

Wooded Habitat Creation Workshop 6 February 2025

Overview of Nature Returns and the Derwent Living Forest Programme – Ruth Pilbeam (Derbyshire Wildlife Trust)

The Derwent Catchment covers c. 70% of Derbyshire. DWT aims to aid the creation of 30,000 ha of wooded landscape over the next 30 years. This includes, woodland, orchards, hedgerows and parkland with the aim of improving habitat and increasing biodiversity, addressing climate/ecological issues, assisting natural flood management, reconnecting the Derwent to its natural floodplain and connecting the Northern and National Forests.

Nature Returns Project

Derwent Living Forest (“DLF”) has had funding to assist with engaging landowners and communities. Helping landowners and farmers with funding, volunteers and with sourcing trees. DWT has done much work on its own sites, such as Thornditch River restoration, Wyver Lane and Gang Mine, but is now focussing on helping other landowners. They are targeting 250 ha of wooded habitat creation in 2025 in partnership with landowners. Engaging with community groups and volunteers.

Outcomes will be monitored including carbon sequestration, increased biodiversity, flood risk reduction by increasing wetland areas, water quality improvement, development of the nature economy.

Nature Economy (presented by Richard [didn't catch his surname])

A way of supporting landowners for nature positive outcomes. Natural Capital is the economic value of aspects of the natural environment. Aspects such as reducing flood risk, sequestration of carbon, mitigating wild fires, increasing biodiversity, etc. all have a value to the economy. Estimated economic value £489 billion.

Natural assets are at high risk.

There are two main markets – Carbon Credits (“CC”) and Biodiversity Net Gain (“BNG”).

With CC there is a Woodland Carbon Code. Parties enter into a long term agreements for woodland creation with landowners generating carbon credits to offset their polluting or development activities. Requires robust monitoring, regular inspections and there are rules on brokering credits.

With BNG, all developments of any size are under planning law required to show a minimum 10% BNG. This cannot always be achieved on site, so often attached to other land nearby. Usually achieved via section 106 agreements or a Nature Gain Covenant attached to the title of the land.

Useful links to documents:

A practical guide for landowners in the Derbyshire Derwent Catchment:

<https://www.derbyshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-10/landowners%20handbook-woodland%20creation.pdf>

Natural Flood Management:

https://www.derbyshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-10/landowners%20handbook_NFM.pdf

Overview of Derwent Living Forest project:

<https://www.derbyshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-08/Derwent%20Living%20Forest.pdf>

Habitat Creation:

https://www.derbyshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/2024-12/ParishCouncil-HabitatCreation-Handbook_0.pdf

Creating Wood Pasture, agroforestry and getting more trees into farmed landscapes – Jack Starbuck (Woodland Trust)

Since 1850 we have lost over 50% of trees outside woodland (“TOWs”) which has significantly adversely affected species diversity and populations. Trees are able to deal with numerous environmental issues. By integrating trees into grazing areas (“Silvopasture”) there are numerous benefits:

- Creates sheltered microclimates in hot and cold weather
- Benefits stock/ animals by providing more shelter
- Extends the grazing season
- Mitigates/reduces ammonia in the soil
- Provides better and more varied nutrition for animals (particularly cattle who will browse from trees)
- Benefits wildlife
- Wood pasture takes this a step further. The National Trust is heavily involved with the creation of wooded areas that are grazed by animals.

On arable farms increasing the number of trees in and around fields has reduced soil erosion, protected from the extremes of weather, holds up run-off from fields, reduces pollution from run-off, improves crop pollination, improved biodiversity and helps with pest control.

Woodland Trust has the MOREwoods scheme where planting of native woodland species on plots over 0.5 ha attracts funding of 75% of cost if self-planted, or 60% if contractor-planted.

The MOREhedges scheme has the same level of funding on hedgerow planting in excess of 100 linear metres.

There is funding from Sainsbury's for establishment of agroforestry up to 100% of the cost. This is allocated competitively on merit. This aims to integrate trees into arable crop and livestock grazing systems.

The Woodland Trust can provide advice, but for any farm this will be a business decision first and foremost

WT also works with schools.

In our area there is additional funding via "Grow Back Greener".

All trees provided by Woodland Trust are UK or Ireland Sourced and Grown ("UKISG") to prevent arboreal diseases. On the WT website there is a long list of nurseries with UKISG stock.

