



## case study

# environmental sustainability



Objective One is  
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The Objective One Partnership  
for Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly

## WORKING WOODLANDS 2

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### *the project*

The public and private sector partnership between the Silvanus Trust (a woodlands charity) and Bow Maurice (a private company) runs Working Woodlands 2 which provides capital investment and business development support services to businesses involved in the management, use, extraction or distribution of timber and wood products from Cornish and Scillonian woodlands.

The Programme has invested £583,209 of European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) in the project which has a total cost of £1,913,419.



### *measures of environmental sustainability adopted*

#### **To promote the prudent use of natural resources**

The project is geared towards the sustainable management of woodlands which are a key resource for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. Woodland businesses are encouraged to use dry waste from wood processing to heat their workshops. Feasibility studies have been carried out into the potential to market waste wood as a heating fuel. The project has funded a beneficiary to build a solar powered kiln. The project offices recycle a range of products such as paper, toner cartridges, glass, organic waste, tube lighting and cardboard. The project seeks to reduce the quantity of waste coming into the system by reusing paper, and buying products with less packaging.

#### **To protect and improve the environment**

The promotion of local timber and contractors is fundamental to the project aims hence the Wood Café initiative that links buyers and sellers of local wood and wood products. Product miles are reduced by this local networking and purchasing. All beneficiaries are encouraged to gain Forest Stewardship Council licensing and certification. FSC certification ensures the wood has been sourced from responsibly managed woodland which helps protect biodiversity. The project has its own environmental policy which includes requirements for the local sourcing of equipment, consultants, supplies, contractors. Efforts to reduce travel by staff include car sharing and working from partner organisation's offices.

#### **To take advantage of the business opportunities afforded by growing demands for environmental goods, processes and services**

Working Woodlands 2 exhibits at the SW Forest Wood Fair which promotes the use of wood, woodland and woodland products to people in the South West. Beneficiaries are encouraged to trade on the environmental credentials of their product.

#### **To increase awareness of residents, businesses and visitors of the value and importance of the environment**

The environmental sustainability of a beneficiary business is assessed as part of the application process. Questions are asked such as do they have an environmental policy and how will they incorporate environmental sustainability good practice within their business? The project then monitors and advises the business on their environmental practices, helping them improve their environmental performance as part of the business planning support it provides.

### *benefits of environmental sustainability*

The protection of biodiversity and habitat afforded by the FSC licenses and certificates has an increasing marketing advantage as larger customers of wood products, such as the construction industry and government, are demanding that products be certified as environmentally sustainable.



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Reducing waste created by the project helps keep costs down and sets an example for beneficiaries to follow.

Local sourcing in-house is essential if the project is to gain respect by practising what it preaches, and importantly it also helps build relationships with local suppliers. Creating the Wood Café has successfully promoted local sourcing e.g. by connecting woodland owners directly with sawmills so that they are able to better plan for future demand. It also provides the opportunity for people to work collaboratively to help secure bigger contracts which would otherwise be lost. Local sourcing has the added benefit of reducing product miles and therefore business costs associated with transportation.

The promotion of renewable energy such as woodfuel and solar-powered kiln provides beneficiaries with the option for cheaper energy, a market for waste, and the development of local relationships and business opportunities.

In summary the economic benefits created through the adoption of environmental sustainability measures have been costs savings and improved supplier relationships for the project; and cost savings, improved marketing and increased business opportunities for the Cornish woodland and wood products sector.

### lessons learnt

Sue Blacker, Director of Working Woodlands, had this to say: *“At first businesses see the environmental requirements as a bit of a drag but now they are seeing the economic opportunities and benefits that can be gained, for instance how the branding of a product as local can be a real selling point.”*

*“In terms of environmental sustainability the local thing is the selling point, the money saving thing is the buying point.”*

*“Set yourself one realistic target each year; build on achieving this and then add another target the following year. Pick an easy target to start with and progress from there as the incremental steps really do add up.”*

*“It is important to have an environmental policy. We also have a member of staff to champion environmental sustainability and an ideas box to make it fun.”*

Keith Hill and partners have received two investments for machinery and equipment for their woodland maintenance and harvesting operations. Keith Hill says:



*“All our tractors are low impact and this enables us to operate in woodlands with minimal ground disturbance and without the need for wide roads. The grant-aided trailer has recently been used for a harvesting operation in Woodland Trust woodland where no other machine would have been able to meet the strict environmental requirements for the operation.”*

John Hurle's forestry business provides a range of woodland services, from management to planting and maintenance. He said: *“The support from Working Woodlands has been key to enabling my business to expand in line with customer needs. Through our existing work for small woodlands throughout Cornwall we identified that there was the potential to offer a one-stop-shop service, but the investment required to enable us to do timber extractions was simply more than we could afford. Since buying the new machinery and equipment our business has gone from strength to strength and we can look forward to a productive future.”*

**For more information about how you can incorporate environmental sustainability into your project please contact the Objective One Partnership Office on 01872 241379 or email [objectiveone@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:objectiveone@cornwall.gov.uk).**