

# **ENGLAND'S COMMUNITY FORESTS**

**COMMUNITY FORESTS CONFERENCE 2008**

**GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE**

10<sup>TH</sup> November 2008  
The Priory Rooms Meeting & Conference Centre,  
Birmingham

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## Foreward

I have worked for Community Forests/ Community Forestry Initiatives since their beginning early in 1990. I am very proud of the fact they have become the largest environmental regeneration initiative in the country and made a positive and lasting impact on the lives of millions of people. Also, because of their long-term vision, strongly developed partnership working and cost-effectiveness, Community Forests and Community Forestry Initiatives, unsurprisingly remain highly relevant to the effective delivery of national, regional and local agendas, 20 years on. In this context, I look forward to the continuing, active support of the Forestry Commission and Natural England, in pursuance of their agendas, working alongside our diverse other partners.

*Jon Clark- Chairman, National Community Forests*

## Introduction

The Community Forest programme was established in 1990 as a pilot project to demonstrate the potential contribution of environmental improvement to economic and social regeneration.

England's Community Forests are located in and around our largest towns and cities, they aim to deliver a comprehensive package of urban, economic and social regeneration, creating high-quality environments for millions of people by revitalising derelict land, providing new opportunities for leisure, recreation, and cultural activities, enhancing biodiversity, preparing for climate change and supporting education, healthy living and social and economic development.

Each Community Forest is a partnership between local authorities and local, regional and national partners including the Forestry Commission and Natural England. The founding basis for each Forest is a government-approved Forest Plan, a 30-year vision of landscape-scale improvement.

Sharing experience and developing and applying best practice has long been an objective of England's Community Forests and a conference is held each year to support this. The Community Forestry Conference 2008 focused on the rapidly growing policy area of Green Infrastructure which Community Forestry Initiatives have done a great deal to pioneer. It also explored the potential links between Community Forests and similar Initiatives as a growing force for policy development, environmental and social action.

## 1. Growth and Green Infrastructure : Bruce Collinson

The keynote speaker was Bruce Collinson, Growth Policy Advisor with the Department of Communities and Local Government. Bruce has been with ODPM and CLG since 2004 working within housing and growth including Eco Towns.

More recently he has been on loan to the Forestry Commission from CLG working on policies around the housing growth agenda and green infrastructure, embedding CLG's work into the ETWF Strategy and associated Delivery Plan. Bruce's 27 month secondment ends in March 2009. The Delivery Plan was published in December 2008 and CLG were involved in the evolution of this document.

For CLG the environment portfolio concentrates on raising bar in terms of environmental quality for new and existing communities, which includes the planning and delivery of green infrastructure. £38m was made available by CLG between 2004-2007 to support this as part of the Growth Areas Fund, embedding the seven principles of the Sustainable Communities Plan launched by Government in 2003. This plan states that a sustainable community is made up of the following:

1. Active, inclusive and fair
2. Well run
3. Environmentally sensitive
4. Well designed and built
5. Well connected
6. Well served
7. Fair for everyone

Greening the Gateway (Thames Gateway) was one of the first. The new Eco Towns prospectus highlights the principals and concept that can be taken everywhere, a GI worksheet is available on The Town and Country Planning Association website entitled "The Essential Role of Green Infrastructure" <http://www.tcpa.org.uk/ecotowns.asp>. GI is also mentioned in the PPS12 revision and the Community Empowerment White Paper talks about green spaces, as community owned assets.

The key message that CLG/Defra would highlight within the ETWF Strategy is the concept of the right tree in the right place. There are opportunities within the strategy for a step change and the need to raise the bar, supported by commitments for all the key players. Trees, woods and forests can play a much bigger part of the sustainable communities agenda, helping to provide a stronger sense of place and address climate change issues through more considered urban design. The Homes and Communities agency (launched on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2008) will have a huge place shaping role, their £17.8 billion budget is designed to bring forward well thought out regeneration and development in partnership with local authorities and other local partners.

Where public services are concerned Local Strategic Partnerships have been given increased responsibility and purpose to help shape community services through the Sustainable Communities Strategy. Community development and empowerment is key to building capacity, providing leadership and nurturing involvement. Successful engagement and ownership requires joint working from an early stage, which is no surprise to those organisations already operating closely with communities. New and existing work will need future proofing to take into account Climate Change and opportunities to secure non-traditional funding sources. For example the Community Infrastructure Levy presents interesting future opportunities.

## **2. The Economic and Other Benefits of Green Infrastructure : Paul Nolan**

Paul Nolan is the Director of Mersey Forest, which is part of Community Forests North West. CFNW is a charity which supports the work of the Northwest region's two Community Forests – Red Rose Forest in Greater Manchester and The Mersey Forest in Merseyside and North Cheshire. The joint organisation generates funding and raises awareness of the two Forests.

Paul opened his presentation with the definition of GI from the NW Green Infrastructure Guide:

"...Green Infrastructure is the Region's life support system – the network of natural environment components and green and blue spaces that lies within and between the North West's cities, towns and villages and which provides multiple social, economic and environmental benefits..."

Even a quote from the Rt. Hon Hazel Blears confirmed the Community Forests belief that "Green Infrastructure needs to be planned, developed and managed just like all other forms of infrastructure, if society is to thrive and prosper."

Mersey Forest's role is:

**Support** : encompassing the natural economy, climate change, planning and policy and support services e.g. GI Forum, Think Tank

**Development** : policy and GI planning, GI mapping and analysis techniques, communications

**Enabling Delivery** – Particularly of trees and woodland elements and their associated habitats : projects and programmes and the Mersey Forest plan.

