

A Guide to Forest Owner Groups in Ireland

facilitated by Teagasc





Introduction

Since the mid nineties, the Teagasc Forestry Development Department has actively promoted and facilitated the development of forest owner groups through the ongoing provision of advisory, technical and organisational support. These groups around the country benefit from group learning and discussion, group thinning, and for some groups business development.

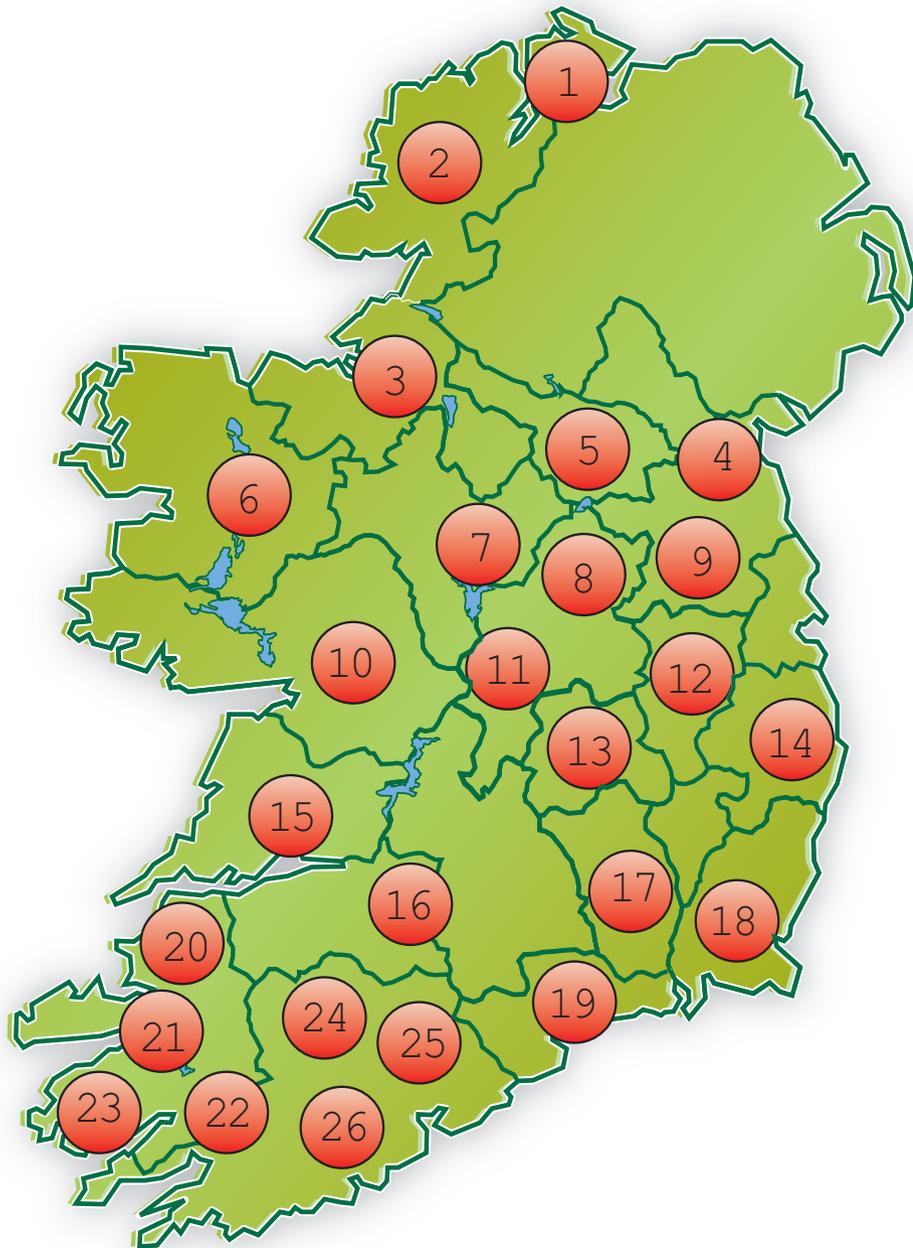
Many of these groups have involvement from other bodies such as Leader companies, IFA, Local Authorities, local wood energy supply companies etc.

