



no. 49 Spring 2010

# Offcuts

the newsletter of the Oxfordshire Woodland Group

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BBC 'Tree O Clock' tree planting world record attempt at Stratfield Brake, Kidlington

***Events listing 2010: inside back page***

## “Tree O Clock” World Record Attempt with the BBC

Tree enthusiasts from across the district gathered at Stratfield Brake near Kidlington to help break a tree planting world record on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> December. The event was organised by the Oxfordshire Woodland Group and the Wychwood Project Conservation Action Team as part of the BBC Breathing Places bid to plant the greatest number of trees in one hour.

David Rees, Oxfordshire Woodland Project said, ‘It was a fantastic turn out and we have never seen people plant trees so fast before. Halfway through the event we found that we were running out of trees despite having already achieved twice our world record pledge. Fortunately we had some in reserve and after a brief lull and a dip into a pot of steaming soup, we finally achieved a total of 264 trees planted’.

Jane Bowley, Wychwood Project said, ‘Tree planting appeals to all generations; it was so encouraging to see so many young volunteers with the Wychwood v Project working alongside young children, parents and grandparents’.

“On the eve of the Climate Change talks at Copenhagen we can feel some satisfaction that our efforts will help build up a renewable resource for the next generation”

County Councillor Ian Hudspeth with spade in hand said, ‘This glorious sunshine is a great relief after all the rain in recent days and has helped to make this such an enjoyable event. It is especially pleasing that local people have been able to make their contribution to a low carbon future on land made available by the County Council’.



**Sponsor a Tree-** County Forester, Eric Dougliss, said, “The County Council is sponsoring a tree planting scheme in partnership with the Oxfordshire Woodland Group and asks that anyone who is interested in sponsoring a tree, perhaps as a Christmas gift contacts him as soon as possible to arrange postage of the certificate before Christmas. The proceeds will be shared with a tree planting scheme in Ghana, Africa.” Sponsorship costs just £6 per tree.

The county council expects to make available new sites for public planting once Stratfield brake has been filled.

*Tree planting opportunity: see p6 & events listing!*

## Scientists call for more tree planting to combat climate change

*This item refers to the Read Report, [www.forestry.gov.uk/climatechange](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/climatechange)*



*Sir David Read*

If an extra four per cent of the United Kingdom's land were planted with new woodland over the next 40 years, it could be locking up ten per cent of the nation's predicted greenhouse gas emissions by the 2050s.

That's the view of an expert, independent panel of scientists who today published the first national assessment of the potential of the UK's forests to mitigate climate change, and of requirements to ensure they can successfully adapt to our new conditions.

The panel, chaired by Professor Sir David Read, recently Vice-President of the Royal Society and currently Emeritus Professor of Plant Sciences at the University of Sheffield, was tasked by the Forestry Commission to make the assessment – believed to be the first national study of its type in the world.

Speaking at the launch of the report in November, Professor Read said:

“All our research points to the fact that forestry can make a significant and cost-effective contribution to meeting the UK's challenging emissions reduction targets.

“By increasing our tree cover we can lock up carbon directly. By using more wood for fuel and construction

materials we can make savings by using less gas, oil and coal, and by substituting sustainably produced timber for less climate-friendly materials. 4

“While so many emissions reduction measures have negative connotations, tree planting can be a win, win, win solution: people love trees, we benefit from them in so many different ways, and now we know they could play a significant part in reducing the UK’s carbon dioxide emissions.”

The report suggests that appropriate planting of 23,000 hectares a year – equivalent to about 30,000 football pitches – over 40 years would involve changing the use of only four per cent of the UK’s land. This would mean increasing tree planting by 200 per cent on current levels. It would bring woodland cover in the UK from its current 12 per cent of the land area to 16 per cent, still well below the European average of 37 per cent.

