

South Yorkshire Forest NEWS

ENVIRONMENTAL REGENERATION • ECONOMIC GROWTH • SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

SILVERWOOD RISES FROM THE ASHES



Brian Tinnion on site at Silverwood

In March, a five year restoration programme at Rotherham's Silverwood Colliery site was completed and is now well on its way to becoming an attractive and diverse green space for community use. The project, carried out by site owners Ogden and Sons Reclamation (now ATH-Ogden), was the first major land regeneration scheme to gain funding from a SYFP Forestry Resource Grant.

Rising from the ashes of the ugly, disused colliery and coal tip, a fantastic 126 hectare network of community woodlands, wetlands, open spaces and access routes has been created for local people to enjoy. The project received a Forestry Resource Grant of £239,000 from the Partnership to help plant native woodland trees on 60 hectares of the site, ensuring the establishment of beautiful new woodlands for future generations to enjoy.

Supervised by Ogden's property surveyor Brian Tinnion, the restoration programme has responded sensitively to the needs and wishes of the local communities through consultations and engagement activities. Local schools have been particularly engaged with tree planting activities, which work very well to confer a sense of ownership and respect for the space among the young people.

A further opportunity for connecting local communities with the site arose when an old colliery winding wheel from the site was discovered on the forecourt of a local garage. The garage owner had rescued the wheel when the colliery closed and later donated it to Thrybergh & Dalton Heritage Group.

A million trees in 5 years!

New round of Forestry Resource Grants set to plant more

The SYFP Objective 1 Forestry Resources Grant (FRG) programme has been an enormous success; not only making a massive contribution to the delivery of vital regeneration schemes in the region, but also stimulating South Yorkshire's woodland and timber based economy. In the five years since its launch, the scheme has spent a staggering £3.6million on new planting and woodland management schemes, and supported many local timber based businesses. It has also been a powerful vehicle for promoting the importance of sustainable working practices.

Forestry Resources Grants have increased tree cover in South Yorkshire by around a million trees, and this number is set to grow as a further £286,000 has now been allocated from Objective 1 funds to extend the project for another year. Krys Craik, SYFP's project manager commented: "We're very proud of the holistic approach of our Forestry Resources Grant scheme and delighted that this additional award from Objective 1 recognises the inherent value of the scheme to South Yorkshire's environment, communities and economy. The work carried out by this project is making an



immediate impact on the local landscape and businesses, but most importantly, every effect seen now promises to grow and expand into the future."



The houses at Silverwood no longer look onto a desolate grey scar

Ogden's have agreed to re-install the wheel at the site as an interesting heritage feature. The return of the wheel will make a wonderful focal point next to the car park where visitor information will be displayed.

SOUTH YORKSHIRE
forest
A National *community forest* Partner

South Yorkshire project informs national woodfuel development

Climate change is fuelling a significant shift in traditional forestry attitudes towards the development of biomass infrastructure around the country. It is now generally accepted that the biomass market is becoming a viable economic strategy that will provide a carbon neutral fuel source and promote the sustainable woodland management practices that foster biodiversity - benefiting the environment at every level.

Reflecting this, the Forestry Commission released its 'Woodfuel Strategy for England' in March. The strategy document recognises the work of the South Yorkshire Woodfuel project as a model of good practice, and in April SYFP's Wood Energy officer Robin Ridley was invited to speak about the development of South Yorkshire's wood energy cluster at a major conference hosted by the Royal Agricultural Society of England, the Royal Forestry Society and the Forestry Commission at Stoneleigh Park in Warwickshire.

The conference brought the key players on the national woodfuel scene together to offer their expertise to farmers and rural businesses, and to share 'best practice' case studies in the context of the national woodfuel strategy.

For the South Yorkshire Woodfuel project, the conference proved to be genuinely life-affirming. As Robin Ridley commented, "Establishing a woodfuel cluster in South Yorkshire over the last few years has been incredibly hard work. With the support of Yorkshire Forward and Objective 1, we have gone from zero demand for woodchip in 2004 to 3000 tonnes per annum in 2006. It's fantastic to see progress finally being made at a national level, I no longer feel like the South Yorkshire Forest is the lone voice advocating wood energy, which makes the next phase of the project even more exciting."