The UN declared 2012 as the ‘The International Year of Cooperatives’ in order to promote the formation and growth of co-operatives among individuals and institutions to address common economic needs and for socio-economic empowerment. The existing 26 Forest Owner Groups are living testimony of this.

This short booklet does not reflect the countless hours spent by forest owners who have given their time in establishing groups, nor can it show the undocumented learning and sharing of experience that happens purely by the fact that these groups exist or indeed it will not capture the future potential of each of these groups if forest owners continue to work hard and give of their time in developing these groups.

This booklet gives a brief glimpse of each forest owner group in Ireland (who have had some facilitation by Teagasc). It outlines basic information about each group, what area they cover and how to contact them if you wish to find out more or indeed join a group.

If you are interested in setting up a forest owner group, contact your local Teagasc Development Officer (for contact details, see www.teagasc.ie/forestry).



Index

1. Inishowen Forest Owners Group
2. Donegal Woodland Owners Society Ltd
3. Sligo/north Leitrim Forest Owner Group
4. Louth Forestry Owners Group & Monaghan Forestry Owners Group
5. Lakeland Forestry Owners Group
6. Mayo Forest Growers Group
7. Longford Farm Forestry Group
8. Westmeath Farm Forest Group
9. Meath Forestry Owners Group
10. Galway Forest Producer Group
11. Offaly Farm Forestry Group
12. Kildare Forestry Producer Group
13. Laois Forestry Producer Group
14. Wicklow Private Woodland Owners Group
15. County Clare Wood Energy Group
16. Limerick and Tipperary Woodland Owners
17. Kilkenny Timber
18. Wexford Forestry Growers Association
19. Waterford Forest Owner Group
20. Kerry Farm Forestry Owners
21. Currow Forestry Group, Kerry
22. Headford Forestry Owners Group
23. South Kerry Owner Groups
24. Duhallow Forest Owner Group
25. Avondhu Blackwater Forest Owner Group
26. West Cork Forestry Group

1. Inishowen Forest Owners Group

This group is based in the Inishowen peninsula. Membership is open to forest owners and others interested in maximising local forestry potential. The group has only been formed recently and is a loose informal setup of neighbours helping each other out with help from Inishowen Co Op and Western Forestry Co Op.

Aims are:

- To group together forests for thinning and getting best markets for thinnings
- Improving underperforming forests
- Educating in forestry culture and sharing knowledge within the group

Contact - Willie Callaghan : 087-2506640
callaghanwilliam@hotmail.com

2. Donegal Woodland Owners Society Limited (DWOSL)

Registered as a Co- Operative Society on the 27th March 2008.

Area covered - Co. Donegal

Basic rule of membership - Must own woodland / forestry within Donegal, minimum of 1 hectare of coniferous or 0.1 hectare of broadleaf woodland.

Membership Subscription - Initial registration from €100 for up to 8 hectares with an annual renewal fee after the 1st year from €30 (see further details on website)

Aims / Goals / Services- DWOSL has a bottom- up, hands- on approach, with the added commitment of voluntary time and labour from its members. Its aims are to maximise returns to forest owners through good forest management services and to add value locally to our timber, thus creating sustainable employment from our member's forests. Services

are available from DWOSL - forest maintenance and administration work, timber marketing and firewood sales, field days, study trips, newsletters and forest machinery hire. DWOSL has entered the Energy Supply Contract (ESCO) market. The committee of Donegal Woodland Owners Society consists of up to 13 elected members (See website for details)

Contact - Donegal Woodland Owners Society Limited (DWOSL)
P.O. Box 10, Donegal Town, Co Donegal, Tel. no. 086- 0410809,
admin.dwogsl@gmail.com
www.donegalwoodlandowners.com

3. Sligo/north Leitrim Forest Owner Group

This group was formed in early 2011 bringing forest owners together and covers all of County Sligo and North Leitrim. Membership is open to all who have forestry in this area. Membership costs €30 and this money is used mainly for administration.