The Liverpool Knowledge Quarter alone has 14,000 people working in the area; 15% of Liverpool's GVA and £600m of investment over the next 10 years on restructuring. The investment is for improving the image of the area; providing an attractive setting; providing additional health benefits; developing a "Learning Landscape" and adapting to climate change

GI planning in the region is aimed at creating new GI where it is needed alongside retrofitting within old places. This leads to enhancing the functions of existing GI to meet the needs whilst recognising what is already good and protecting it.

Funding for the natural economy of the North West comes from the regional development agency (NWDA) and Natural England as part of a 3 year programme. GI is only one strand of the activity.

In order to secure economic development funding it is important to capture the economic value of GI, eleven have been identified.

The menu of 11 tests for GI which need to be weighed up against "benefit" and "value" are:

- Quality of place
- Health & well being
- Land and property values
- Economic growth & investment
- Labour productivity
- Tourism
- Leisure & Recreation
- Products from the land
- Land & biodiversity
- Climate change mitigation & adaptation
- Flood alleviation & water management

The GI outcomes also need to be analysed alongside the RDA's objectives and the ecosystem needs to be compared with economic growth and investment.

GI can be used as an umbrella for a range of organisations, each with a specific role but providing a coherent message to funders. It is a programme to bring everyone together under a united front.

Paul reiterated that the Community Forests' wealth of experience and regional networks are excellent mechanisms for enabling GI planning and delivery, but CFs need to share more information on what is working and what isn't. CFs need to re-establish their national position with more publicity perhaps and engagement at a national level.

### **3. Critical Climate Change Functions of Green Infrastructure for Sustainable Economic Development in the North West : Dr. Susannah Gill**

Susannah Gill is based at Mersey Forest but works across both North West Community Forests through CFNW. Her work has been to scope future regional risks, opportunities and priorities for GI to adapt and mitigate for climate change as per one of the actions in the NW Climate Change Action Plan.

The aim was to find out how and where climate change functions of GI are critical for short term economic development of the North West and resolve related 'pinch points', which are areas of regional economic importance with potential considerations for GI climate change functionality. This work was requested by the NWRDA so was economically driven.

Susannah used the example of Salford and the flood plain, with the question of whether we can invest in GI upstream to allow development.

The work had to be complementary to the "Environmental Considerations of Sustainable Economic Growth (ECOSEG)" study which shows four types of critical infrastructure – energy, water, waste and transport. It was felt that GI should also be considered as critical infrastructure. In the short timeframe available Susannah focussed on 'climate change adaptation and mitigation' benefits identified by NENW and not the ten benefits – future work is likely to cover the rest.

The approach:

- identify regional economic priorities;
- climate related risks and opportunities for economic priorities;
- GI functions to reduce risk and maximise opportunity;
- map functionality and where it is most critical to protect and enhance;
- sub-regional storylines;
- actions to protect and enhance functionality.

The regional economic priorities have associated climate change risks and opportunities which GI functions can help minimise or maximise.

Mitigation:

- Carbon sequestration & storage
- Reducing need to travel by car
- Food production

Adaptation:

- Moderating urban heat island
- Reducing flood risk
- Reducing soil erosion
- Allowing species movement
- Reducing visitor pressure on vulnerable landscapes

The mapping functions required:

- Proxies for the mapping functions
- Thresholds for where functions need to be protected and enhanced
- Combining threshold maps to get multifunctional maps
- Clipping at each stage to regional economic priorities.

The storyline can then develop and you can begin to say which economic priorities are most important in sub-regions and districts and combine them with the GI functions that will be most critical in that area. But still not quite ready to speak in terms of risk/opportunity prioritisation.

## **4. Quantifying and Mapping the Green Infrastructure Resource : James Fry**

James Fry is Landscape Programmes Manager for the Forest of Avon and has been involved in GI mapping across the West of England sub- region (formerly Avon). His work has been based on seven typologies:

- Children and Young People's Space;
- Outdoor sports;
- Amenity GI;
- Natural GI;
- Blue infrastructure;
- Allotments and community gardens or farms;
- Formal GI

130,000 new homes are planned for the area across four unitary authorities. One of the problems encountered is that it has been hard to fit the Local Authority interpretations.

A website has been set up as part of the consultation draft to develop a Green Infrastructure strategy. It is intended to be used by members of the public, planners, developers and anyone who has an interest in the provision of Green Infrastructure in their local area.

<http://www.greeninfrastructurewest.org>

Future work will include air quality data and a climate change tool, at the moment they have produced maps that detail the typologies, the publicly accessible GI and buffering.

The project has been financially supported by CLG and NE. There is a new bid in which is mainly CLG. In response to a question Bruce Collinson said that there will hopefully be more investment to come in the future.

The Forest of Avon is trying to get the maps adopted by the planners and there is the hope that they will use the website as a trusted resource. Although the planners provided input Jim is not yet convinced that they will use them.

There was a discussion on whether GI was just about green space because there seemed to be more emphasis on this. It was commented that CLG are looking at urban green space but also looking at the wider countryside and how growth impacts on the countryside.

Planning Policy Guidance 17: Planning for Open space, Sport and Recreation (PPG 17) is likely to be reviewed possibly in 2009.

There is also currently a consultation running on the Planning Policy Statement on Eco Towns when is due to finish on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2009, Andy Gale of Natural England reminded everyone that it was important to respond to that consultation because of the relevance to our discussions today.