On mitigating climate change, the report says:

- woodland creation has the potential to provide highly cost-effective and achievable abatement of greenhouse gas emissions compared with potential options in other sectors;
  - carbon storage in UK forests has been declining as a result of new-planting rates falling and younger forests, which sequester more carbon than older forests, maturing. Stepping up the new woodland planting rate would help to reverse this decline;
  - creating new forests would help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in other ways, for example, by reducing the use of nitrogen fertilisers, which require a high fossil fuel input in their manufacture, and by reducing the emissions
-

of the greenhouse gas nitrous oxide from the land;

- if the market for wood construction products continues to grow at its current rate over the next 10 years, there is the potential to store an estimated additional 10 million tonnes (Mt) of carbon (equivalent to 36.7 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>) in new and refurbished homes by 2019; and
- within the next five years, sustainably produced woodfuel has the potential to save the equivalent of approximately seven million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per year by replacing fossil fuels. The report says the use of biomass for heating provides one of the most cost-effective and environmentally acceptable ways of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

### **Exotic species**

On ensuring that forests are adapted to and can withstand the effects of climate change, the report says that forest planners will need to reconsider the current preference for using native tree species and local provenances under all circumstances. The panel said that if greenhouse gas emissions do not decline, foresters will need to consider introducing new species, including those from continental Europe, to ensure that forests are resilient to changes in the climate. It added that “further research is urgently needed to establish which species will be best suited to the changed environmental conditions”.

### **Urban trees**

The report also states that trees, particularly in towns and cities, have an important role in helping society to adapt to climate change by providing shelter, cooling, shade and controlling rainwater runoff. It says tree and woodland planting should be targeted to places where people live, especially the most vulnerable people, and places where people gather, such as town and local centres which currently have low tree cover.

## Stanford-in-the-Vale plans a Community Wood 6

After many years in gestation Stanford-in-the-Vale can look forward to the creation of a new community woodland early in 2010. The land selected for the planting is at the western end of the village, occupying level pasture on a full-bodied brown earth.

The woodland will feature native trees planted in a natural pattern around an extensive ride system designed with the visitor and naturalist in mind. Groups of major native species such as oak and ash will be planted in large swathes, with scattered groups and individual trees of minor species diversifying the mix. Mixed native shrubs will be planted around the edges to add more interest and widen the habitat.

In common with others planted around the county, the woodland will provide a place for quiet recreation and for observing wildlife. As time goes on, thinnings may become valued as firewood and ultimately for higher quality constructional timbers.

## Conditions improve for woodland managers

Recapping on 2009 news, two related events stand out for the woodland manager. These are the launch of the **my-forest** woodland management website\* and the introduction by the Forestry Commission of their **£1000 woodland planning grant**, part of the English Woodland Grant Scheme stable.

These developments, when taken with the improving economics of woodland management argue for a review of your woodland holdings, contact the Woodland Project office for further details.



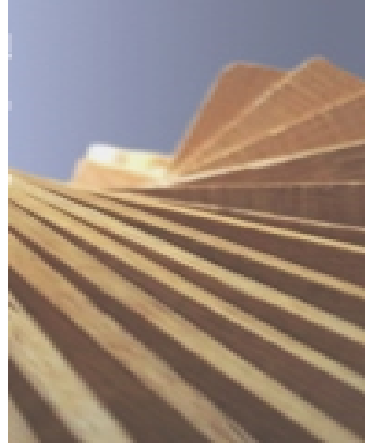
*The myforest application buttons*

\*see Offcuts no. 48 or [www.myforest.org.uk](http://www.myforest.org.uk), see also [www.forestry.gov.uk](http://www.forestry.gov.uk)

## Accoya- Turning softwoods into hardwoods

A clever technique that toughens softwood, enabling it to be used as a durable hardwood is now being sold under the trade name Accoya by Accsys Technologies. The firm is rapidly developing a global network of distributors for the product.

The technique is the latest in a body of experimentation that goes back into the late 1800s, seeking ways to increase the life of timbers in harsh working environments. Early attempts included heat treating the timber to alter the structure of the carbohydrate molecules associated with cellulose to make it less digestible by the common timber degradation fungi.



There is an interesting parallel in certain local practices of scorching the ends of fencing posts to make them last longer in contact with the ground.

