teachers/governors to receive training and are keen to further integrate Forest Schools into their outdoor learning plan. Another is an after school club within the Bassenthwaite area which has had a very successful year including summer programmes. A number of students from the School of Outdoor Studies have run local Forest School programmes as part of their work experience.</i></p> <p><i>Cathie Jones who works at NR in the Childhood Section has been planning and delivering 6 level 1 training Forest School sessions at 4 different sites across Cumbria. She is working on a level 3 course that will enable learners from her section to progress with their Forest School training.</i></p> <p>After undertaking desk/web research into active Forest Schools in the region, Penny Oliver has arranged a regional meeting for Forest Schools</p>

			at the RFF Forum in October as the AA4 workshop. This meeting will explore needs for further FS development in the region.
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	<p>current projects related to worklessness to review skill/capacity building schemes.</p> <p>Consider development of an environmental escalator, incorporating several levels of engagement</p>	<p>Forest BTCV</p>	<p>BTCV are running worklessness projects in Cumbria and have gained funding to do more (linked to action 32).</p>
<p>32</p>	<p>Evaluate and promote Haverigg Prison work pilot and develop to include more skills development</p> <p>Promote health benefits to inmates in addition to environmental benefits</p>	<p>FC</p>	<p>The Regional Offender Environmental Outworking Partnership – had 4 meetings during the year, where we continued to grow our shared agenda and provide an overview of, and co-ordinate, progress with individual prisons and development of Target Wellbeing Offender project.</p> <p>Haverigg – out-working continued during the year. BTCV delivered training programme for both offenders and prison staff using Impact funding for 8 weeks at the Forestry Commission site, Giggle Alley and on Walney Island for Natural England. Uclan undertook some monitoring and evaluation work, as a lead into their BIG wellbeing project alongside the training programme. This evaluation of the Haverigg Pilot will help produce a monitoring model to roll out to other prisons.</p> <p>Kirkham – after initial meeting with prison on 23rd May, had further meeting with prison and landowners on 7th August. This was very success with several landowners interested in project and a further meeting arranged for 29th October.</p> <p>Other prisons – ongoing partnership between Thorn Cross and Forestry Commission at Delamere and they would like to develop a longer term, apprenticeship-type scheme. Pennine Edge Forest is developing relationship with Buckley Hall and hope that this could happen with Hindley and Red Rose Forest.</p> <p>Funding – After much development work the Target Wellbeing BIG lottery</p>

			applications have gone to prisons in September. We will work with prisons to help them with applications for this funding. Also secured some funding from GONW.
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Action Area 5 - The role of trees and woodlands in adapting to the impacts of climate change

Lead	Helen Sweeney – Government Office North West
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Priorities for Action

a) A concerted programme to increase vegetation and tree planting in urban areas would use urban trees as a key solution in the development of a region-wide strategy to adapt to and mitigate climate change. Our use of floodplains and upland areas needs to be addressed, planting trees and woodlands in a mosaic with other semi-natural habitats to help alleviate possible flooding and erosion (see Action Area Three).

b) The role of timber in construction projects, particularly in new housing developments, should be promoted as a low energy, low impact building material. (See Action Area One).

c) The creation of new, and management of existing woodlands must contribute to the creation of functional ecosystems and support species migration and adaptation. The consolidation and expansion of existing biodiversity 'hotspots' (such as ancient woodland) will increase the resilience of local habitats to the possible impacts of climate change. (See Action Area Three).

d) We should encourage and enable the production of roundwood for energy from a range of sources including managed woodlands and short rotation coppice grown on agricultural land.