Feedstock demand is expected to rise to 8000 tonnes per annum by next year and new funding will look to extend a sustainable supply and demand chain right across the region. The project also plans to establish a Green Timber Residue network to source timber residue from arboriculture, and continue to overcome barriers to the uptake of woodfuel systems through promotion, information exchange and logistical problem solving.

For more information please visit www.wood-fuel.org.uk



Solar timber kiln unveiled at South Yorkshire Energy Centre

The latest addition to the South Yorkshire Energy Centre is an innovative solar powered kiln for drying timber. The Energy Centre, based at Heeley City Farm in Sheffield, is an eco-refurbished terraced house that demonstrates renewable energy and sustainable building materials and techniques.

The kiln was developed in a joint Heeley City Farm and Sheffield Hallam University project with £6,900 funding from the FRG programme. Nick Parsons from the Energy Centre and Andy Young, Senior Lecturer in Thermofluids at Hallam, designed the kiln using a 'passive solar system' which dries the wood using simple hot air flow - the heat being generated by the external solar panels. Similar systems are proving

very effective in warmer parts of the country such as Cornwall. The kiln in Heeley could test the power of South Yorkshire's sunshine however, and may require the addition of a mains run dehumidifier. If this turns out to be the case, the kiln will still be incredibly useful as a model for sustainable timber practices as electricity used would be far less than a standard electric-powered wood kiln.

Heeley City Farm is currently using the kiln to



The solar kiln at Heeley City Farm

dry out a stack of sycamore which they hope to use to create an eco-kitchen for the eco-house. The South Yorkshire Energy Centre is open to the public from 12 - 3pm at weekends, visits outside these hours can also be arranged - call Nick Parsons on 0114 2584574.

Stories and sunshine warm community tree plantings



A 65 year wedding anniversary ...

The Gift that Grows tree-sponsorship scheme brought people of all ages out to plant trees during January and February. Incredibly the sun shone for all our community planting events in Rotherham, Sheffield, Barnsley and Doncaster! More people than ever turned out to plant the trees dedicated for them, and it was moving and heart warming to hear their stories - some happy and some sad, but all very positive.

Chris Laude brought her young grandsons to the Sheffield planting event at Beighton where they helped her plant trees as a memorial to their mother. Chris told us: "Edward and little Thomas had made a single hand print each on a piece of biodegradable kitchen paper to put into the hole - the tree food went on top, just as if the hand was holding it. Ed thought it was very clever. He liked the idea of the "blanket" keeping the tree's feet warm and we have convinced him that the trees are happily munching their food and have started growing already. It was all rather emotional for me, but I'm sure my beloved daughter is happy with what was accomplished. We look forward to being able to visit in three years' time."

The Gift that Grows was also immensely popular as Christmas and anniversary presents, providing families of all ages with a brilliant reason to do something active together in the great outdoors. In Rotherham three generations

of the Holmes family wrapped up to plant trees at Herringthorpe Valley Park. John and Janet Holmes sponsored the trees to mark Janet's parents Leonard and Freda's incredible 65 years of marriage and son Rob's recent marriage to Leigh.

For information about giving the Gift that Grows call Kerry on 0114 2571199 or visit www.syforest.co.uk/gift