## **5. Green Infrastructure Planning in Swindon : Jonathan Wilshaw**

Jonathan Wilshaw is based at the Great Western Community Forest and has been working in Swindon and the wider GW Community Forest on Green Infrastructure planning. Over the last 12-18 months he has been developing a GI strategy for Swindon.

Jonathan told the audience that Swindon doesn't enjoy the best of images but it does have a very strong economy and unemployment is low. Swindon sits on the M4 and on the main rail link between London and Bristol. It is in a very attractive landscape, between two areas of outstanding natural beauty. It has a strong cultural and landscape heritage. Swindon is

famous for its post war expansion and in the 1980's it was Europe's fastest expanding town. There is a population of 180,000 set to grow by another 35,000 homes over the next 20 years or so.

It seems that every 20 years or so there seems to be some new impetus for green space planning, network planning and the language is much the same. Community Forest plans came along this route but GI is a new impetus with a new planning system and the development of new policies.

The SW Regional Spatial Strategy has a strong policy for green infrastructure, it's not fully adopted yet and there is an expectation that the Local Authority will take a lead on developing local GI plans and supported policies. Jonathan has been working with the Local Authority planners to develop Swindon's GI strategy. The Community Forest team has been used in a consultancy roll and Jonathan authored the document.

It took quite a while to develop through a long process with stakeholders and workshops. Geographically the plans looked beyond Swindon's boundaries, similar to the Community Forests boundaries. There are two main strands, one is looking at some of the specific functions of GI:

- play provision,
- biodiversity,
- environmental services
- quality of life issues
- multi-functional networks.

A lot of maps were produced using local standards and the team did various types of analysis but at the end of the day Jonathan said they got the crayons out and did all the overlapping, multi functionality and hot spots. Working with experts and stakeholders they started to draw on the maps identifying key networks from the regional scale, the bigger scale for Swindon down to the localised scale and identifying the local clusters within the urban centre and the importance of the expansion areas.

Two of Swindon's major expansion areas are:

- Wichelstowe which is currently being built, 2,500 homes on the southern edge of Swindon.
- Swindon's eastern development area about 12,000+ homes but that number may rise. The masterplan is not available until it has been out to wider consultation. The development has almost been shaped by the GI - islands of development set within a sea of green space.

There are two areas of land, each about 400 hectares, one is flood plain and the second is tenanted farm land owned by the Borough Council. These will both be designated green space, the first area will range from nature reserves through to more intensively managed open spaces and country parks. The second, which in lieu of the Wichelstowe development, will have landscape enhancements, access and recreation.

There have been a number of problems and difficulties:

- Resources : for the planning and delivery. It was carried out in-house as Community Forest work no additional cash.
- Understanding : what GI actually is and what it means in planning terms.
- Standards : what standards should be used and how to build a strong, robust evidence base that is open to challenge.
- Science : Great Western Community Forest dealt with GI in terms of biodiversity, health and well-being, environmental services, flooding and climate control, then broke it down into individual bits and pieced them back together to talk about multi-

functionality. Jonathan is not convinced that's the way the world works. This may be an area of work that needs more holistic thinking and a systems based approach.

From the questions and discussion that followed:

Great Western CF presentation: This was a good case study of a local authority working with its Community Forest and that authority making GI mainstream, but this isn't always the case and other partnerships have different experiences. The mapping work came from the master plan of the big developments. The issue of scale is a big one and the vast amount of mapping might not have been necessary. In retrospect they might have been able to get away with a bit less.

There was concern that good GI work is going on but it seems to be variable how it is being funded. In the east midlands work is being funded through growth point funding. Some Local Authorities are buying in expensive consultants but there are obviously Community Forests doing excellent work and not getting any reward for it. Local authorities should be letting Community Forests use growth point funding to get absolutely the top notch job and if Community Forests are doing it they should get paid for it.

There are some tensions: Community Forests have helped bid for CLG growth points funding but the money went to the Unitary Authorities to some degree to do GI work themselves but to do strategic master planning and employ consultants from elsewhere. The Community Forest was bypassed. They are now back at the table but it's quite competitive and LAs feel reassured by paying £400,000 for consultants to do the whole of their master planning of which GI is a component. The message from around the country might be different and it's not as straightforward as it should be.

When looking at green spaces (reference to Forest of Avon and Great Western presentations) is the issue of gardens and private space more difficult to map and evaluate? If you are going to argue about climate change cooling, the white space can't be ignored. Are we at risk of ending up with two different things called GI plans? Ones that look at everything and ones that look at green space.

Great Western CF described a number of principles within their document and one of those principles is that the white spaces are just as important for individual functions. The white space hasn't been ruled out but it's a different strategy that picks up on more detail.

## **6. Accessing Resources to Deliver Green Infrastructure – The Yorkshire Experience**

### **6.1 Kryss Craik – South Yorkshire Community Forest**

Two project from the South Yorkshire Forest, both with EU funding.

Creating a Setting for Investment - EU Interreg funded project. Providing an evidence base for policy on creating sustainable communities and landscapes. Approval of the project was linked to the climate change agenda coming up, and recognition that Europe was going through challenges on the economic and environmental side.

Three aspects of what was achieved through this are relevant to green infrastructure activity:

- International partnership: learning from work that had already been delivered on the ground, principally in Germany. Belgium were at an earlier stage. Also

encompassed different organisations on the academic side, their investment agencies and regeneration agencies.

- Research
- Investment sites

The research indicated what actually matters to stakeholders when they are looking at good GI provision and what attracts investors.

