



THE COPPICE ASSOCIATION North West

www.coppicenorthwest.org.uk

National Coppice Federation launched in London

NEWSLETTER No 48 Autumn 2013

The National Coppice Federation is officially up and running after its official launch on October 16th at the Houses of Parliament.



There were 100 people there to listen to speeches by Prof Julian Evans, President of the Institute of Chartered Foresters, Ed Suttie of the Grown in Britain campaign, Pooran Desai of Bio-regional and Dr Martin Warren of Butterfly Conservation. *(more on 3)*

CANW AGM

The year is whizzing past again and already its time for another AGM. Its the usual bundle of laughs with a quiz, wife/partner swapping and hopefully a mini ceiladh, although people are asked not to jump around too much due to the uncertain soundness of the floor (this is probably directed at Steve Tomlin!).

Apparently there is no wife/partner swapping but there is a raffle, so bring things for raffle prizes. Further information inside.

Health and Safety

We become ever more subject to health and safety edicts. While we may not like them, there is usually a good reason behind them so inside there is a piece on the ever unfathomable First Aid requirements and information on the new FISA (forest industry safety accord) guidelines which will effect anyone working woods operated by bodies signed up to FISA ie Forest Enterprise, United Utilities, National Trust.. The main thrust at the moment is that chainsaw operators will have to get a refresher course if all their chainsaw qualifications are over 5 years old.

Article on page 5

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Events

AGM Sprint Mill 7th February 2014 7pm



The AGM is at Sprint Mill again courtesy of Edward and Romela Ackland . There's all the usual fun and frolics, picking committee members, a raffle and this year the possibility of a Ceilidh. The committee is crying out for new members to keep the energy up so tell the secretary (Grace) you are keen and join in the fun.

17th-18th May 2014 **Weekend in the Woods 2014**
Staveley in Cartmel
Courses to be advised, get it in your diary.

1st-5th September **Woodland Pioneers, Staveley in Cartmel**

NCFed launch

The fascination of the structure of the building of St John's, in Westminster's Smith Square, was more than matched by the intrigue of the 70 or so coppice minded enthusiasts who gathered there on 16 October for the official launch of the National Coppice Federation. A simplification of the structure of the building can cause it to be likened to an upturned stool with its 4 legs, the corner towers, reaching up into the sky. The gathering of the variety of coppice enthusiasts could easily be understood to make up the intricate weave of the seat of the stool.

The magnificence of the venue was easily matched by the importance of the occasion. A key word used by one of the speakers as a chief quality of coppice products could also well describe the workers, "variety".

CANW was well represented at the launch with at least 7 members being present including, of course, Rebecca who is Chair of the Federation. Also present was a very impressive list of other interested and influential people representing for example MPs, Forestry Commission, Confor, Woodland Trust, National Trust, National Parks, Natural England, Grown in Britain, Institute of Chartered Foresters, Small Woods Association, Royal Forestry Society, Wildlife Trusts, Funders, NFU Mutual and Publicists. We hope that a good impression of coppicing was taken away by them all.

The excellent display of coppice products and relevant documentation could not fail to affirm the variety and potential of the industry to newcomers to coppicing and even to old hands.

Very good and relevant presentations were given about:
history of coppicing;
Grown in Britain;
B&Q barbecue charcoal contract;
wildlife considerations especially butterflies.

The report of a mention of coppicing in the bible was exciting from the first speaker, obviously extracted from his new book about references to trees in the bible. The fact of the launch taking place within the first Grown in Britain Week could not be a coincidence. We look forward to a good ongoing relationship with this new body.

An excellent closing speech by Rebecca paved the way forward to a better future for our under-appreciated coppice resource. Training and apprenticeships should be a key aim together with
networking, hopefully more local groups;
lobbying, especially about insurance and regulations;
and marketing with probably a push for events across the country in Beanpole Week in May next year.

A very significant list of additional aims is being considered by the NCFed directors and we wish them every success!

Brian Crawley

BHMAT to try crowd funding an apprentice

Our sister/brother/sibling organisation BHMAT has run into a temporary funding black hole. To raise funds for the next generation of coppice workers they are going to try crowd funding. This is an internet based method where you pitch on a crowd funding website for funds. There are various levels of rewards for people who donate from simple newsletter updates, items of treen to places on courses. If they reach the target sum they get to keep the money raised, if they don't, they get..... nothing.