... and a new marriage

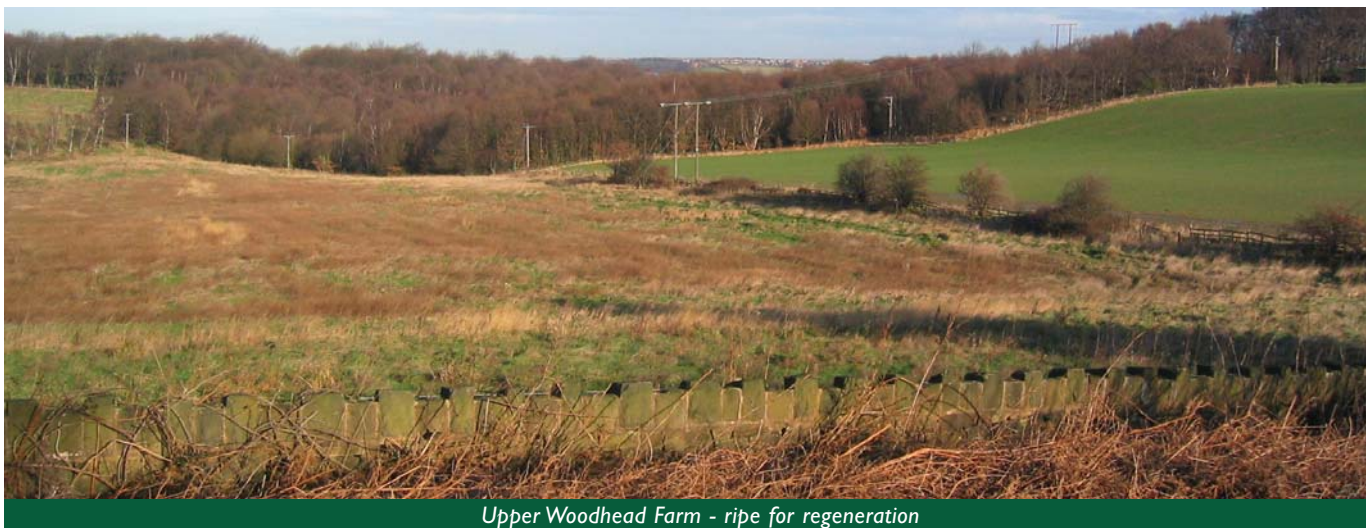
Barnsley residents look forward to healthy green space

In February nearly 100 residents from Blacker Hill and Wombwell, joined the South Yorkshire Forest team and local Forestry Commission rangers to contribute to the vision for Upper Woodhead Farm. The community is thrilled that the former open cast site, adjacent to Wombwell Wood, Barnsley has been purchased by the South Yorkshire Forest Environment Trust and will be transformed into a beautiful community green space over the next few years.

Residents highlighted the need for controls to prevent fly tipping and off-road motor-biking, and asked that benches, wildlife ponds, nesting boxes and information boards be included in the scheme. Many people also suggested community events that could take place on the site - from community bulb planting to dog obedience walks - the ideas poured out. Even more creative was the wish list compiled through workshops at Jump, Park Street and High View Primary Schools. Luckily woodlands and ponds were at the top of the children's

priorities, but underwater caves and bungee jumping were also suggested!

There's certainly plenty of scope for healthy community activities in and around Upper Woodhead Farm, so much so that the South Yorkshire Forest Partnership has announced the creation of a new post and will soon take on a Green Health Officer to work directly with communities close to the site. The post will be funded by Yorkshire Forward and Objective 1 European funding and will be advertised shortly.



Upper Woodhead Farm - ripe for regeneration

BUSINESSES BRANCH OUT FOR BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS



diva planting their 150th tree*

diva*, Sheffield's premier social marketing agency, celebrated its 10th birthday this year by showing its green credentials. After calculating their likely carbon emissions - based on office energy use, travel and materials over the past decade - diva* staff planted 150 trees in Darnall through the

South Yorkshire Forest's Branch Out scheme. Amanda Pearce, diva* director said, "From day one we were committed to working within an ethical framework, and this is reflected in our commissions and our clients. Building on this we saw our tenth anniversary as the perfect time to revise our

sustainability policy. With more and more businesses looking to balance the impact they have on the environment, we wanted to go one step further and celebrate ten years as a company by retrospectively offsetting a decades worth of emissions."

Another environment-conscious business, web-design company, Freedom Software also signed up to the Branch Out scheme to celebrate its first year of business. Director, Robin Wood explains why: "Corporate social responsibility is about a company protecting and giving back to the community. Freedom Software is a small company, but we understand the great value of everyone, no matter how small, playing their part. All of us, as individuals and businesses have a responsibility to minimize our negative impact on the community and the environment, so at Freedom we do what we can to achieve this - in an attempt to promote green thinking and to really give something back, in April we pledged a tree for the South Yorkshire Forest on behalf of each of the clients that have supported us through our first year of trading."

Sponsored tree planting is a fantastic way to put something back into the environment and the community. If your business or work place wants to 'Branch Out', please contact kerry.bennett@syforest.co.uk or visit www.syforest.co.uk for more information.

PARTNERSHIP HELPS FOREST SCHOOLS TAKE ROOT

SYFP has been awarded £3,900 by the Forestry Commission's Forest Education Initiative (FEI) to co-ordinate a series of Forest School workshops in Sheffield's Winter Gardens as part of the Sheffield Children's Festival.

