

WALES NEWS January 2018



Martin Bishop, National Manager for Wales

Hi All, Welcome to our Wales newsletter in January 2018.

addressed.' [Read more](#)

Call for more planting to save forestry jobs was the title of a Western mail article in December.

"WALES has lost 40 million trees in the last 15 years and action needs to be taken to protect thousands of forestry jobs, the Welsh Government has been warned.

Businesses are warning of sawmill closures and a rural employment crisis unless swift action is taken." The report was put together by David Lee, Confor's publicity guru, and Martin Shipton Chief reporter for the Western mail.

LATEST NEWS

Planting more trees is essential to meeting carbon reduction targets, Welsh Government told

Wales needs to plant 4,000 hectares of new woodland (around 8 million trees) each year to meet the legislated target of an 80% reduction in carbon emissions by 2050, according to a report published today by the UK Climate Change Committee (UKCCC).

The chair of the UKCCC, the Rt. Hon John Gummer, Lord Deben,

commented at the launch that it was disappointing that "Wales had not embraced forestry as it should have in recent years" and that "Wales cannot meet its climate change mitigation obligations until we get on top of the forestry issue, Wales needs a national determination to plant more trees".

Forestry is also at the top of the list identified in the report of 'measures that offer benefits beyond greenhouse gas reduction, such as supporting the seven well-being goals of the Well Being of Future Generations Act.'

A key policy recommendation of the report is, 'The Welsh Government should simplify and streamline the process for supporting tree planting, in order to reduce the barriers to action.'

I attended the launch of the report in Cardiff and commented that: 'It is encouraging to see this recognition of the vital role of forestry. Growing trees for timber is a significant carbon sink and using that timber in construction locks the carbon up in buildings for many decades. Forestry is a vibrant part of our rural economy, and the industry is ready to invest and plant trees as soon as the blocks to planting are

The Branching out Report, by the Climate Change, Environment & Rural Affairs committee, still making news.

The Welsh Assembly debated the report in the Senedd in December with Committee chair Mike Hedges reporting that all the stakeholders consulted for this report had called for significantly increased planting rates. There was no shortage of finance or ideas, he said: forestry is profitable, and could have a significant role to play in regenerating former industrial areas, enabling farmers to access payments for ecosystem services, and building on what is already a significant part of the economy, already generating 10,000 jobs and half a billion pounds GVA.

Many other AM's queued up to commend the report and call on WG to act on it.

In reply the Environment Minister Hannah Blythyn told the Welsh Assembly that improving and expanding the woodland of Wales will be one of her top priorities.

The Minister said that she would explore all avenues for speeding up woodland creation, including removing barriers to planting, collaboration between stakeholders, areas of presumption in favour of woodland creation and forestry as a carbon sink.



One of the recommendations in the report was that "The Welsh Government must, as a matter of urgency, refresh its woodland strategy with the aim of significantly increasing planting rates. The refreshed strategy must include long term

targets for woodland cover and must incorporate commercial forestry”.

The minister has asked the Woodland Strategy Advisory Panel to look at this and come up with a light touch review of the Woodlands for

Wales strategy and we are working on that now.

Some of the Confor Wales Committee met with Environment Minister Hannah Blythyn in November and we are planning a series of site visits for the minister throughout 2018 to show the minister the sector.



Rural Broadband

In response to complaints from Confor members I contacted Plaid Cymru Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Climate Change and Rural Affairs Simon Thomas and asked him to help.



In a debate in the Senedd in November he has called on the Welsh Government to stop the “superfast” broadband rip off and ensure that people in all parts of Wales have adequate access to the internet.” Mr Thomas cited Confor member’s complaints in his questioning of WG saying: “Adequate access to broadband is no longer considered a luxury for businesses and households across Wales, but rather an essential service for commerce, healthy living, to reduce environmental impact, social interaction and education.” He added, “The UK Government has begun planning ahead of 5G technology, whilst the Welsh Government is still grappling with 4G. I want to see the Welsh Government upgrade its 4G infrastructure to give people dependable access to the internet wherever in Wales they are.”

A New Woodland & Forestry Management Plan template is under development by the Confor Wales Committee and NRW. The idea is to have a long term management plan (up to 10 years) for the private sector. By submitting information in advance with sufficient detail, NRW could give approvals for a longer time period than the current 2 years allowed under the present felling licence process.

The draft template is undergoing trials now and hopefully will be ready to launch soon.