It relies on getting the word out through the networks of people who know BHMAT (email, facebook, Twitter) and hopefully they will raise enough for another apprentice. If you can't help with donations just passing the information on to your contacts would be a great help, they are trying to raise a total of £16,000. If you are on the CANW email list you should receive details soon. Its due to appear imminently.

Stop press !!! The campaign is live at Buzzbank

Moss and Height Spring woods

Its been an eventful year for MAHS with two coups being cut last winter/spring by apprentii Launa Singleton and Sam Robinson. We've had a number of work days to do things like oak bark peeling, tree safety work and putting temporary fencing round the coups. The latest work days have been to get some stone down on the access track. A very wet day to start off and the invaluable help of Jim Miller and his 'venerable' Land Rover which ferried stone along the track saving a lot of hard work barrowing.



Wet conditions for the first track improvement work day.

Coconut Grove

When I was at Home Base in Kendal during the summer I was interested to see sprouting Coconuts (*Cocos Nucifera*) for sale initially at £19.95. They looked quite healthy, with leaves about 3 ft long, the nut lying on it's side in a pot of fibre compost. I have been interested in coconut palms since visiting South East Asia in the Royal Navy at the end of the war. When crossing the Java Sea, we could see the tops of coconut palms on the horizon long before the land itself came into sight, as the islands were very low, and the mirage effect came into operation. The nuts often fall into the sea, and the rough husk is buoyant so that they get carried away to the beach of some other island by the tides and currents.

Since I have been doing demonstrations of rope making in the last ten or twelve years, I have been aware how many different materials can be used for cordage and rope, and I remember seeing wooden boats being built in Southern India by SEWING the planks together with coconut fibre string. Fresh nuts contain Coconut Water which is very refreshing on a hot day, and Coconut milk is made by pressing the flesh in the centre. The shell makes useful containers and tools, the outer fibre is also used, and the leaf makes the

cordage. When the leaf falls, the leaf stalk remains to form the "false stem".

I returned to Home Base several times and saw that these little palms were being reduced in price, first to £9.95. After visiting Staveley Apple Day and the wonderful exhibition at Sprint Mill on September 28th, I called in at Home Base again, and found that the coconut plants were down to £6 something, with an additional 15% of every price ticket, so that the palms were £5 only. I couldn't resist them. Never mind the winter with it's frosts. I came away with a young coconut palm that by that time had 5 leaves, and about 5ft6 tall.



Artist's impression of Staveley circa 2030

The leaves emerge rolled up, in the centre through the leaf stalks of the previous leaves, and then unfurl, with tips split in two, and on each side of the leaf there are a dozen ribs that grow out of the main midrib and lie more or less parallel to the midrib. On a

mature palm, these side ribs have all separated from each other forming the pinnate or feather-like shape that we are familiar with. I am looking forward to seeing just how the shape changes - if it lives that long! It is living in my old 21ft static that I abandoned because the wood burning stove was in such a state that I was able to replace the static with another, 24ft long, for less money than buying a new stove. I am turning the old one into a sort of greenhouse with paraffin and electric heaters.

I will submit updates of the palm saga as they develop. I also bought a Japanese Banana plant on the same day, Musa Banjoo, for £1.10 ! That is also another story.

Walter LLoyd

Forestry Safety accord will effect you, err probably



It is 3 times more dangerous to work in forestry than in construction. As a result major players in Forestry have got together to form FISA in an effort to reduce accidents.

They will provide guidelines on safe working, report on accidents and set standards for trainers.

One of their first requirements has been that everyone who works for FISA member organisations should have a chainsaw certificate that has been taken within the last five years or a refresher chainsaw certificate which should be taken every five years.

Rather like the need for ever larger amounts of third party insurance, because of events organised by organisations like the National Trust or going onto Forestry Commission land it seems likely that this will affect us very quickly (in fact it became mandatory for FISA members on 1st October) . FISA is actually going to organise refresher courses, and you can put your name down for them on their website:-

www.ukfisa.com

They are going to keep statistics of injuries and it might be worthwhile asking them to keep a separate note of coppicing related stats .

Ian Taylor

First aid qualifications update



You might be aware that on 1st October this year changes have been made to the [HSE First Aid at Work regulations \(1981\)](#).

As it is part of my job to read those documents (do I detect some glazed looks?) I thought you might appreciate a summary of what those changes are and how it potentially affects you in relation to your coppicing and forestry activities.

