

The Oxfordshire Woodland Project

Sadly, the Oxfordshire Woodland Project will formally cease activity from 17th January 2014.

For twenty-three years the Project promoted the management of Oxfordshire's difficult, small-scale broadleaved woodland by recognising problems and enabling a co-ordinated approach to their management. The principal output of the Project was free, impartial, professional woodland management advice to landowners, community groups and others working towards social, environmental and economic sustainability of the resource.

The Project has been a partnership between the local authorities of the county and the Oxfordshire Woodland Group - this was set up in 1987, and achieved charity status in 1993.

In the early years the Project and its work was developed by Ken Broad. He designed the operating structure of the Project and established a programme of educational field events and farm visits designed to increase the flow of woodland management information, and help woodland owners develop and share best practice.

In 1999 Ken retired and David Rees was appointed to take forward the Project. During the next decade and with continued support from project sponsors, he developed a practical style of forestry skills presentation. He also collaborated with many partners and initiatives, to help the economic renaissance of the county's woodlands.

Over the past three years with rapidly declining public sector funding, it has been increasingly difficult to find secure funding for a full time project officer, and in 2013 it was decided to close the project.

With wood on the rise again for domestic woodfuel, there remains a lot of work to be done to ensure that increasing demand results in increased management rather than casual exploitation. There is reason to celebrate the work that the Project has done over the last 23 years in raising awareness of the economic and environmental potential of woodlands, and helping to skill up hundreds of small woodland owners. It is possible that some of the work of the Project will be taken forward in new ways in the future.

[/reports/the Oxfordshire Woodland...](#)