- Focus on entrances, access routes and provision of amenities;
- remove detractors;
- a 'cared for' appearance matters;
- generous and high quality planting;
- community engagement.

The future actions which developed from the research were aimed at local authorities, developers, investors:

- Develop and deliver regional or area-based strategies for landscape quality enhancement.
- Prepare site masterplans to promote site identity and high quality landscape and ongoing maintenance.
- Ensure that ongoing maintenance and security is addressed.
- Developers should work with planners to invest in quality landscapes at site and area level.
- Local community should be involved throughout the development phase.

Details in the publication - Creating a Setting for Investment from South Yorkshire Forest. More information on : [www.environment-investment.com](http://www.environment-investment.com).

SY Forest have had approval for two projects in the next phase.

1. Valuing landscapes in the urban economy (VALUE) and that is now under way. The main objective is to demonstrate the economic value of green infrastructure at a city region scale.
2. Making places profitable – private and public open spaces (MP4) is focussed on the maintenance and the future management of open spaces and getting partners together. MP4 will start shortly.

**Forest Resources Grant:** EU Objective 1 funded and just finishing. A programme of grant packages available to all sectors connected with woodland ownership, management, woodland creation, and businesses working in timber (harvesting, marketing, processing). Focussed on the woodland sector rather than GI. But this illustrates how by linking different functions the actual result is much bigger.

Woodland management targets were exceeded with over 2,500 hectares of woodland brought into some kind of management. A new woodland innovation centre at Ecclesall Wood was established. An annual South Yorkshire Woodfair to showcase wood-based activity.

The succession to the Forestry Resources Grant:

- Woodfuel Infrastructure programme – supported by Yorkshire Forward with funding until 2010. Turning the south and west Yorkshire sub region into probably one of the leading areas in England for developing wood boilers on a community based scale.
- Recognition that woodland management strategies need to be linked to producing woodfuel and other sustainable wood activities.

- Growing the South Yorkshire Forest : an independent report supporting the need for continued new woodland planting, to address the woodfuel agenda and restoring, regenerating brownfield sites. 500 hectares have been identified as quick win sites.
- Continue working with Sheffield Council to develop the Innovation Centre at Ecclesall Wood

SY Forest would like to see GI as creating the over arching impetus for all this to carry on.

## **6.2 Guy Thompson – White Rose Forest Partnership**

Guy provided a potted history of White Rose Forest:

- Launched in 2000. Partnership formalised in 2002. The primary aim is economic, “To improve the environment as a way of attracting and retaining business investment in West Yorkshire”.
- 2000-2003 WRF secured £1m to deliver 42 new woodland projects covering 100 hectares, targeting derelict land, major transport corridors, regeneration areas, gateways. £500K came from Yorkshire Forward. The funding stream stopped in 2003 to be replaced by the “single pot” and the RDA withdrew support.
- 2003-2004 Partners continued commitment to WRF with the Woodland Ways projects securing £225,000 for communities working with ancient woodlands on archaeology and biodiversity surveys. Creating a Setting for Investment contributed £200,000.
- 2005 WRF Steering group adopted Green Infrastructure as flagship activity. Lobbied Yorkshire Forward during the revision of the Regional Economic Strategy and sought funding from Yorkshire Forward through the West Yorkshire Investment Plan.

But the route to this point was long and frustrating with submissions, sub groups and ICE panels, before getting approval as an official project in the investment plan. At this point Yorkshire Forward decided not to fund any access projects so they had to be cut from the plans.

In October 2006 the new plan consisting of predominantly urban forestry was finally approved by the executive. Only then, two years after first starting on this route could WRF finally make a submission to Yorkshire Forward.

WRF had a big investment in Manningham, under Urban Renaissance, and a business plan with RSPB for a wetlands area. Most of the money was on a variety of new community woodlands also providing a community woodland resource for woodfuel and a revenue post for Yorwoods to help Local Authorities do management planning.

After 15 months in Yorkshire Forward's Performance Management Framework the partnership were awarded a contract in April 2008.

The key to this approval was a champion inside Yorkshire Forward plus the reputation of previous WRF work, the widespread partnership buy in and the links within their work to spatial priorities

In May 2008 Yorkshire's Regional Spatial Strategy was published and Green Infrastructure is now core policy. Local Authorities and local delivery frameworks have to have GI and they have to argue the economic benefits for it. One of the WRF partners, Natural England, is undertaking a mapping of the whole region's green infrastructure, working with planners and looking for the evidence for the policy.

West Yorkshire Investment Planning has gone completely it's now all about the city regions so they are now aligning themselves to the city regions secretariat to make sure they are on the agenda, they've got the growth points and they're looking for a GI strategy for the city region.

Referring to the woodfuel infrastructure programme mentioned by Krys Craik, Guy explained that the Forestry Commission has got a £2M capital plan to deliver its England Forestry Strategy currently inside the Performance Management Framework.

White Rose Forest while delivering its GI programme are embarking on a period of proposed expansion to try and include within the partnership the Local Authorities within the Leeds City Region but outside West Yorkshire. They are looking to ensure that the White Rose Forest is the partnership for GI delivery and planning in the Leeds City Region.

**From the questions and discussion that followed:**

There was interest in the FC funding bid and how that would relate to WRF's bid that had already been approved. Whether FC was seen as being more strategic, will the money still come to the same beneficiaries or different?