Aims and objectives- To raise awareness and knowledge of good forestry practice through education, training and sharing experiences. Field days and meetings are organised regularly. Under the professional guidance of Teagasc, the group encourages better forest management. The groups aim is to achieve the most sustainable profits possible for our timber products.

Contacts - Chairperson - Michael O'Brien
Tel. no. 087-7837860
michaelartobrien@gmail.com

Secretary - Annette Forde
Tel. no. 087-2213129
annette-forde@yahoo.ie

Treasurer - Bernard Brennan
Tel. no. 086-8098569
bernardjbrennan@gmail.com

4. Louth Forestry Owners Group and the Monaghan Forestry Owners Group

The development of owners groups in counties Monaghan and Louth is at the development stage and initial meetings have taken place. It is intended this Autumn/Winter to generate productive clusters and formalise group structures.

Contact - Kevin O'Connell, Teagasc
Tel. no. 087-1216159
kevinococonnell@teagasc.ie

5. Lakeland Forestry Owners Group

The Lakeland Forestry Owners Group covers county Cavan and some adjacent areas of counties Meath & Leitrim, where productive clusters can be formed. The criterion for membership is ownership of a forest/ woodland. The Lakeland Forestry Owners Group was formed in 2010 with approximately 70 owners. All owners are interested in the concept of increasing their knowledge and awareness of forestry practice through training, education and sharing individual experiences. A number of meetings, courses and field days have been organised to facilitate this. The groups have no formal structure but eight owners act as a steering group for the other owners.

The emphasis in the immediate future is to develop and consolidate cluster groups so as to combine owner's resources to achieve economies of scale. The objective for the long term is to maximize the economic, social and environmental benefits of forestry for both the grower and the local economy.

Contact - Kevin O'Connell, Teagasc
Tel. no. 087-1216159
kevinococonnell@teagasc.ie

6. Mayo Forest Growers Group

Area covered-East Mayo

Basic rules of membership - Must be forest owners and for practical reasons should be within a working distance of Swinford.

Membership subscription - None at present

Aims and objectives - The Group was formed in early 2012 to develop viable and sustainable management and harvesting of timber. The aims are to enable the growers to gain experience and take control of their own plantations, many of which are relatively small or isolated. The approach being taken is to exploit the rising demand for timber fuel to support long-term management of farm forestry resources.

Contact - Group co-ordinator, Tom Kennedy
Tel. no. 094 9252176
Mob. no. 086 8117309

7. Longford Farm Forestry Group

The Longford Farm Forestry Group commenced in March 2010

A steering committee of 11 elected members is in place to help lead the group. The group has held a number of information meetings and field events specifically for all forest owners in Co. Longford that have forestry planted prior to 2002. Over 120 forest owners have attended one or more of these events organised by the group.

The aim of the group is to maximise the value of farm forestry plantations in Co. Longford through education, co-operation and the sharing of experience.

Contact - Liam Kelly, Teagasc
Tel.no. 087-9090495
liam.kelly@teagasc.ie

8. Westmeath Farm Forest Group

The Westmeath Forest owner group was formed in November 2010. It is open to all forest owners in Westmeath that have planted prior to 2002. A membership fee of €30 applies. A steering committee of 12 are in place to lead the group. The group is a discussion / educational group that meet 3 / 4 times a year, generally during the autumn, winter and spring.

Meetings & events will be held to explore; local thinning markets, forming thinning clusters, identifying the resource in Westmeath and dealing with both broadleaves and small sites issues.