Action		Lead	Update
33	<p>Facilitate and promote, to the whole supply chain, the benefits and opportunities of biomass energy and carbon savings</p> <p>Promotional activity and training</p>	<p>CFNW Woodland Initiatives</p> <p>FC</p>	<p>Ignite course and demonstration projects being held in Cumbria.</p> <p>Forestry Commission Pathfinder money matched with Cumbria Vision funds to undertake activity. Pathfinder project underway with Cumbria Woodlands – supply chain development.</p> <p>£40,000 from Lake District National Park Sustainable Development Fund for biomass activity.</p> <p>Training events in Lancashire for installations and installers.</p> <p>Cheshire Renewables toolkit and options for biomass installations.</p>
34	<p>Access Capital Grant Scheme funding to assist in the installation of medium-sized boilers to stimulate supply chain development</p> <p>Work ongoing within NWDA to finally secure funds for biomass activity</p>	NWDA	<p>NWDA Board agreed Biomass project, reduced to £750K.</p> <p>Envirolink contracted to undertake work on the supply chain. Nigel Blandford to take position. Work to begin shortly. Project to begin Autumn 2008.</p>
35	<p>Advocacy for the biomass sector in the North West (including under-managed woodlands, processing by-products and SRC)</p> <p>Coordinating response to the RDPE activity</p>	<p>CFNW Woodland Initiatives</p> <p>FC</p>	<p>Timber Officer, Nigel Blandford, in post (Jan 2008) at Mersey Forest to assist in the delivery, including woodfuel development in RFF AA5.</p> <p>Working the sub-regional partnerships to ensure that RDPE delivery is achieved.</p>

36	<p>Provide regional information to planners and developers on the opportunities for biomass installations and use in relation to Planning Policy Statement 22 Renewable Energy</p> <p>Technical information for planners and developers</p>	NWRA	<p>Two separate information documents for developers and planners completed. Content and format considered by Biomass Contacts Group on 20th May.</p> <p>Revised brief presented to NWRA (4NW) Contract for £5k contributed by 4NW. Contract won by Mersey Forest to undertake work.</p> <p>3 documents produced due end of September;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planners • Developers • Householders <p>4NW to promote information to LPA. Link on the EST website for householder information.</p> <p>Information on iwood website and other appropriate venues.</p>
37	Develop demonstration facility for biomass installations	NSF	<p>Some initial feasibility studies of buildings on the campus at Newton Rigg were completed. Three suitable building complexes exist that have older heating systems suitable for replacement. The woodfuel option offered significant fuel cost savings approx, £20,000 per year for the 3 buildings along with the potential for demonstration purposes.</p> <p>Following further feasibility and funding sources, engineering consultants have been appointed to develop expansion plans at University of Cumbria Newton Rigg campus. Incorporation of renewables technology and biomass installations being considered. Proposal currently being prepared for HES CE/Salix Funding.</p>
38	Research the role of trees, woodland and forestry in the low carbon economy - new research	NSF	<p>National research funding being pursued.</p> <p>UK Energy Research Centre is funding a PhD research project in the University of Cumbria entitled "Community perceptions of opportunities</p>

			for renewable energy".
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Action Area 6 - Supporting and Resourcing the Sector

Lead	Keith Jones – Forestry Commission
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Priorities for Action

- a) The spatial and thematic targeting of resources will best deliver public benefits, firstly in the management of existing woodlands and forestry businesses and secondly through the creation of strategically placed new woodlands.
- b) The development of an integrated (social, economic and environmental) landscape scale approach will assist resource allocation for woodlands and associated industry growth.
- c) Woodland development should be supported and delivered through broad, cross-sector partnerships to ensure that resources are accessible and delivery meets local needs.
- d) The roles of the public forest estates are as a champion for the new woodlands agenda, and as a catalyst for widespread local social, economic and environmental development.
- e) A climate for economic growth could be created by supporting and seeking to resource cooperation and communication across the sector in its broadest sense. (See Action Area One).
- f) An advocacy campaign that promotes wood products and demystifies woodlands to show them as assets, and forestry as asset management, will gain the support and investment needed to ensure that our woodlands can deliver the broadest range of public benefits.