Accoya, though, is produced by a distinctive acetylation process, a kind of 'pickling in vinegar' -but using acetyl anhydride. This modifies the chemical surface of the wood in such a way as to inhibit decay by the action of fungal enzymes, yet avoids the impregnation of the timber with hazardous toxins.

It is not known if the durability conferred by this process will survive in-service wear and tear or any process that might breach the protective surface envelope.

More durable timber with longer service life is good news for everyone since it enables timbers to substitute building materials with a higher embedded energy. In the Netherlands, a road bridge guaranteed for 90 years has been built using only Accoya, illustrating the company's faith in the durability of the wood and its capacity to compete economically with steel and concrete as a heavy construction material.

## Excellence in Forestry Awards: A Competition

The Royal Forestry Society in conjunction with Forestry Commission England, presents their all-new *excellence in forestry* awards. The updated and refocused awards have been designed to reflect the broader remit of forestry in England while remaining founded in the maxims of best practice. There are five awards, for:

- Multipurpose forestry
- Community forestry
- Schools award
- Farm woodland Award
- RFS silviculture award

The competition circulates the regions of England and is open to all within that region for that particular year. In 2010 the award moves to Oxfordshire and the south east. The competition makes prestigious awards with cash prizes of £1000 for each category, however there is an entry fee of £50-£100 with entry to the schools category being free of charge. For further information, visit [www.rfs.org.uk](http://www.rfs.org.uk) or contact Trefor Thompson on [rfscpetition@boyns.net](mailto:rfscpetition@boyns.net)

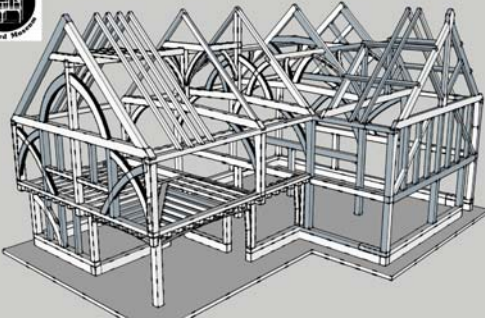
The deadline for entries is noon Tuesday 9th March 2010.



# New Timber Frame for Wallingford?

Wallingford Museum has launched a very exciting 'Framing the Future' project to build a medieval-style timber-framed annexe behind their existing building at Flint House in Wallingford.

They have an ambitious timescale, but if the fundraising and planning permissions come together as planned, the building will be fabricated on the Kinecroft and erected behind the Museum during August 2010.



3-D view of the timber frame from the south-west

It is essential for the project to source wood for this significant timber structure, and is hoping for donations of timber to bring the project to fruition, which would substantially reduce costs. The project team are looking for as much donated timber as can be found, as it forms a significant chunk of their costs. Sponsors will be able to have their names engraved on timbers!

They are especially keen to fell oak with the "flare" at the foot of the tree because these will be valuable for making the joints for the supporting posts and beams (usually these are removed by commercial foresters). Likewise they are also keen to select particular branches for their curved timbers to create braces (often sawn up for firewood in the commercial market). Fallen oak is equally attractive for floor boards and floor joists as this will be seasoned and therefore not warp. For the cladding they are looking for Larch or Western Red Cedar. Ideally, they hope to select and fell the timber this winter, between now and end of February.

If you can help in any way in sourcing the timber, please contact Peggy Holland on 01491 834652 or [peggy.holland@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:peggy.holland@yahoo.co.uk)

## The Countryman– back issues

...from the 70s onwards, needing a new home. Interesting stuff. Contact the Project office for further information..

The Department for Energy and Climate Change announced in November that it is seeking applicants for £1.5 million Bio-energy infrastructure grants. Farmers, foresters and local authorities can apply for £1.5 million grants to help develop the supply of biomass, such as wood chips or energy crops like miscanthus, in England through round three of the Bio-energy Infrastructure Scheme.

As with previous rounds, the objectives of the scheme are to increase renewable energy generation and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, while contributing to sustainable land management. The Scheme provides grants to help the development of the supply chain required to harvest, process, store and supply biomass to heat, combined heat and power, and electricity end-users. The scheme is restricted to projects based in England and is open to businesses, local authorities and charities.

