

Natural Environment White Paper – The Natural Choice: Securing the value of nature case study

Sustainable woodland management – Heartwoods, West Midlands

Heartwoods is a third sector led private/public partnership project, set up in 2002, promoting sustainable woodland management across the West Midlands and providing networking and advice for wood-related industries. Woodlands are a key natural asset in the Marches and wood is a low carbon product which fits with the aspiration of the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership to maximise the value of our natural and economic assets in an environmentally sustainable way.



Heartwoods acts by:

- Promoting benefits of woodland management across the west midlands region
- Making woodland owners aware of their resource and markets available
- Creating business networks and linking supply chains
- Supporting the investment of over £1 million capital investment in the timber supply chain through grant facilitation. in 2010.

Progress on the project:

- £1 million public and private sector investment between 2002 and 2005), created 28 jobs, safeguarded 47 jobs
- £1m investment planned from 2009 to 2013 means more woodlands brought into management and more wood coming into the local supply chain.

Chris Thompstone, who runs Rolleston Park Farm in East Staffordshire, which has extensive woodland, says:

“The Heartwoods project has helped me to manage my woodlands better, create more to use for fuel and basically become self-sufficient for all my heating needs. This has saved me the cost of 6,000 litres of oil per year and I’m even using rejected seed corn in the boiler, so nothing is wasted.”

In future, the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership will be working with Heartwoods and its steering group partners to explore more ways to support the many small rural businesses in the Marches area.