DEFRA has recently increased its payment levels for various capital grants, which includes woodland planting, so this is another route to take.

Useful links to web pages:

Woodland Carbon scheme:

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/woodland-carbon-farmers-and-landowners/>

Planting trees via MOREwoods scheme:

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/trees-for-landowners-and-farmers/morewoods/>

Farming for the future:

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/agrireport/>

Robert's story: planting trees for wildlife, environment and future generations:

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/Robert/>

Klare's story: Tree planting for climate and biodiversity:

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/Klare/>

Trees for landowners and farmers:

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant/>

Agroforestry benefits:

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/agroforestry-benefits/>

Creating New Woodland in the Derwent Catchment – Phillip Ayres
(Forestry Commission)

The UK is the least forested country in Europe with only 10% of land covered by woodlands, of which 77% is broadleaf deciduous.

Timber is important for jobs with 32,000 jobs and £2 billion turnover. This is comparable to the dairy sector.

The Forestry Commission has various big pots of money for:

- Productive tree plantations
- Wildlife rich woodland
- Woodlands for climate change mitigation
- Multi-functional woodlands (e.g. including leisure, camping, etc)
- Agroforestry
- Trees outside woodlands
- Shelterbelts and riparian (riverside) planting

The idea is to use land which is lower quality grazing or arable, or small, awkward fields that are less suited for modern machinery and to utilize these for growing trees. Compared to other schemes, the incentives available are quite generous.

There is the Woodland Creation Planning Grant (“WCPG”) for planning large schemes; the England Woodland Creation Offer (“EWCO”), and Carbon Guarantee (not covered in the talk as it is complex!).

EWCO

This rewards farmers and landowners who have 1 ha or greater (which can be in smaller blocks totalling at least 1 ha or more). Capital costs of up to £10,200 per hectare are covered and ongoing maintenance for the first 15 years at up to £400 per hectare per year are also included. After 15 years the farmer/landowner is free to cut the woodland if so desired.

There is also funding for access, hardstanding and for establishing recreational use. Additional contributions are available on a field-by-field basis. There is no maximum size of scheme and it is possible to join forces with a neighbour as well. The money is available to public bodies and well as private individuals.

Useful links:

www.gov.uk/forestry/newsletter-sign-up There is an East Midlands specific newsletter.

How trees can benefit your farm business:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/grow-your-farm-business-how-trees-can-benefit-your-land-crops-and-livestock/grow-your-farm-business-how-trees-can-benefit-your-land-crops-and-livestock>

EWCO:

www.gov.uk/guidance/england-woodland-creation-offer

Woodland Carbon Code:

www.woodlandlandcarboncode.org.uk

Publication – Grow Your Farm Business:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67054c8f366f494ab2e7b518/PD1221_FC_WMB_Business_Benefits_WEB_AUG24.pdf

Phillip Ayres has said he is happy to talk to local landowners and to TDEG about what the Forestry Commission can do to help. His email is phillip.ayres@forestrycommission.gov.uk

Help and Support Available Through DWT – Ady Cox (DWT)

DWT is the only NGO focused solely on Derbyshire. DWT provides:

- ecological, habitat and species surveys
- specific advice to landowners
- makes use of the Derbyshire Biological Record Centre to establish which species are recorded on the land in question and this informs proposed planting schemes
- can help with providing detailed mapping to assist in certain grant applications
- Completes Environmental Impact Assessments (“EIAs”) in conjunction with applications
- Can assist with putting together individual or group applications in connection with the Woodland Carbon Code

Case Study 1

Stanage House Farm near Eyam

22 ha of woodland creation partly on a SSSI. Helped the landowner access grants for an application to the Forestry Commission. Undertook habitat survey, provided detailed mapping, undertook soil sampling and badger surveys.

Case Study 2

Deep Dale Wood Pasture

60 ha of new wood pasture creation. Undertook habitat surveys and mapping to support landowner’s application. Entered into a shared grazing agreement as the land adjoined land owned by DWT.

Case Study 3

Yew Tree Farm, Stretton

1 ha of new woodland. Supported landowner’s application

DWT and Community Engagement – George Jones (DWT)

Community engagement includes talks and visits to schools, community groups, environmental groups, landowners and companies. This includes the promotion of DWT’s aims and providing information on available funding, recruiting volunteers, assisting landowners achieve their aims.

George co-ordinates a large number of volunteers who assist with tree planting and other work