Forest School activities provide an exciting forum for learning in an outdoor setting, and SYFP wants to promote this method of outdoor education within the region's schools and encourage teachers to take up Forest School training.

Ten local junior schools will be given the

opportunity to bring thirty pupils to workshops from June 18th - 22nd. The children will learn the art of den building, take part in woodcraft activities and join the enigmatic 'Wizard's Quest'. The activities are designed to be fun with an emphasis on practical learning and will be led by Forest School providers Archimedes Training and Muddy Faces, along with Rangers from Sheffield City Council.

Peter Machan, education officer at SYFP will also be going into schools to work with teachers who have done Archimedes initial Forest School training to help them develop

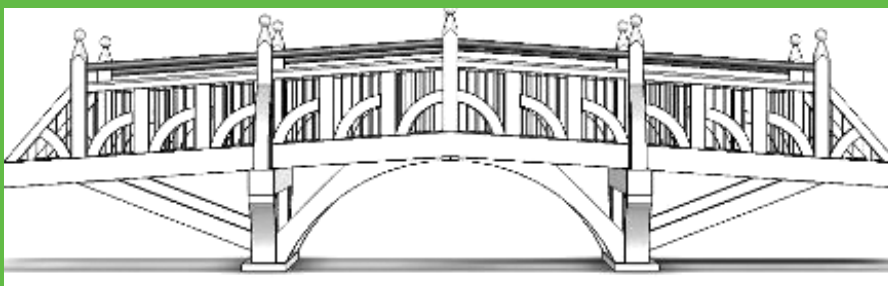


Learning about minibeasts and their natural habitat

activities with their students. These groups will come to the Winter Gardens to demonstrate what they have learnt through these activities every lunch-time throughout the week.

For more information about Forest School initiatives please email peter:machan@syforest.co.uk

New bridge for Weston Park



An exciting heritage project, reconstructing an old timber framed bridge in Weston Park, Sheffield, has provided the first opportunity for The Working Woodlands Trust's social enterprise, Working Woodlands Ltd to be utilised for partnership working by member businesses. Hector & Cedric timber framers will be teaming up with Handspring Design to create the bridge pictured below. Visit www.workingwoodlandstrust.co.uk to find out more about South Yorkshire's innovative sustainable wood working community.

GREAT BIG ONION LAUNCHED AT SHEFFIELD'S WINTER GARDENS

Another Forestry Resource Grant success story, Handspring Design, launched their range of sculptural seating and shelter installations at a special event in the Winter Gardens in March. Guests enjoyed the communal seating experience and framed views of the Winter Gardens provided by the vaulted hand built shelters. Made from sustainable, locally sourced oak, the giant Onion and Apple inspired structures are ideal for school grounds and community spaces. Since the event an Apple has been installed at Huddersfield Media Centre. Sited close to the centre's café, the shelter provides a focal point and outdoor meeting space for the community there. Handspring has also been commissioned to craft an Onion for use as a summerhouse in a private garden. Director Graeme Ritchie commented "The new shelter range has been received really well. We hand craft these structures using a unique method that we were only able to develop with the support of a Forest Resource Grant. New opportunities are opening for Handspring as a result." More information from www.handspringdesign.co.uk



Creating a Setting for Investment works in Wakefield



Boundary improvements in progress

Funding from the Creating a Setting for Investment (CSI) project and English Partnerships has fuelled a remarkable transformation in the economic fortunes of Langthwaite Grange, a declining industrial estate in South Kirby, Wakefield. In the short time since environmental and security improvements were completed in 2005/6, 15 new businesses have located to the park creating 200 new jobs for local people. The project has been so successful that Prince Edward visited the site in March 2007 to unveil a special plaque commemorating the work done.

The park's face lift has been more than skin deep, as Karen Harrison, First Wakefield's project manager notes, the work has prompted a sea change in the attitude of the site's existing businesses, "Companies who were reluctant to clean up their premises and mend their fences have seen the impact

and 2005/6 is also a significant success for the project - and the local community.

Director of First Wakefield, Mohan da Silva attributes the schemes success to the "unique partnership between First Wakefield District Development Agency, English Partnerships, Wakefield Council, South Kirby and Moorthorpe Town Council, the South Yorkshire Forest Partnership and the resident businesses: a network of organisations committed to delivering lasting changes, something which though often attempted, had not been achieved before."