What has changed?

The HSE no longer directly approves first aid at work qualifications and first aid training providers.

What does this mean?

The HSE now place greater emphasis on you to choose a first aid course that is relevant to your work and environment based on your individual risk and first aid needs assessment.

This means that you now have greater flexibility in choosing a relevant first aid course for you.

How can I make sure that the course I choose complies with HSE regulations?

Although the [1 day Emergency First Aid at Work \(EFAW\)](#) and [3 day First Aid at Work \(FAW\)](#) are still common choices for the workplace, the [new HSE guidance](#) recognises that other or additional first aid training might be more relevant to some organisations and groups of employees i.e. those working in remote areas or outdoors.

If you work outdoors or in forestry you also have the option of gaining a [2 day outdoor first aid qualification](#) in order to comply with the new HSE regulations based on your individual risk assessment rather than a standard first aid at work qualification.

What are the benefits of choosing a 2 day outdoor first aid qualification?

- ✓ This is a highly practical 16 hour course usually taught over 2 days which is more effective in terms of cost and time than the 3 day FAW course
- ✓ It covers all the content of a 3 day FAW course but additional topics and the structure of the course are specifically designed for those working outdoors and in sometimes remote areas
- ✓ Whilst most EFAW and FAW courses are taught in a classroom environment, this course includes an element of practicing relevant first aid scenarios outside with participants wearing their full PPE.
- ✓ Nationally recognised first aid qualification valid for 3 years.

What if I work as an external contractor to the Forestry Commission?

The [current Forestry Commission \(FC\) first aid policy](#) for external contractors, hauliers and others working on FC land only recognises two first aid at work qualifications with the addition of forestry specific content (+F)

- 1 day Emergency First Aid at Work - **EFAW + F*** (6+ hour course)
- 3 day First Aid at Work – **FAW + F*** (18+ hour course)

* What is specified by the FC as the required **+F** content (i.e. suspension trauma, severe bleeding, crush injuries, Lyme disease and hypo/hyperthermia) is **covered on the 2 day outdoor first aid course as standard** (see attached course comparison list).

Their policy is based on the notion that those two courses were previously HSE approved.

It is worth checking the [FC website](#) for any updates on their current first aid policy as I expect it will be amended in line with the HSE changes.



Summary of first aid qualifications available for those working outdoors, in forestry, with forest schools and sometimes remote areas in line with new HSE regulations:

- **1 day (6+ hours) [Emergency First Aid at Work \(+ extra forestry content\) EFAW + F](#)**
 - a. **Qualification:** ITC Level 2 Award in Emergency First Aid at Work (QCF) + accompanying letter to state additional forestry content
 - b. **Requalification** by attending the same course after 3 years
- **3 day (18+ hours) [First Aid at Work \(+ extra forestry content\) FAW + F](#)**
 - a. **Qualification:** ITC Level 3 Award in First Aid at Work (QCF) + accompanying letter to state additional forestry content
 - b. **Requalification** course by attending a 2 day (12+ hour) course after 3 years
- **2 day (16+ hours) [Outdoor First Aid \(includes forestry content by default\) OFA](#)**
 - a. **Qualification:** ITC Certificate in Outdoor First Aid (SQA)
 - b. **Requalification** by attending the same course after 3 years
- **2 day (16-17 hours) [Outdoor First Aid for Forest School Leaders \(includes paediatric first aid elements\) OFA/FS](#)**
 - a. **Qualification:** ITC Certificate in Outdoor First Aid (SQA) + accompanying letter to state additional paediatric content
 - b. **Requalification** by attending the same course after 3 years

If you have any questions just drop me an email on andrea@firstaidtrainingplus.co.uk or give me a ring on 07818 258 799 - happy to advise 😊.