In response Guy said that WRF had to make sure it was dovetailed. The WRF bid was part of the sub regional investment plan and FC were going for a regional pot, a slightly different funding pot but basically theirs is up to the forest gate investment in forestry management, whereas the infrastructure is all about the processing and demand side. Krys of South Yorkshire Forest added that the FC programme is going through the width of the infrastructure programme which includes a lot of capital investment, things like wood pellet plants. There is overlap identified in some of the work that ties in with sourcing woodfuel and FC want to look at more strategic aspects of woodland management which again is creating woodfuel. It is a woodfuel infrastructure programme. There's still a lot of grey areas.

Is RDA funding principally around woodfuel?

The National Forest have RDA funding of around £850,000 for a visitor infrastructure project. For branding of existing tourist attractions, on site interpretation and signage. Linking tourism, recreation, attractions under one brand.

The Mersey Forest/Red Rose Forest got £5M to deliver 160 hectares of brownfield land across the Mersey belt for soft end use but economic benefit. Linking with their Green Streets Programme.

South Yorkshire Forest are exploring a programme which concentrates on Gateway developments.

Forest of Avon sub region is perceived to be an extremely urban end of a larger rural region so they have struggled to make any kind of economic arguments for the development of wood fuel, for example and wood products, the tourism argument doesn't stack up. It's a kind of growth area, but it has some quite rural and some quite deprived areas.

## 7. The Future of Community Forestry

Jon Clark, who was chairing the conference, indicated that it was difficult to compete with large, well-funded national federations such as Groundwork or the Wildlife Trusts, in terms of accessing scarce resources. He suggested therefore, that consideration should be given to expanding the Community Forestry network to strengthen its voice at a national level. Jon outlined that current national working focused on one annual seminar, the collation of annual monitoring data and a secretariat provided by Angela Pollard. This was largely funded by the Community Forest themselves, although the FC continued to make an important contribution. Jon indicated that there had been a long debate about the resources the FC had provided Community Forests to work nationally and the feeling that there is a need for continued funding support to demonstrate their practical commitment to Community Forestry.

In this context, delegates debated the following questions and the following comments summarises their position:

### **a. What would the benefits be of Community Forestry initiatives working more closely together?**

- Strong support for sharing best practice. A need to share this at the appropriate 'level' of staff was identified.
- General agreement that the Community Forests should work closely with other Community Forestry Initiatives because this provides a stronger collective voice, more likely to be heard at national level. A need to identify a common set of objectives was identified and this could help in ensuring the 'message' does not become too dilute.
- A feeling that through the above, there is a greater chance of accessing national funding through grants and directly.

### **b. What form should the network take, based on a realistic assessment of time and resources?**

- Strong support for an annual national meeting based around one or more key topics, possibly lasting 1.5 days. The need for this to include relevant staff rather than just Directors was identified.
- Wider communication by email, facilitated by a secretariat.
- Strong support for a national champion/advocate, perhaps seconded from a relevant organisation. An alternative would be to employ a lobbyist, perhaps jointly with an organisation which shares similar objectives.

### **c. What role should the Forestry Commission, Natural England or other Government agencies play in supporting the above?**

- There was a strong support for these organisations championing Community Forestry and a broad feeling that this was not currently taking place.
- Their involvement was also strongly felt to provide Community Forestry initiatives with access to Government agendas.
- There was support for one of these organisations to provide a secondee to achieve the above.
- It was felt that there was a lack of consistency in how Community Forestry Initiatives were treated across the country.

# **APPENDICES**

**DELEGATES LIST FOR COMMUNITY FORESTS CONFERENCE  
10<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2008 - BIRMINGHAM**

<b>ORGANISATION</b>	<b>DELEGATES NAME</b>
Communities and Local Government	Bruce Collinson
Community Forests North West	Susannah Gill
Community Forests North West	Tom Butlin
Forest of Avon	Jim Fry
Forest of Avon	Jon Clark
Forest of Mercia	Dave Knowles
Forest of Mercia	Rebecca Banks
Great Western Community Forest	Jonathan Wilshaw
Green Network, Scotland	Max Hislop
Greenwood Forest	Malcolm Hackett
Greenwood Forest	Nic Wort
Groundwork West Durham & Darlington	Kate Culverhouse
Groundwork West Durham & Darlington	Nigel Potter
Marston Vale Community Forest	James Russell
Mersey Forest	Chris McGloin
Mersey Forest	Clare Olver
Mersey Forest	Jo Sayer
Mersey Forest	Paul Nolan
National Forest	Simon Evans
Natural England	Andy Gale
Pennine Edge	Emily Barker
Red Rose Forest	Mike Savage
Red Rose Forest	Tony Hothersall
Secretariat Community Forests/ Woodland Initiatives Network	Angela Pollard
South Yorkshire Forest	Krys Craik
White Rose Forest	Guy Thompson