The Infrastructure scheme is open to businesses who are small or medium-sized enterprises and it applies to Short rotation coppice and woodfuel from forestry, arboricultural tree management, among others.

Grants will only be available for projects which complete by 31 March 2011. The **deadline for receipt of applications is 26th February 2010(!)**, although applicant projects will be assessed on a rolling basis as they are received. The Department may also consider extending this deadline, depending on the rate of response. The scheme is administered on DECC's behalf by TUV NEL Ltd.

For application forms, guidance and other information, contact 01355 593800 [help@beis.org.uk](mailto:help@beis.org.uk).

*This newsletter and the Oxfordshire Woodland Project is supported by:*



**OXFORDSHIRE  
COUNTY COUNCIL**

[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk)



**WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL**



Listening Learning Leading



Oxfordshire Woodland Group  
**Gift Aid Declaration**

I (name in capitals)

.....

Of (full address in capitals).....

.....

.....

**have made a gift of £..... to the Oxfordshire Woodland Group, registered charity 1055228.**

**I confirm that I have paid sufficient tax in the UK for the charity to claim back tax against my gift.**

**Signed..... Date.....**

Registered Charity no. 1055228  
*Please complete this form and return to us at  
Oxfordshire Woodland Project OX20 1SN*

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**Situation Vacant      Researcher (15 days)**

The Climate Outreach and Information Network (COIN) seeks an informed researcher to prepare a short report on climate change work on the renovation of existing housing stock.

This will be a one off consultancy to assist COIN in deciding where it can best put its resources in this field. The report will comprise a review of the action already happening, and what still needs to be done, at national and regional levels.

The successful candidate will have 'hands-on' experience of work in this sector in management, research or the building trades. They will have a good grasp of what is happening in climate change action in the housing renovation sector. They must have good interpersonal skills and be an excellent communicator. They will also have a track record of keeping to deadlines.

**This is a four week research project to start immediately. Payment is £95 per day for 15 days. If you are interested in working with COIN on this report please send your CV with a covering letter to the Executive Director, Tim Baster at [tim@coinet.org.uk](mailto:tim@coinet.org.uk) by 11<sup>th</sup> January 2010.**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Oxfordshire Woodland Group Events Booking form</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>--winter/spring 2010--</b></p> <p>Print this booking form and enter your preferences and/or places to be booked. Return to OWP, Fletchers House OX20 1SN. Queries? -contact us (see back page)</p>	<p><b>Your name:</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p><b>email/ phone number:</b></p> <p>_____</p>	
<b>Event</b>	<b>Date &amp; times</b>  <b>OR</b> <b>Record your preferences</b>	<b>Enter below numbers of places to be booked</b>
Community WoodlandTree Planting: Stanford in Vale	Date to be announced, register your interest by returning this form	
Post & Rail fence using cleft chestnut, Glympton estate nr Woodstock	State your availability on any day in March 2010, the best date will be selected	
Pruning workshps 11am-1pm Throughout the county.	Date to be announced, register your interest by returning this form	
Marking-for-thinning workshps 11am-1pm Throughout the county.	Date to be announced, register your interest by returning this form	
Hazel pollarding workshop Kidlington only	Date to be announced, register your interest by returning this form	
Winter Seminar: LEADER/SEEDA grant applications & conditions session	6pm 11th March 2010	
Besselsleigh Wood Bluebell Walk	10.30am Saturday 8th May 2010.	
Woodland Group Field Visit 2010 & AGM Lockinge EstateCourtesy Thomas Loyd. Vale White Horse	1.45pm for 2pm 21st Sept 2010	

For OWG events email the Project office or use booking form opposite, p12.

Contact the Oxfordshire Woodland Project on: 01993 814140 or [owp@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:owp@oxfordshire.gov.uk)  
Attendance is only by advance booking (use the attached form), unless otherwise stated.  
'Woodland meeting' road signs are posted around the venues for all *Group* events. To minimise costs, your booking will be confirmed only on request. Field events will usually involve off-path walking over potentially physically demanding terrain.