Contact - Chairperson - Robert Ogle
arogle@eircom.net
Secretary - Josephine Hanley
josephinehanley@hotmail.com

9. Meath Forestry Owners Group

The Meath Forestry Owners Group covers county Meath and some adjacent areas of counties Cavan, Louth and Monaghan, where productive clusters can be formed.

The criterion for membership is ownership of a private forest/woodland in County Meath. The Owners Group was formed in 2011 with about 65 owners. The Groups' objective is to maximise the value of private forests and woodlands in County Meath. One of the main reasons for the formation of the Group is to share experiences, ideas and information on forest management, harvesting and timber sales. Meetings, courses and field days are organised to facilitate this.

The group has no formal structure but some owners act as a steering group for the other owners.

The emphasis in the immediate future is to develop and consolidate cluster groups to combine owner's resources and so maximise access to timber/fuel wood markets. The objective for the long term is to maximize

the economic, social and environmental benefits of forestry for both the grower and the local economy.

Contact - Kevin O'Connell, Teagasc
Tel. no. 087- 1216159
kevinocconnell@teagasc.ie

10. Galway Forest Producer Group

Area covered: County Galway

Basic rule of membership: owning private woodland in Co. Galway

Membership subscription: No subscription necessary

Aims & objectives-

The Galway Forest Producer Group was established in 2008 with the aim of mobilising timber in Galway from Private Forests. Forest owners come together to share their experiences in relation to harvesting, some owners may not have gone through the process yet but it is important to share any knowledge to ensure a good model for thinning is established for the private sector in the county for the future. To date over 50 members have joined the group and have participated in training provided by Teagasc. Many owners are at the stage of road construction but more owners need to come on board to make thinning a viable option.

Contact - Teagasc
Tel. no. 091- 845200
galwayforest@gmail.com
www.galwayforestproducergroup.ie

11. Offaly Farm Forestry Group

The Offaly Farm Forestry Group was formed in September 2010. The group serves the information and educational needs of forest owners in Co. Offaly that have plantations over 8 years old. A membership fee of €20 applies. The group is steered by an elected committee of 13; which

represents the county geographically.

The groups aims to hold a number of information meetings and field days for its members on relevant issues. The group also intends to prepare an annual information newsletter for all paid up members.

Contact - Chairperson Stephen Powell
Tel. no. 057- 9133013
clonbeale@gmail.com

Secretary - Liam Kelly, Teagasc
Tel.no. 087-9090495
liam.kelly@teagasc.ie

Treasurer- Bridget Horan
Tel.no. 086- 8774708
bridgethoran@eircom.net

12. Kildare Forest Owner Group

The Kildare Forest Owner Group was formed in April 2012. It is open to all forest owners in Kildare that have planted prior to 2005. A membership fee of €20 applies. A steering committee for 2012 is in place. The group is in place to help promote thinning and good forest management. To date the group has held 2 public meetings and 2 management events with over 90 attending.

Meetings & events will be held to explore; local thinning markets, broadleaf management, dealing with small sites, forming thinning clusters and identifying the resource in Kildare.

Contact - Chairperson- Michael Dempsey
Tel. no. 086- 8146489

Secretary - Liam Kelly, Teagasc
Tel. no. 087- 9090495 liam.kelly@teagasc.ie

13. Laois Forestry Producer Group

Area covered- Co Laois

Basic rule of membership- private forest growers in County Laois whose plantations are at least 8 years old

Membership subscription: €30/year

Laois Farm Forestry Group was formed in 2009 and has about 80 active members. The aims of the group are to maximize the economic, social and environmental benefits of farm forestry in Laois through education, training and the sharing of experience. A constitution is in place and an executive committee runs the group. Liam Kelly of Teagasc is secretary to the group. To date a series of workshops and demonstrations have been organised by the group. A private forest resource survey of the county has been carried out for the group by Purser, Tarleton & Russell Forest Consultants. Clustering and certification are issues presently being addressed by the group.