Best wishes and stay safe

Andy

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Book review - A guide to Coppicing by Ray Tabor

Ray is a well respected writer and his 'Encyclopedia of Green Woodworking' was a firm favourite of mine for getting the dimensions of hurdle moulds and breaks. So I was looking forward to having a read of this slim tome. It's actually an update of a booklet that Ray wrote some time ago, with quite a bit of extra information for our health and safety conscious, pestilent ridden age. Its written more with the volunteer in mind and has lots of useful information on felling coppice with hand tools and planning how you work. One of the extra sections that Ray has added is about monitoring deer and describes how to mark various activities of deer (deer scrapes, sightings, chewed shoots) to give an overall score, the aim being to judge if the problem is getting worse and whether you need to get the stalker in. All in all a very handy book on modern coppicing, with lists of products, shaving and cleaving brakes, coppice management tips and what to do with all the brash. If enough people are interested in a copy we can get some in at a discount. Cover price is £6.50

Ian Taylor

A guide to coppicing by Ray Tabor is published by Eco-logic books info@eco-logicbooks.com

Stott Park Bobbin wood supply

Stott Park is wanting in the region of 20 tonnes of bobbin wood this winter. The spec is 2-3 inch diameter, clean straight, 7 foot + (they were looking for some 14ft bits if you have them) metres long. Can be any species except Oak. It needs to be fresh cut.

To keep it simple Stott Park just want one invoicing point so:-

1) organise with Stott Park to deliver your bobbin wood

(Mick 015395 31087)

2) Agree a weight with them when you deliver

3) Invoice CANW for the delivery

We are experimenting with this a bit and you may have to wait till CANW gets paid to get your money.

Biochar Standards

I was recently contacted by someone from the International Biochar Initiative sounding out the prices of bulk biochar as he was putting together a proposal for carbon credits for biochar. During the conversation he mentioned a biochar standard which I hadn't heard about. After looking at the IBI's website I found a detailed standard for 'Standardized Product Definition and Product Testing Guidelines for Biochar That Is Used in Soil'

The standard only covers the USA and Canada at the moment, but with the growing popularity of biochar to improve soils, reduce nitrate run off and fix carbon in the soil, there will be ever more ways of making biochar from just about anything with carbon in.

When I first started reading the standard I was becoming alarmed at the talk of testing for PCBs and toxins in biochar, aaargh is this going to be the end of charcoal burning?

Well it didn't seem so bad on further reading the feedstocks used for making biochar were classed as unprocessed or processed. Processed feed stocks are subject to toxin testing every year, processed feed stocks include matter that has been grown on contaminated land. Most of our wood would be defined as unprocessed and after an initial analysis would not need to be tested for three years.

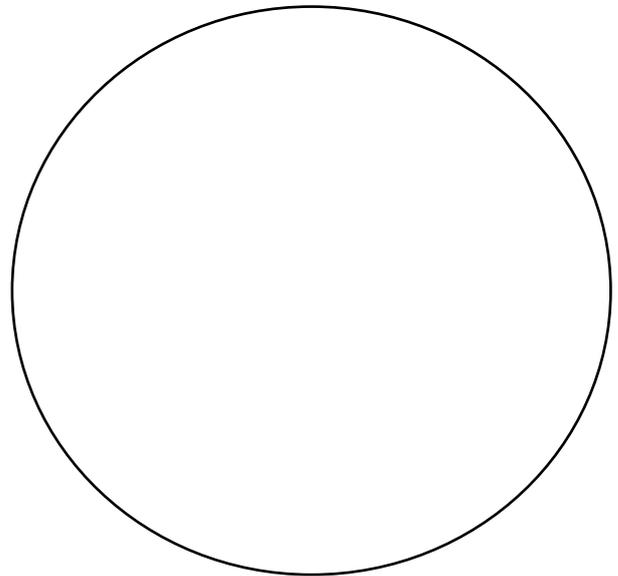
There are 3 types of tests in the standards, Cat A is the physical qualities of the charcoal like the moisture content and particle size (which only have to be declared). The interesting measure is carbon content. If its greater than 60% its Class 1 biochar . The charcoal that was tested by the Italians when we sent some over was in the region of 80% carbon so most fines should be class 1.

Cat B tests are for toxins and have to be done every three years(if you are using unprocessed wood like we usually do) and the test includes a germination test where they see if a seed will grow on the biochar and tests for dioxins ,PCBs and a whole load of heavy metals.

Cat C tests are optional and are tests for soil enhancement properties.

http://www.biocharinternational.org/sites/default/files/IBI_Biochar_Standards_V1.1.pdf

Design a car sticker for CANW



FISA has a car sticker, so its about time we had one too. There are loads of artistic people in CANW so lets see your suggestions scribbled in the handy circle above or for the really professional done as a pdf, or a potato. Send your entries to the newsletter editor and I'll make them into chips. I will present a pimp to the best entry that we can use.

Next issue

Deadline March 21st

Any articles gratefully received.

Preferably by email with pictures separate.