Funding will also be available to help with the production of these long term plans and this will be from the Farming Connect programme.

The Farming Connect programme has kindly offered to help run a few workshops to publicise the new template early in 2018. These workshops will also provide information on the funding that is available from the farming connect programme for writing management plans and how to access that funding.

Area Statements

The process of NRW gathering information and data to inform the area statements process is ongoing, they have decided that there will be 7 areas for the process (defined in the map), and including 1 for the whole of the marine environment. NRW will shortly be conducting a survey to ask if you wish to be involved and we will send out the link when it arrives.



Woodland Carbon Code Update – November 2017

There's now 150 projects which have passed the first milestone of validation. Of these, 5 have now past the second milestone - the year 5 verification check - and now have verified carbon units available, and there are more following in their steps over the next few months. In total over 2.5 million tonnes of carbon dioxide that will be sequestered in these projects. View latest stats [here](#)

PLANT HEALTH

All quiet on P ramorum until the surveillance flights restart.

However there is something called the Plant Passport on the horizon, an EU piece of legislation that at present will require movement of timber, bark and other biological material within the UK to be passported. There is a meeting planned in February which we are attending to make sure our sector is not disadvantaged by this.

The deadline set by WG for completing all current Glastir Woodland Creation and Glastir Woodland Restoration proposals is 31 March 2018. Should you need to discuss the practicalities of completing a proposal by 31st March 2018, please contact Rural Payments Wales through your respective online account at the earliest opportunity.

EVENTS

Natural Resources Wales will be holding its annual customer liaison day on Tuesday 16th January 2018.

The venue will be the International Pavilion at the Royal Welsh Showground in Builth Wells. Coffee will be available from 09:30 and a light lunch will be provided.

Please let them know if you wish to attend or for any items for the agenda. Contact Glenys Jones at Glenys.Jones@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk

Forest Industries Mountain Bike Challenge

Tilhill Forestry we will be holding the Forest Industry Mountain Bike Challenge (FIMBC) on 21st June 2018 at the Llandegla Mountain Bike Centre, Llandegla.

The FIMBC is open to everyone with involvement or links with the forest industry. So, whether you are into biomass, sawmilling, forestry management, agent or regulator then we would love you to support the event. The FIMBC provides a great informal networking opportunity, a chance to get on your mountain bike and then enjoy a superb lunch and prize giving.

Tilhill are unashamedly looking for sponsors so we can make the 2018 event bigger and better than in previous years. We can't do this without your help and so we are offering the following sponsorship opportunities:

- Sponsor a section of trail
- Sponsor the BBQ lunch
- Sponsor a trophy and or prizes

In return you will have your logo on all promotional material, banners around the event or in the OnePlanet Adventure café. For further details please contact Simon Miller on 07990 638874, or Steve Bradley on 07836 281131 or Cerys Lowe on 01678 522340.

You are invited to join Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water's innovation event 19th April 2018 in Cardiff!

This year's event will be a full day programme bringing together senior representatives from Welsh Government; academia; SME's; Natural Resources Wales, Ofwat, The Consumer Council for Water and the Drinking Water Inspectorate;

and other UK water companies.

The aim of the event is to help facilitate networking and dialogue between partner organisations and Dŵr Cymru, to highlight potential technology, science and research projects to help Dŵr Cymru achieve its 2050 operational vision. Register here; [Welsh Water's innovation event](#)

CONSULTATIONS

Consultation on the NRW Charging Scheme for 2018-19

NRW are required by Government to recover the costs of delivering regulatory services from those being regulated, rather than being funded by general taxation and this accounts for approximately 20% of Natural Resources Wales total funding. NRW Fees and Charges Scheme is reviewed regularly to ensure that costs are covered and technical requirements are being met. As a result of the most recent review NRW are proposing to maintain the current levels of their baseline charges but are proposing a new upper tier for hydropower abstractions and an increase to their hourly rate for pollution incident response cost recovery.

NRW are seeking your views and opinions on proposals for fees and charges for 2018/19. This 12 week consultation will close on 16th January 2018 and the results will be used to inform the final scheme, which will be introduced from 1st April 2018. Details here: [NRW charging scheme consultation 2018-19](#)

Grey Squirrel Management Action Plan consultation

WG are consulting on a draft plan for the management of grey squirrels that would:

- reduce negative impact on woodland and wider biodiversity
- support native red squirrel populations
- meet our commitment to develop a strategic and targeted approach to threats from non-native invasive species.