Finding an effective design solution to meet the challenges of the run down, crime ridden industrial estate was also fundamental. Landscape architect Tom Lonsdale, was brought in to design and deliver the improvements. Tom's response to the random, dilapidated assortment of boundary

the improvements have had and are now smartening up their act to bring their premises up to the same standard. "The dramatic 70% reduction in reported crime between 2004/5

treatments and signs was a simple rationalisation. Pragmatic and cost effective, the design has been achieved with a co-ordinating theme of extended grass verges and beech hedges, and a consistent line of new security fence. The result is a clean, logical arrangement displaying civic pride without being too pretentious for the practical outlook of the estate's businesses.

The overall approach to the transformation of Langthwaite Grange has been direct and simple but highly effective. To have achieved such a fast turn around for this site - in both environmental and investment gains - is a prime example of the CSI agenda in action.



CSI Project Manager Tom Wild, meets Prince Edward

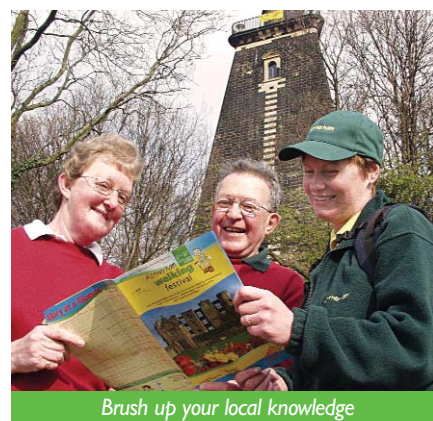


COMING SOON TO THE SOUTH YORKSHIRE FOREST . . .

Rotherham Walking Festival

2nd - 25th July

Rotherham has some of the most beautiful walks in South Yorkshire and the Walking Festival is a great way of getting people to take some exercise in the environment. Most walks are free and suitable for families. Especially recommended are the walks led by our own education officer and local history expert Peter Machan. Join Peter to explore Canklow Woods on Tuesday 3rd July, enjoy the ancient woodlands of Grange Park on the 4th and take the Kimberworth Village discovery trail on the 10th. For more information please contact Karen Oliver on 01709 336892



Brush up your local knowledge



21st July - 2nd September, across South Yorkshire

Forest Fever gets underway on July 21st, featuring hundreds of green space events taking place throughout the summer holidays. For the festival's 10th year we've created a digital event guide, so to find out exactly what's on all summer long all you need to do is visit the South Yorkshire forest website www.syforest.co.uk

To mark the start of Forest Fever a special launch event is currently being planned in conjunction with the new Heritage Ranger at Sheffield's Ecclesall Woods Sawmill. We are thrilled to be working with top storyteller Shonaleigh on the creation of a 'woodland quest' through the ancient Ecclesall Woods. Story and activity walks are a brilliant way to bring young people into contact with the local wooded environment and provide a fun, accessible opportunity for both environmental education and physical activity. Date tbc - look out for details in local press.

Woods of South Yorkshire Exhibition

7th - 24th September, Winter Gardens, Sheffield

To celebrate the diversity of woodlands in South Yorkshire, and to illustrate the incredible versatility of timber from our native trees, the Partnership is co-ordinating a major exhibition in Sheffield's Winter Gardens. Leading local sculptors and furniture makers will exhibit work



Exhibiting sculptures made from different timbers

made from a range of different timbers, each object expressing the qualities of the particular wood used. The project also has an innovative educational aspect - a number of science based workshops will take place in schools where children will examine the different properties of different types of wood - and actually experience using them through a variety of traditional craft activities. The exhibition will include a special display of the children's findings along with lots of information about activities and events taking place within the woods of South Yorkshire.



Playing with fire at Woodfair 2006

Woodfair 2007

6th October, Endcliffe Park, Sheffield

Put it in your diary now! Attended by 5000 people and reportedly "the best outdoor event in Sheffield" last year, Woodfair has something for everyone - traditional woodcraft demonstrations, big modern machinery displays, talks, workshops, children's activities, plants, art, food, beer, music and entertainments that will take your breath away.

If you are interested in exhibiting or booking a stall please contact Alistair Farr on 0114 2571199 or email alistair.farr@syforest.co.uk

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