

The end of an era

Confor's National manager for Scotland, Jamie Farquhar, retires after 19 years of promoting the benefits of trees and forests. **Stuart Goodall** reports

In March, Jamie Farquhar will retire after a career in land management, forestry and timber that spans six decades. When Jamie completed his service as a commissioned officer in The Black Watch in 1973, he was employed by Smiths Gore, Chartered Surveyors until joining the Forestry and Timber Association as Director for Scotland in April 2002. In 2006 the role transferred to the successor organisation, Confor and Jamie has continued representing the sector in Scotland to this day.

When it began to filter out that Jamie may actually contemplate a life after talking trees and timber, many people got in touch to say how much they have valued his many years of service. For 19 years he has been explaining and promoting the benefits of forests and trees to everyone who will listen in multiple ways. Jamie presents to organisations and audiences across Scotland, drafts and consults the industry on numerous government consultations, writes updates and articles for the trade and public publications and often provides the links between forestry and other sectors and rural industries.



cessing sector Jamie has been instrumental in working with government to help develop a practical and effective regulatory and policy framework that has seen the sector flourish and grow delivering multiple benefits for the economy, society and the environment.

Over the years, Jamie has represented the voice of forest-

the variously changing forestry grants regime, and the many stakeholder groups engaging with government agencies.

In his role, Jamie has been the conduit to Government and has secured the respect of successive Ministers with his knowledge and passion for the industry. Jamie is always thoroughly informed, both of the views of the people and businesses he represents and the detail of policy and the wider context within which he is working. His contributions are always practical and constructive, his explanations well-argued and concise. He is often working in groups with people who far less experienced in these matters and he takes the time to work with others developing their understanding of the world of Scottish forestry so that good decisions are made.

Jamie has worked, most recently with the Scottish Forestry and Timber Technologies Industry Leadership Group, to prepare and deliver biannual regional events that always

draw in numerous forestry and timber folk from across rural Scotland for informative and enjoyable talks and events. Jamie is there explaining what is important for them to know and how they can engage to influence and develop the industry.

Underneath it all Jamie is a modest, unassuming man, always working for the benefit of others. He does not put himself forward for recognition or position, which makes the following small selection of praise that people have sent to me all the more poignant.

James Hepburne Scott former Scottish chair said "His dedication to this role has been immense from the start. He would travel to meetings all over Scotland, often in the worst weather, to make sure he really got to know and understand all the different elements and principal people in the forestry and timber sector. I can honestly say I have never met anyone who worked harder to master a new role".

Norman O'Neill MD at RTS Forestry added, "Jamie has perfected the art of combining the delivery of important industry facts and figures with a determined and dogged commitment to getting the issues resolved. In so doing he has the ability to target the right message at the right audience, and not take no for the answer!".

Jamie's role has also been recognised by the public sector. Dave Signorini, Chief Executive of Scottish Forestry reflected "That the Scottish forestry industry is in such a strong position, and with a bright future, is on no small part due to Jamie's contribution".

I, we will be sorry to see Jamie go, but at least he has the time now to spend with his wife Pauline, their three daughters and burgeoning collection of grandchildren. He leaves with our best wishes and our deepest thanks and gratitude.

"JAMIE HAS BEEN CENTRAL TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF FORESTRY AND FOREST POLICY IN SCOTLAND FOR TWO DECADES, A PERIOD THAT HAS SEEN A LARGE INCREASE IN THE ROLE OF PRIVATE FORESTRY, NOT LEAST IN WOOD PRODUCTION."

Jamie has been central to the development of forestry and forest policy in Scotland for two decades, a period that has seen a large increase in the role of private forestry, not least in wood production. As the representative of the private forestry and wood pro-

dustry on almost all of the various groups that have helped shape the industry deom national strategy forums to timber transport groups. Jamie's voice is well known (and often heard) on the Customer Representatives Group which provides feedback to government on