The consultation closes 21st February 2018 – [read more](#)

UK Committee on Climate Change Call for Evidence – Bioenergy Review

The UKCCC is planning to update its work on bioenergy, culminating in a new Bioenergy Review to be published in Autumn 2018. This will consider the latest evidence to provide an

updated view on the role of bioenergy in meeting both the United Kingdom and Wales's climate change targets. The review will provide an updated view on the role of bioenergy in decarbonising the UK economy through to 2050. Key themes to be explored include sustainability and certification, GHG emissions accounting, developing sustainable supply, non-energy uses of bioenergy resources, and transitions to future best- uses of bioenergy resources. The consultation closes on 05 February 2018 and can be found here: [Bioenergy Review](#)

FUNDING AND FINANCE

The Timber Business Investment scheme provides funding for capital investments that add value to forests by enabling woodland management, timber harvesting and/or timber processing. The scheme is open to private forest owners, local authorities, SME's and community organisations or forestry contractors. Investments supported by the scheme must be related to improvements in value in forests, for example by enabling woodland management activities, timber harvesting and/or in-forest or small-scale timber processing.

EOI window opens on 1st February 2018 and closes on 18th April. Examples of eligible activities supported include:

- small to medium scale forest-based investments that will enhance forestry potential or that relate to the harvesting, processing and adding value to forest products, particularly environmentally friendly technology, including cable- cranes, skidders and other equipment suitable for small and/or inaccessible woodlands
- investments in development and rationalisation of the marketing and processing of wood and wood products
- investments related to the use of wood as a raw material and energy source prior to industrial processing
- investment may include small forest nursery related developments that are specifically related to one or more forest holdings
- investments must be related to the improvement of the economic value of specific forests.

Details at: [Timber business investment scheme](#)

Glastir Woodland Creation

A sixth window for EOI in Glastir Woodland Creation has also been announced. The window is due to open on 26 February 2018 and will close at

midnight 6th April 2018. We will send out details as soon as they are available. [Glastir woodland creation](#)

The Co-operative Forest Planning Scheme aims to support proposals seeking to facilitate, develop or establish new collaborations and activities and to help potential new collaborations develop project proposals. EOI window is open and closes in April 2018. Details at: [Co-operative forest planning scheme](#)

Natural Resources Wales is making £3million available to projects to improve the environment across Wales. The funding and other support, will be on offer to organisations that can offer projects to meet these challenges as part of a new commissioning approach.

The challenges have been split into four themes:

- Ensuring that land and water is managed sustainably, reducing the risk from environmental hazards such as flooding and pollution
- Improving the resilience and quality of our ecosystems.
- Helping people to live healthier and more fulfilled lives, improving access to the outdoors
- Promoting successful and responsible business - using the natural environment to support the economy and develop skills

The EOI window is open until 14 January 2018. [Read more](#)

MORE NEWS

The Sell2Wales website is an information source and procurement portal set up by the Welsh Government. Examples of tenders on the [Sell2wales](#) site now are:

Grounds Maintenance Services at Cardiff Metropolitan University

Provision of Amenity Grass Cutting to Selected Sites within Pembrokeshire

Forest Replanting, Protection and Maintenance. Published by: Forestry Commission England

Bracken Management in the Black Mountains. Published by: Brecon Beacons National Park Authority

Waking the Dragon

A Welsh Dragon Sculpture and Culture Centre at the entry to Wales that will bring tourists, jobs and business to Wales. Situated on the historical gateway into Wales, at Chirk on the A5/A483, and standing 110 feet into the sky the bronze Welsh Dragon will be a lasting monument signalling your arrival into Wales and helping to create a flagship Business - Tourism - Leisure hub. The project is being led by Simon Wingett, a Welsh businessman who is looking for Corporate Sponsors – Welsh Businesses - who will proudly support this project so that we can forever say “I helped build that! Because this is a Welsh Dragon, we want it to be built and funded by the people of Wales.”

If you would like to be involved in showing the world what Wales can and does achieve, call Simon on 07534 495522. [Read more](#)

The UK's data protection law is changing.

The EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) comes into effect in the UK on 25th May 2018 and will replace the current Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA).

The GDPR will update the law to take into account significant advances in technology as well as fundamental changes to the way in which individuals and organisations communicate, use and share information; and it will also remove inconsistencies in data protection across the EU. More information at: <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/>

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