# **GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE EXPERIENCE**

**NATIONAL COMMUNITY FORESTS CONFERENCE 2008  
GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE**

<b>Name of organisation</b>	<b>Forest of Avon</b>
<b>Area of operation</b>	West of England sub-region (formerly Avon), excluding the Mendips and Cotswold Hills AONBs.
<b>Delegates name(s)</b>	Jon Clark (Director), Jim Fry (Landscape Programmes Manager)
<b>Telephone number</b>	0117 953 2141
<b>Email address(es)</b>	<a href="mailto:jon.clark@forestofavon.org.uk">jon.clark@forestofavon.org.uk</a> ; <a href="mailto:james.fry@forestofavon.org.uk">james.fry@forestofavon.org.uk</a> ;
<b>Experience of Green Infrastructure (promotion, mapping, delivering, managing?)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over the last 3 years there has been a considerable focus on promoting and mapping green infrastructure both at West of England (sub-regional) level and within each of the four Unitary Authorities. A key area of work has been the production of the Green Infrastructure website setting out comprehensive Green Infrastructure mapping for the whole of sub-region, produced in partnership with Avon Wildlife Trust.</li> <li>• At a more local level, there has also been considerable work undertaken to influence the shape and form of urban extensions, which could increase houses within/ adjacent to the Forest of Avon by up to 130,000.</li> </ul>
<b>Any problems/difficulties?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green Infrastructure is becoming a key priority for Avon Wildlife Trust, which means that income generation by the Forest team is compromised.</li> <li>• The huge growth agenda means that it is difficult for a small team to influence this at all levels. This is now being supported by the growing practical engagement of Natural England and the Forestry Commission, something the Forest of Avon team has sought to promote.</li> </ul>
<b>Proposed future work within Green Infrastructure</b>	Green Infrastructure has been included within the recent Growth Fund bid for the sub-region, submitted to CLG. If successful, this will fund mapping work of urban extensions, focusing on the identification of deficits in provision and setting out a prioritised programme of delivery.

**NATIONAL COMMUNITY FORESTS CONFERENCE 2008  
GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE**

<b>Name of organisation</b>	<b>Forest of Mercia</b>
<b>Area of Operation</b>	Southern Staffordshire and West Midlands
<b>Delegates Name(s)</b>	Rebecca Banks and Dave Knowles
<b>Telephone number</b>	01543 370737
<b>Email address(es)</b>	<a href="mailto:Rebecca.Banks@Staffordshire.gov.uk">Rebecca.Banks@Staffordshire.gov.uk</a> <a href="mailto:David.knowles@staffordshire.gov.uk">David.knowles@staffordshire.gov.uk</a>
<b>Experience of Green Infrastructure (promotion, mapping, delivering, managing?)</b>	Much of the work we complete on public open space for Local Authority Partners links in with promoting and delivering Green Infrastructure, such as woodland management on urban parks, street tree planting, free tree schemes, improving access, improving the environment. Our focus is largely around involving people in this process through community engagement and work with local young people.
<b>Any problems/difficulties?</b>	Although the majority of work we undertake could be linked to Green Infrastructure, we do not specifically 'badge' it as this.
<b>Proposed future work within Green Infrastructure</b>	Continuation of the work highlighted above.

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<b>Name of organisation</b>	<b>Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership</b>
<b>Area of Operation</b>	Glasgow City Region
<b>Delegates Name(s)</b>	Max Hislop
<b>Telephone number</b>	0141 229 7747
<b>Email address(es)</b>	max.hislop@gcvgreennetwork.gov.uk
<b>Experience of Green Infrastructure (promotion, mapping, delivering, managing?)</b>	<p>The Glasgow and Clyde Valley (GCV) Green Network Partnership is a catalyst for the creation of a transformational high quality Green Network across the Glasgow metropolitan area. The role of the Partnership is to act strategically to stimulate and facilitate the planning, delivery and sustainable long term management of the Green Network.</p> <p>The aim is to create a step change in the scale and quality of the Green Network to improve the region's competitiveness for investment, enhance quality of life, promote biodiversity and more sustainable use of natural resources, and encourage healthy lifestyles.</p> <p>The GCV Green Network Partnership brings together the eight local authorities which comprise the Glasgow metropolitan region with five major government agencies that promote and delivery on the environmental, social, health and economic agendas throughout the GCV area, namely Communities Scotland, Scottish Enterprise, Glasgow Centre for Population Health, Forestry Commission Scotland and Scottish Natural Heritage.</p> <p>Four themes provide the framework for project development: stronger communities; enterprise development; health improvements and biodiversity and the environment.</p> <p><u>Promotion</u> – see our 'Seeing the Bigger Picture' campaign <a href="http://www.gcvgreennetwork.gov.uk/video/bigger_picture.php">http://www.gcvgreennetwork.gov.uk/video/bigger_picture.php</a>.</p> <p><u>Mapping</u> – we completed GIS mapping of all greenspace to PAN 65 typology across the region more than 2 years ago.</p> <p>Delivery, management – see our project reports: <a href="http://www.gcvgreennetwork.gov.uk/publications/reports_strategies.php">http://www.gcvgreennetwork.gov.uk/publications/reports_strategies.php</a></p>
<b>Any problems/difficulties?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner commitment</li> <li>• Managing expectations</li> <li>• Core funding</li> <li>• Apathy/Cynicism</li> <li>• Lack of vision</li> </ul>
<b>Proposed future work within Green Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GCV Green Network planning guidance</li> <li>• SUDS and the Green Network</li> <li>• Models for sustainable management of greenspace</li> <li>• Various geographically focussed Green Network strategies</li> </ul>

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<b>Name of organisation</b>	<b>Great Western Community Forest</b>
<b>Area of Operation</b>	Geographical: GWCF covering Swindon, part of Wiltshire and Oxfordshire. Some limited regional work (largely south—west)  Job role: Projects Manager GWCF, GI planning
<b>Delegates Name(s)</b>	Jonathan Wilshaw
<b>Telephone number</b>	01793 466322
<b>Email address(es)</b>	jwilshaw@swindon.gov.uk
<b>Experience of Green Infrastructure (promotion, mapping, delivering, managing?)</b>	Management and delivery of GI initiatives via community forestry  Author of GI strategy (consultation document) for Swindon + other area based GI plans within GWCF.
<b>Any problems/difficulties?</b>	Resources and understanding.
<b>Proposed future work within Green Infrastructure</b>	Continued delivery of GI 'on the ground' through community forestry.  Steer through adoption of Swindon's GI Strategy.  Supporting development of : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- GI supplementary planning document for Swindon's LDF.</li> <li>- Master planning for major development areas in Swindon</li> <li>- Parks and open space strategy for Swindon</li> </ul>