Contact - Chairperson - Andy Dunne
Tel. no. 087- 2515113

14. Wicklow Private Woodland Owners Group

Area covered- County Wicklow and adjoining areas

Basic rule of membership- owning private woodland in Co. Wicklow & adjoining areas

Membership subscription- €40 base sub, (maybe higher for owners of larger forest areas)

The Wicklow Private Woodland Owners Group was formed in 2008 to foster and promote the interests of private forest owners in County Wicklow and adjacent areas.

The WPWOG, with over 100 members was an initiative of the Wicklow Uplands Council, supported by Forest Service, Teagasc, and Wicklow Rural Partnership with a focus on forest management and optimising woodland resource. To date it has conducted a Private Woodland Production Forecast Study for Co Wicklow. It has participated in the Wicklow Forest Forum with local forest stakeholders including Wicklow Co. Co., Forest Service, processors etc. The group hold regular meetings and forest walks, have negotiated group woodland insurance and have held a conference on Forest Recreation. WPWOG are currently investigating proposals to contract the supply of woodchip.

Contact - Chairperson- Joe Walker
joe-walker@clubi.ie

Secretary - Sean Eustace
sean.p.eustace@gmail.com

15. County Clare Wood Energy Group

Area covered- Co. Clare

Basic rule of membership- all forest owners in Clare

Membership Subscription- No subscription necessary

Aims / Goals / Services-

The County Clare Wood Energy Project (CCWEP) was established in 2005 to support the development of a commercially viable wood energy sector in the county, based on wood chip from local farm forest thinnings. Over the years the wood energy sector has grown in the county with 2.5MW installed capacity. There are over 400 CCWEP members and many are now supplying the raw material for the woodchip boilers in the County. A cluster approach is used to bring neighbouring forest owners together. Smaller forests are more attractive for road and harvesting contractors in a group setting so it is important that owners work together to get the best prices possible for their timber.

Training is extremely important for the clusters and Teagasc provide this service on behalf of CCWEP. There are many useful publications available for forest owners and wood energy enthusiasts. CCWEP's motto is "there is strength in numbers".

Contact - Clare Local Development Company
Tel. no. 065- 6866800
Teagasc
Tel. no. 091- 845200
info@ccwep.ie or www.ccwep.ie

16. Limerick and Tipperary Woodland Owners

Area covered- Counties Limerick and Tipperary

Basic rule of membership- Private woodland owners in Counties Limerick and Tipperary

Membership subscription- €50/year

"The Limerick and Tipperary Woodland Owners" was formed in November 2010. Many private forests are approaching thinning and it was timely to come together to pool resources to optimise farmers' investments. The group has held many meetings, field days, education days and forest walks. The group produces a newsletter and has a website www.limerickandtipperarywoodlandowners.ie. To date it has formed 10 individual clusters, incl. Ballylanders Forest Owners, South Tipperary Ash Growers Group, West Limerick Forest Producer Group

Contact - Chairperson- Michael Ryan
Tel. no. 087-2749282
Sologhead House,
Monard, Co. Tipperary

Vice Chairperson - John Reardon
Tel. no. 086-8133931
Caherline, Caherconlish, Co. Limerick

17. Kilkenney Timber

Area covered- County Kilkenny

Basic rule of membership- owning private woodland in Co. Kilkenny
Membership subscription- €20

Kilkenny Timber is a group of forest owners who collectively hope to improve their forestry by good management and timely harvesting. The group was initially supported by Teagasc and Kilkenny Leader Partnership. Over 100 farmers have attended events and in February 2012 an interim committee met to formalise the group structure. Since then monthly meetings have occurred and significant progress has taken place.

The group are interested in combining their resources to sell timber and at present have a sub-group concentrating on selling high quality firewood to the local market.

