

Wood Products *co-operative*

Project Summary

A marketing co-operative that promotes and sells wood products sourced from local timber.

Background

After hosting a workshop on developing the local timber industry, the Forest of Avon became aware that:

- Timber producers found it hard to find local outlets for their timber, resulting in much being used for pulp or burnt as waste.
- At the same time, users of local timber reported problems with sourcing local timber!
- Local timber users also had problems with marketing their products, without a clear brand image and with no real marketing support or networking.

The Project

With assistance from the Co-operative Development Agency, the Forest established a marketing co-operative, linking producers and users. The co-operative now has 30 members, including mobile saw millers, forestry consultants, wood turners, furniture makers, paper makers, charcoal makers and wood carvers. In addition, the Forest was able to help establish and define a distinct 'Forest of Avon Products' brand.

What has been achieved?

- Three 'Forest of Avon' sales outlets have been established.
- The co-operative members are receiving more commissions and are benefiting from mutual support and assistance.
- Commission from sales is re-invested to fund further marketing.
- Local timber producers and woodlands also benefit, as

products sold through the co-operative have to be made from locally grown timber. This encourages active management of local woodlands and so has benefits for biodiversity and landscape. Where feasible, the Forest negotiates improved access in woodlands managed under this scheme.



KEY FACTS	
DATES	2001-2002
Partners	Bristol City Council, JC Decaux Ltd (landowner), 'Growing Together', local residents
Costs	£17,000
Funders	New Opportunities Fund, Bristol Sustainable Neighbourhood Fund
Size/scale	60 person days in volunteer labour