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<b>Name of organisation</b>	<b>Greenwood Community Forest Partnership</b>
<b>Area of Operation</b>	Nottinghamshire
<b>Delegates Name(s)</b>	Malcolm Hackett and Nic Wort
<b>Telephone number</b>	01623 827327
<b>Email address(es)</b>	<a href="mailto:malcolm.hackett@nottscc.gov.uk">malcolm.hackett@nottscc.gov.uk</a> <a href="mailto:nic.wort@nottscc.gov.uk">nic.wort@nottscc.gov.uk</a>
<b>Experience of Green Infrastructure (promotion, mapping, delivering, managing?)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Delivery of new GI – transforming derelict land into accessible greenspace.</li> <li>2. Promotion – encouraging use of greenspace for recreation, health, education etc.</li> <li>3. Mapping – all of Greenwood mapped to show available green infrastructure and its multifunctionality</li> <li>4. Growth agenda – supporting development of GI strategy for Three Cities and Three Counties</li> </ol>
<b>Any problems/difficulties?</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sharing data between partners</li> <li>2. Updating data to overcome inaccuracies</li> <li>3. Using mapping data to allow progression to a meaningful strategy</li> </ol>
<b>Proposed future work within Green Infrastructure</b>	Likely to propose that Greenwood should act as “clearing house” for GI data between partners, to allow development of strategy and to support sharing of information and best practice, helping districts with production of greenspace strategies. To consider need for dedicated officer to facilitate this.

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<b>Name of organisation</b>	<b>Groundwork West Durham &amp; Darlington</b>
<b>Area of Operation</b>	West Durham
<b>Delegates Name(s)</b>	Kate Culverhouse Nigel Potter
<b>Telephone number</b>	01388 662666
<b>Email address(es)</b>	kate.culverhouse@groundwork.org.uk
<b>Experience of Green Infrastructure (promotion, mapping, delivering, managing?)</b>	North East Community Forest (Great North Forest and The Tees Forest) has recently become Groundwork Community Forests North East. As a result we are in the process of ensuring that quality delivery on the ground continues whilst we assess the best way forward for the organisation. We see Green Infrastructure at the heart of the future programme but at this stage need to evaluate with partner Local Authorities the potential within the North East. So the conference is perfectly timed in getting to know what the other Community Forests are doing re: Green Infrastructure.
<b>Any problems/difficulties?</b>	
<b>Proposed future work within Green Infrastructure</b>	

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<b>Name of organisation</b>	<b>Marston Vale Trust</b>
<b>Area of Operation</b>	Forest of Marston Vale (Bedfordshire)
<b>Delegates Name(s)</b>	James Russell
<b>Telephone number</b>	01234 762607
<b>Email address(es)</b>	<a href="mailto:james.russell@marstonvale.org">james.russell@marstonvale.org</a>
<b>Experience of Green Infrastructure (promotion, mapping, delivering, managing?)</b>	<p>GI delivery is the core business of the Marston Vale Trust, principally directed at projects related to creating the Forest of Marston Vale, one of England's Community Forests. Considerable GI project delivery experience from £50k-£6m in value, via small, multi-disciplinary team.</p> <p>GI planning work has been limited to producing an agreed Framework for creating the Bedford River Valley Park, an 868ha GI asset on the Bedford urban fringe.</p> <p>GI promotion via general advocacy work, including case study literature.</p> <p>The Marston Vale Trust owns and manages a portfolio of c.500ha of GI assets, ranging from modest community woodlands to revenue-generating visitor facilities and multi-functional parks.</p>
<b>Any problems/difficulties?</b>	
<b>Proposed future work within Green Infrastructure</b>	<p>Continuing delivery of a range of GI projects as part of creating the Forest of Marston Vale, working with public and private sector partners.</p> <p>Leading the creation of an 868ha sub-regional park (Bedford River Valley Park) as essential GI for the Bedford/Marston Vale Growth Area.</p>

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<b>Name of organisation</b>	<b>The Mersey Forest</b>
<b>Area of Operation</b>	Merseyside and North Cheshire
<b>Delegates Name(s)</b>	Susannah Gill Chris McGloin Clare Olver Tom Butlin Jo Sayers Paul Nolan
<b>Telephone number</b>	01925 859604
<b>Email address(es)</b>	paulnolan@merseyforest.org.uk
<b>Experience of Green Infrastructure (promotion, mapping, delivering, managing?)</b>	Policy development, project delivery, mapping, supporting regional activities
<b>Any problems/difficulties?</b>	Keeping up with all the LDF Need for more Planning expertise on the Forest team Having created the demand – keeping up Maintaining our position
<b>Proposed future work within Green Infrastructure</b>	Critical GI 2 Climate Change and GI Sub regional plans Growth points