Contact - Michael Fitzpatrick,
Tel. no. 086-1966535
www.kilkennyforestry.com

18. Wexford Forestry Growers Association

Area covered- Co Wexford

Basic rule of membership- owning private woodland in County Wexford
Membership subscription- €20/year

The Wexford Forestry Growers Association was formed in 2010 with the aim of maximising the value of the Private Forest Estate in Co Wexford. The group hopes to achieve this through learning good forest management practices and cooperation between forest owners to maximise access to local markets. To date the Wexford group have held many meetings, forest walks and training days concentrating on broadleaf management, grey squirrel control and timber measurement. The WFGA are at present putting together a business plan to move the group forward into the future.

Contact - Chairperson - Nicholas Sweetman
nsbc@oceanfree.net
Frances McHugh, Teagasc
Tel. no. 087-6222111
frances.mchugh@teagasc.ie

19. Waterford Forest Owner Group

Area covered- Co. Waterford (formed 2011)

Aims & Objectives-

To maximise the economic, social and environmental benefits of farm forestry, to raise awareness and knowledge of forestry practices through education, training and sharing experience and to facilitate forestry development but without direct commercial involvement. Meetings, field days and courses have been held.

Membership-

Membership will be open to all private timber growers who reside or have forestry in the Waterford area. New members wishing to join should do so by either making an application in writing to the Secretary or by attending a meeting of the Group.

Annual membership subscription-

Plantation 1-10 years €30

Plantation 10-15 years €50

Plantation 15+ years €80

Contact - Secretary - Tom Hickey
Tel. no. 087- 938 6209
tomaphickey@gmail.com

Chairperson - Gerald Curran
Tel. no. 086- 805 9208
geraldcurran6@gmail.com

20. Kerry Farm Forestry Owners

Area covered- north Kerry

The Kerry Farm Forestry Owners group was independently convened and set up in 2009 by forest owners in North Kerry. Their objective was to assist farmers with all aspects of farm forestry in Kerry and to maximise returns to the farmer. The size of individual plantations in Kerry makes marketing difficult. By organising groups of forest owners, Kerry Farm Forestry Owners sought to assist by bringing these plantations into active management and to increase returns to the farmer.

While not involved in day to day running of the group, Teagasc and the Forest Service has provided access to training, technical backup and organised forestry events on thinning and harvesting.

Aims

- To increase returns from forestry to farmers.
- Advice on inspection paths, inventory, roadways, felling licence, harvesting
- Marketing
- Advice on training courses.

Membership subscription-
Registration fee of €100

Contact - Secretary- Edwin Stryker
Tel. no. 087-2535909

21. Currow Forestry Group, Kerry

The Currow Forestry Group was set up in December 2011. There are 6 members with farm forestry covering 300 acres of mainly Sitka spruce trees, located in mid Kerry, 3 km from Currow village. Members are asked to attend all meetings/demonstrations and to contribute any knowledge which they may have or heard with regard to forestry/timber matters.

Annual membership subscription-
There is no subscription fee at present but plan to introduce one shortly.

Aims & Objectives-

The groups aim is to manage/thin forests as a co operative and in doing so, get the best price possible for products and most importantly keep the profits in the local area. Rural communities must be maintained and preserved and the group believes that forestry is key in achieving this into the future.

In 2010 the first plantation was thinned at 19 years old and yielded 600 tonnes of timber. This was an important job as it showed the value of timber and how important it is to get the first thin right. So far in 2012, 4 others forests were thinned and 1600 tonnes of timber went over the weigh bridge.

Contact - Group coordinator - Padraig Cronin
Tel. no. 087- 9126261

22. Headford Forestry Owners Group

Area covered- Headford and Killarney area, Co. Kerry

Basic rule of membership- Own or have an interest in forestry
Membership subscription- None

The Headford Owners Group first met in Autumn 2009. There is no formal committee in place, members have periodically met, primarily to share experiences and gain technical knowledge on issues involved in management and harvesting. Members have also attended events such as forestry field days, forestry demonstrations and chainsaw training. Plantations within the group are at varying stages of development.

