

Summary Report 2nd November 2009

Arboricultural, Countryside Forum and Institute of Chartered Foresters Conference

South Oxfordshire District Council offices

In partnership between South Oxfordshire District Council and the Institute for Chartered Foresters this conference aimed to increase awareness regarding funding opportunities for rural communities and show the latest urban tree research.

LEADER Funding – presented by Mike Furness, South Oxfordshire District Council

- For foresters, farmers and rural communities or businesses
- 14 areas in the SE running each financial year until 2013
- 70% for farmers and foresters
- Detailed objectives in Local Development Strategies managed by Local Action Groups (LAGs) in each area
- LAGs assess applications competitively against each other
- For example: improve economic potential of woodland or renewable energy crops
- Further information can be found at www.seeda.co.uk/rdpe

Forestry Commission – presented by Jane Hull, Forestry Commission

- As above plus...
- 70% funded training courses in woodlands (Landskills)
- IGNITE training courses
- Other grants available include: Woodland Planning and Woodland Improvement
- Contact Mike Habergham (replacement during maternity leave)

My Forest – presented by Dr Gabriel Hemery, Sylva Foundation

- New website service aiming to map all UK woodland and join up services among woodland workers
- UK 2nd least wooded country in Europe and wood is the 6th largest import to UK
- Over half UK woods not managed by approved Forestry Commission management plan
- Mapping, Management and Marketing are the main objectives of the initiative
- Working with Forestry Commission to share information regarding woodlands
- www.myforest.org.uk

Extending Life of Urban Trees – presented by Örjan Stål, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

- Any tree can have deep root systems that infiltrate infrastructure pipework.
- The technique developed by his research looks to create a permeable layer around the top of the root structure, thereby encouraging root growth near to the upper surface.
- The technique involves five stages:
 - Removal of the compacted soil from the root system to a depth of 800mm, normally by vacuuming
 - 600mm depth of large rocks, ideally granite, compacted every 200mm

- Top soil spread over this layer and washed into the gaps
- 200mm of gravel at the top layer
- Geogrid layer on top to ensure no further compaction
- Results have shown improvements and development of roots within the large rock layer and subsequent improvement to the health of the tree.

Up By Roots – presented by James Urban

- Aim for the largest size tree pit as possible; ratio of soil area to canopy area for all new highway trees planting.
- Tree grates do not allow growth – New York City has banned them
- Developed the ‘Silva Cell’ system to be load bearing soil container to improve street tree life.
- The system has been designed to UK load bearing standards for highways.
- If used he recommends reusing the existing soil in first instance then adding organic matter and return to tree pit.
- Further information regarding the ‘Silva Cell’ system can be found at http://www.geosyn.co.uk/products/deeproot.asp?product_id=47.

South Oxfordshire District Council has a Forestry and Countryside department who meet regularly to discuss best practice on a range of committees. Further information regarding this department can be found at <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/environment/forestry/>.

If anyone would like to discuss the information in this conference report please contact me on the details below.

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