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### Tree Planting Stanford-in-the-Vale

A large new woodland will come into being through the efforts of volunteers this winter. The planting dates and arrangements await grant news from the Forestry Commission. If you would like to help Stanford community in their labour of love, contact the Project office using the booking form, opposite. Bring warm clothes and a spade, if you have one.

### Winter programme of small woodland management workshops

—Traditional Post & Rail in cleft sweet chestnut at the Glympton estate, near Woodstock, courtesy the Glympton Estate. This workshop has limited places to be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Participants must have basic tools experience. The workshop will be held on the most convenient day in March for attendees. Register your interest and your availability on all days in March by emailing the Project office. I will pick the date convenient for the greatest number of people and let you know in due course.

—Pruning and marking-for-thinning workshops (between 6 & 12 workshops total) to be held across the county. Normally from 11.00am-1pm on a weekday or weekend. We bring the tools, you bring the warm clothing, boots & sandwiches! Contact the Project office to express your interest. These workshops can accommodate rookies and more experienced persons together.

—Didcot Millennium Wood: formative pruning workshop. Located off New Road, East Hagbourne SU529887 11.00am Sat 13th February. All welcome.

—Hazel pollarding as a no-browsing harvesting option, pea stick and hedging stakes and binders production. Kidlington area. Contact the Project office to express your interest.

**Winter seminar:** The *myForest* presentation has been **postponed** pending completion of additional services developed for the system. Interested parties will be notified of seminar dates in due course.

**Winter seminar #2: LEADER/SEEDA forestry infrastructure grants introduction & workshop 6.00pm 11th March, Loyd Lyndsay Rooms Lockinge SU432884. Courtesy Thomas Loyd.** The Woodland Group has organised a meeting for persons interested in knowing more about the LEADER and SEEDA forestry infrastructure grants available in Oxfordshire and wanting to apply it to their circumstances. Here is an opportunity to get good access to those in the know, in the company of Woodland Group members. SEEDA funding is appropriate for the whole of Oxfordshire, LEADER for South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse districts.

**Besselsleigh Wood Bluebell Walk 10.30am Saturday 8th May 2010.** Experience a woodland walk through a haze of cobalt blue! Meet at the eastern entrance to the wood (the Besselsleigh Hamlet end) SP450018 Oxford Landranger sheet no.164. Further location details may be had from the Project office.

**Woodland Group Field Visit 2010 & AGM, 1.45pm for 2pm 21st Sept 2010, The Loyd Lyndsey rooms, Lockinge Estate. Courtesy Thomas Loyd.** First Visited in the late 1990s the Woodland group will review progress of extensive young woodland at Lockinge estate.

# Project set to relocate in the ...spring

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After nearly 10 years at its present offices in Woodstock the Project will relocate to modern premises at Old Station Way, Eynsham this winter. We will be exchanging the genteel poverty of the old wooden Pratten Building located within the Oxford Museum gardens for an altogether different set up with efficient materials storage and modern offices with high-speed communications links. We expect to retain our telephone numbers and email addresses will remain unaffected.

The Woodland Project moves along with the Wychwood Project and the Lower Windrush Valley Project, the Thames Valley environmental Records Centre (TVERC) and the whole of Oxfordshire County Council's Countryside section.



...events listing inside back page

## **The Oxfordshire Woodland Group**

*Registered charity no.1055228*

Membership is open to all with an interest in Oxfordshire's woodland. The group works towards a sustainable future for our small woodlands for the many benefits they provide. The annual subscription is £10, payable from April and confers full rights of membership. Cheques should be made payable to the Oxfordshire Woodland Group and sent to this address:

Oxfordshire Woodland Project

Fletchers House

Park Street

Woodstock

Oxfordshire OX20 1SN

**NB POSTAL ADDRESS DETAILS CHANGE IN MARCH**

Tel: **01993 814140** fax 814127

—email: [owp@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:owp@oxfordshire.gov.uk)—

[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/woodland\\_project](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/woodland_project)

*Manager: David Rees BSc MICFor CEnv*