Aims & Objectives- To encourage new members, active participation and avail of the benefits of a co-ordinated approach to forest management, where appropriate.

Contact - Tom Houlihan, Teagasc
Tel. no. 087-6184353 | tom.houlihan@teagasc.ie

23. South Kerry Owner Groups

Area covered- Kenmare, Dromid & Killorglin

Basic Rule of membership: Own forestry or have an interest in forestry/ wood energy

Meetings have been held in the South Kerry Area in response to the emergence of local wood energy opportunities and the required economies of scale in relation to harvesting, marketing and supply. Indoor and outdoor meetings to date have been facilitated by South Kerry Development Partnership with independent technical input by Teagasc.

As this is the early stage in the development of these groups, a decision is yet to be made on issues such as structure and how groups will develop. New members are welcome to join.

Contact: Joseph McCrohan
Tel. no. 066-9472724
RSS Manager / Rural Development Officer
Mob.no. 087-2849165
South Kerry Development Partnership Ltd.
West Main Street,
Cahersiveen,
Co. Kerry.
jmccrohan@skdp.net

24. Duhallow Forest Owner Group

Area covered-north west Co. Cork (formed 2011)

Aims & Objectives-

To raise awareness and knowledge of forestry practices through education, training and sharing experience, particularly through field days.

Membership-

Membership is open to all private timber growers who have forestry in the

north west Co. Cork area. New members wishing to join should do so by either contacting below or by attending a meeting of the Group.

Annual membership subscription-None

Contact - John Casey, Teagasc
Tel. no. 087- 2242283
john.casey@teagasc.ie

25. Avondhu Blackwater Forest Owner Group

Area covered- mid- north east Co. Cork (formed 2010)

Aims & Objectives-

To raise forestry awareness and knowledge through education, training and the sharing of experience, to pool members resources together in order to develop 'economies of scale', to achieve the best sustainable profit for timber produce through forest management services, timber sales and added value at local level and to maximise the economic, social and environmental benefits of farm forestry for both the grower and the rural economy. Meetings, crop inventories, field days and courses have being held.

Membership-

Membership is open to all private timber growers who reside or have forestry in the Avondhu Blackwater Area. New members wishing to join should do so by either making an application in writing to the Chairperson or by attending a meeting of the Group.

Annual membership subscription-

Plantation 1-10 years	€30
Plantation 10-15 years	€50
Plantation 15+ years	€80

Contact- Chairperson- Tim Crowley
Tel. no. 086- 6061164

26. West Cork Forestry Group

Area covered- Co. Cork at present (formed 2008)

Aims & Objectives-

To maximise the benefits of farm forestry, to raise awareness through training and sharing experience, to facilitate forestry development through the current transition into a co- op and to organise & carry out forestry operations from planting onwards, incl. thinning. Meetings, crop inventories, field days and courses (incl. chainsaw) have being held.

Membership-

Membership is currently open to all private timber growers who reside or have forestry in the Cork area. New members wishing to join should do so by either making an application in writing to the Secretary or by attending a meeting of the Group.

Annual membership subscription-€50

Contact - Secretary - William Melville
Tel. no. 086- 2456941



Teagasc's Forestry Services



Research

Teagasc's forestry research focuses on supporting the developing farm forestry sector.



Advice

Your local Forestry Adviser provides private landowners with independent and objective advice.



Training

Teagasc's Forestry Development Department provides FETAC-certified, forestry-related courses.

Further information:

- Contact your local Forestry Adviser
- www.teagasc.ie/forestry provides up to date info on forestry grants, upcoming events, technical advice, forestry research, staff contact details and much more
- Subscribe for Teagasc Forestry e-News: forestry news emailed directly to you
- Follow us on Twitter: twitter.com/teagascforestry
- Scan this QR code with your smartphone:



Contact Details:

Teagasc Forestry Development Department,
Athenry, Co. Galway

Tel: +353 (0) 91 845200

Email: info@teagasc.ie

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