Action	Lead	Update
39	<p>The use and development of PBRS as an aid for strategic planning and investment for other action areas</p> <p>Promotion of PBRS approach to funders, decision makers and stakeholders</p>	<p>FC and others as appropriate</p> <p>PBRS principles are now increasingly understood and used both within and outside the region.</p> <p>Funding applications and incentives (grants) are increasingly made and delivery against spatial mapping backdrop examples include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Newlands and Green Infrastructure planning ▪ Climate Change and Environ Index finished ▪ Health - work at Alder Hey ▪ Creation of Environ Index complete
40	<p>Identify principal North West sector funding sources</p> <p>Clearly and simply present this to the sector specifically 06-07 on RDPE</p>	<p>FC Public & private sector e.g. ICF, FTA & RFS</p> <p>RDPE in the North West now has forestry and woodlands embedded within regional and sub-regional plans.</p> <p>Natural England and Forestry Commission.</p> <p>Woodland Initiatives understand and are planning applications</p> <p>Work with private sector owners ongoing but need to be elevated once RDPE fully launched.</p> <p>Other sources of funding becoming increasingly scarce and harder to access/win.</p>
41	<p>Identify and promote (via production case studies) best practice from within North West, Great Britain, European Union and worldwide,</p>	<p>FC Cumbria Woodlands Woodland Initiatives</p> <p>Throughout the region there is daily and weekly promotion of woodlands.</p> <p>Work of the Community Forests, Lancashire and Cumbria Woodland Projects constantly being promoted.</p> <p>North West decision and policy makers constantly informed of the benefits of</p>

	including: Bassenthwaite Catchment Study and Forest Futures linked to RDPE targets		trees and woodlands. This is especially true regarding the role of woodlands and climate change. This area needs constant attention.
42	Creation of a Future Visioning Forum to enable woodland and other key landowners to participate in the delivery of the RFF	FC, NWDA Private Sector	Limited progress on this action.
43	Review and seek to safeguard existing capacity/delivery mechanisms Aim for a market-led approach	FC NE NWDA Private sector	All delivery mechanisms remain although their funding is constantly under pressure. Delivery mechanisms are now well versed in bidding for funds to deliver against funders needs – the market.
44	Public Forest Estate (PFE) to exemplify the way forward (e.g. redevelopment of Grizedale) and to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ share commercial advice with those seeking to develop similar public benefit delivery ▪ develop 	NW FD Private Sector	Multi-million pound Grizedale development now well advanced, including woodfuel. Various senior figure tours and visits undertaken. Partnership with Lancashire Wildlife Trust regarding Brockholes. Many and various PFE. Delivery of many Newlands sites completed or underway.

	<p>commercial partnerships post Regulatory Reform Order</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ share training and marketing needs and opportunities 		
45	<p>Create advocacy capacity for forestry, to promote trees and woodlands as an important option in sustainable land management</p>	<p>FC NW RFF SG</p>	<p>Constant promotional work underway.</p> <p>RFF Champion in Place and starting to make an impact.</p> <p>New Forestry Commission RAC in place.</p> <p>This area is in need of constant attention and a realistic approach.</p>
46	<p>Revise the NW RFF SG into a Delivery Group.</p> <p>At the sub regional level, enable ownership and delivery through sub-regional fora</p>	<p>FC NW RFF SG</p>	<p>Achieved.</p>
47	<p>Continue working closely with the key regional policy makers and input to all regional and local strategies</p>	<p>FC NE, NWRA NWDA GONW WT</p>	<p>With comparatively limited resources the role of tree and woodlands is consistently being embedded within the key regional strategies and plans.</p> <p>All leads and others contribute to this action area.</p> <p>There is a constant need to deliver against this area as existing strategies are refreshed and new ones created.</p>

Refreshing the Delivery Plan

In line with the RFF governance document, the RFF Action Plan will be refreshed in 2009 and the new Action Plan launched to start activities in 2010/11.

This will be an opportunity to assess where the RFF needs to develop, which actions in the current plan need to be continued and taken forward and where perhaps there are actions which are no longer priority, necessary or even perhaps relevant.

The Action Plan will take into account the policy environment within which forestry has to be delivered.

We have;

- A new Trees, Woodlands and Forests Strategy
- A new delivery plan from FC and NE due in late 2008
- Increasing focus on the role of Green Infrastructure in planning and land use decision making
- Increasing focus on natural resource management, DEFRA's Ecosystem Services approach
- A new integrated regional plan on the horizon
- Proposals for growth points in the North West
- Increasing realisation that climate change is an issue that has to be addressed through a wide range of activities across all sectors of the economy

The role of forestry in the ever-changing policy environment and the ability of the sector to take on these challenges will shape the next NW RFF Action Plan.