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<b>Name of organisation</b>	<b>National Forest Company</b>
<b>Area of Operation</b>	200 square miles of central England – Staffs, Derbys, Leics.
<b>Delegates Name(s)</b>	Simon Evans
<b>Telephone number</b>	01283 551211
<b>Email address(es)</b>	sevans@nationalforest.org
<b>Experience of Green Infrastructure (promotion, mapping, delivering, managing?)</b>	Extensive – covering all of the areas highlighted over a 15 year period as part of The National Forest’s development.
<b>Any problems/difficulties?</b>	Matching the scale of growth planned in The National Forest with a strategic approach to GI. The National Forest is both a strategic resource for GI for major towns and cities across parts of the east and west Midlands. It also needs to secure major new GI related to specific growth proposals from the two new Growth Points affecting the area.
<b>Proposed future work within Green Infrastructure</b>	Input to GI boards for 6Cs and Burton Growth Points affecting the Forest. Promoting a strategic GI approach with local and regional authorities. Working with partners to achieve new GI provision. Updating our Planners and Developers Guide to help secure more extensive development related woodland planting. Commenting on RSS, LDFs and major planning applications to help secure GI provision with individual developments.

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<b>Name of organisation</b>	<b>Pennine Edge Forest</b>
<b>Area of Operation</b>	The Greater Manchester borough's of Oldham, Rochdale, Stockport and Tameside
<b>Delegates Name(s)</b>	Emily Barker
<b>Telephone number</b>	01706 924234
<b>Email address(es)</b>	Emily.barker@rochdale.gov.uk
<b>Experience of Green Infrastructure (promotion, mapping, delivering, managing?)</b>	<p>Pennine Edge Forest is one of a number of organisations involved with developing green infrastructure strategy and policy across Greater Manchester.</p> <p>In Rochdale, a green infrastructure strategy is being developed as one of a number of supporting documents for the local development framework, the community strategy and the work of the local strategic partnership. This will be accompanied by series of detailed green infrastructure plans for each of the townships within the borough which will include detailed information on the local green infrastructure and plans for its future development.</p>
<b>Any problems/difficulties?</b>	<p>As with all new areas of work ensuring that policy documents reflect what is needed and ensuring that implementers understand what is needed and work with developers etc to deliver the document. It is a work in progress to ensure that the local and borough plan mesh together and that these in turn link together with the Greater Manchester framework.</p>
<b>Proposed future work within Green Infrastructure</b>	<p>Continue the development of the strategy and plans within Rochdale and work with the other Pennine Edge Forest borough to facilitate strategy development as appropriate to them. We will also be continuing to work on the role of Green infrastructure within Greater Manchester.</p>

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<b>Name of organisation</b>	<b>Red Rose Forest</b>
<b>Area of Operation</b>	Greater Manchester
<b>Delegates Name(s)</b>	Tony Hothersall, Mike Savage
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 872 1660
<b>Email address(es)</b>	<a href="mailto:tony@redroseforest.co.uk">tony@redroseforest.co.uk</a> , <a href="mailto:mike@redroseforest.co.uk">mike@redroseforest.co.uk</a>
<b>Experience of Green Infrastructure (promotion, mapping, delivering, managing?)</b>	Red Rose Forest is (with The Mersey Forest) a leading player in developing GI in the North West, inc. playing an active role in the GI Think Tank. RRF undertook the first phase in the GI in Greater Manchester project and are working on further developments of the project. Are leading in the development of Tree Audits for GI planning.
<b>Any problems/difficulties?</b>	GI in Greater Manchester project identified major problems with inconsistency of policies/designations between Local Authorities (e.g. wildlife/green corridors, regeneration areas) Still encountering a tendency to focus on greenspace rather than the full range of GI components
<b>Proposed future work within Green Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting GI in the emerging Greater Manchester Commissions</li> <li>• Undertaking a GI Plan for Irwell City Park</li> <li>• Working on GI planning for Growth Points</li> <li>• Working with partners on District GI Plans</li> <li>• Undertaking Tree Audit for Salford and promoting Tree Audits regionally</li> </ul>

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<b>Name of organisation</b>	<b>South Yorkshire Forest Partnership</b>
<b>Area of Operation</b>	South Yorkshire
<b>Delegates Name(s)</b>	Krys Craik
<b>Telephone number</b>	0114 257 1199
<b>Email address(es)</b>	Krys.craik@syforest.co.uk
<b>Experience of Green Infrastructure (promotion, mapping, delivering, managing?)</b>	Mapping – SY woodlands( extensive and detailed), also selected areas of access, landscape quality, derelict land - All on GIS MapInfo Research projects – see presentation Implementation of greenspace improvement and land regeneration – see presentation
<b>Any problems/difficulties?</b>	Securing funding in the current climate
<b>Proposed future work within Green Infrastructure</b>	See presentation for secured projects and others under consideration

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<b>Name of organisation</b>	<b>White Rose Forest</b>
<b>Area of Operation</b>	West Yorkshire
<b>Delegates Name(s)</b>	Guy Thompson
<b>Telephone number</b>	07720414356
<b>Email address(es)</b>	Guy.Thompson@kirklees.gov.uk
<b>Experience of Green Infrastructure (promotion, mapping, delivering, managing?)</b>	The WRF, since January 2005, has been promoting GI particularly regarding investment planning. The partnership in September 2005 set up a sub-regional working party called the Green Infrastructure Group. In April 2008 it finally succeeded in securing £914,000 from Yorkshire Forward for a programme of GI projects.
<b>Any problems/difficulties?</b>	"Ploughing a furrow" for GI meant the need for extensive consultation and making partnership links across the investment planning process. Thus very time consuming.
<b>Proposed future work within Green Infrastructure</b>	Now working with the Leeds City Region partnership to embedding GI into future economic development work.