

FORESTRY & TIMBER NEWS

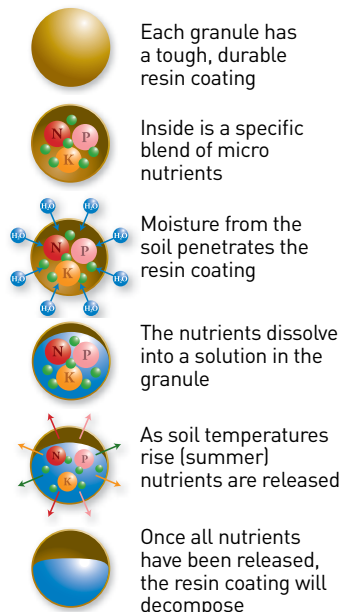
October 2015 Issue 71

TREEBOOST

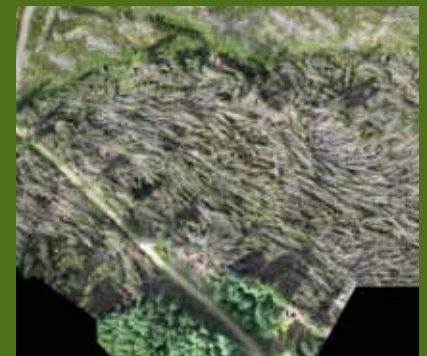
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As one government minister prepares to help promote home-grown wood products, another celebrates a Swedish import.

Stuart Goodall wants a clear message from the government – in favour of UK timber

Mixed messages

On 12 October, Secretary of State Liz Truss will visit a construction site as she launches the third annual Grown in Britain week – a celebration of home-grown wood products. The SoS will then be guest of honour as department store Heal's unveils its special celebration of wood season in their Tottenham Court Road flagship store.

Events like these provide an opportunity to promote our sector and to demonstrate the linkages between everyday products and well-managed forests. It is hugely disappointing then to see Ms Truss's forestry minister Rory Stewart recently promoting Swedish timber frame homes in his Cumbria constituency – see p4 – something we hope the minister will address when he speaks at our conference in London on 10 November.

Much of the softwood sawmilling sector has been hit by the strength of Sterling in 2015, losing market share as imported wood becomes significantly cheaper. This has a ripple effect across the sector, with, as is highlighted in this month's market report, particularly damaging consequences for the contracting sector.

Confor's Wood for Good campaign continues to promote the use of wood generally, but we also need lobbying and awareness raising to continue to make the link between the wood that businesses and individuals use and the source of that material. It would clearly help if the minister responsible for our sector backed home-grown wood.

At least we are seeing progress on driving up levels of new planting, in particular of productive conifer. After a huge amount of effort by Confor, including many meetings with ministers and officials, changes to the grant scheme in Scotland appear to be prompting an increasing number of larger, productive schemes to come forward and pressure on the previous English forestry minister helped to get the first significant productive planting scheme approved in Northumberland last year.

Confor's efforts are now focusing as much on helping smooth the path for planting applications as it is in stimulating the applications themselves. As well as publications setting out the benefits of these forests for farmers, for water management and for biodiversity, we are seeking to inform statutory consultees and the wider public about the benefits of well-managed forests. We will shortly also be publishing new guidance on how forestry professionals can engage with stakeholders.

If the public, officials and environmentalists can be educated about modern forestry and the benefits of using wood then we can help create a more secure and robust future for the sector as a whole.

CONFOR CONTACTS



Confor head office and editorial office
59 George Street,
Edinburgh EH2 2JG



0131 240 1410



info@confor.org.uk



www.confor.org.uk



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Caroline Harrison
National manager for England and regional director
M: 07500 927482
E: caroline.harrison@confor.org.uk



Jamie Farquhar
National manager for Scotland
M: 07817 374906
E: jamie.farquhar@confor.org.uk



Andrew Heald
National representative for N. Ireland
M: 07771 844653
E: andrew.heald@confor.org.uk



Martin Bishop
National manager for Wales
Rheolwr Genedlaethol i Gymru
M: 07876 029482
E: martin.bishop@confor.org.uk



Stefanie Kaiser
Communications and editor FTN
T: 0131 240 1420
E: stefanie.kaiser@confor.org.uk

We want to hear from you
Forestry and Timber News is your magazine, please contact Stefanie with your views and comments

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Forestry and wood policy debate returns to Westminster

The Confor Westminster conference - **Modern Forestry: unleashing the rural potential** - aims to put forestry and wood right at the heart of the Conservatives' vision for rural communities.

Rory Stewart MP is joined at the event by a wide range of forestry and timber experts, along with politicians from across the spectrum. The first Conservative Forestry Minister for almost 20 years will outline his vision for the sector and his party's blueprint for rural Britain.

Session 1 will examine how forestry can deliver for carbon, for biodiversity and for global leadership, with speakers including the innovative Craig White of White Design.

Session 2 puts the focus on the economy and what needs to be done to stimulate markets and build effective, sustainable supply chains. Confirmed speakers include Steve Cook, Chairman of the UK Contractors Materials Supply Group, Caroline Harrison, England Manager of Confor and Andy Howard of Pennine Biomass.

Dr Gabriel Hemery of The Sylva Foundation will also speak, calling for a greater understanding

of the benefits of restoring a woodland culture.

Stuart Goodall, Chief Executive of Confor, who will take part in the conference, said: "The modern forestry and wood-using sector is a positive force for rural communities, delivering a broad range of environmental, economic and social benefits to drive sustainable growth. This conference aims to illustrate that in a very practical way to the new Government and to show just how much forestry and wood can offer rural Britain - and in turn, what the Government can do to help unlock its full potential."

Colin Mann, Managing Director of conference sponsor Scottish Woodlands, said: "Events like this are hugely important in ensuring that the sector and policy-makers work together as effectively as possible to drive our industry forward."

Save the date... 10 November 2015



Forestry Minister Rory Stewart MP will outline his vision for the sector



The conference takes place at RICS, Great George Street, Westminster, on 10 November 2015, 10am-4pm. Tickets are £95 plus VAT and £75 plus VAT for Confor members. Places are limited and early booking advisable. Email liz@confor.org.uk or call 0131 240 1410

Does our minister back British wood?

This is a question we will put to UK forestry minister Rory Stewart, MP at Confor's conference in Westminster on 10 November. The minister has lent his support to a project to build affordable timber frame homes in his Cumbria constituency.

There is growing UK interest in developing low-cost, high-performance timber frame housing as a potential solution to the rural housing crises and fuel poverty. Companies such as Carbon Dynamic have pioneered the use of new technology and UK timber to produce a range of stunning buildings which require little if any

energy for heating.

Unfortunately, the project supported by Rory Stewart is manufactured by a company called Trivselhusbyesh, who are a wholly owned subsidiary of Swedish forestry giant Sodra.

So, within a few miles of England's largest sawmill at Carlisle, the UK forestry minister is backing a project to import and build timber frame homes using Swedish Timber. (See screen shot from Twitter)

Ensure you hear Rory's reply by booking your seat now. Call Liz on 0131 240 1410 or email liz@confor.org.uk



Future planting and wood supply

Thursday breakfast Q&A panel

There was a strong panel of speakers that included Ian Tubby (FC England), Jez Ralph (Timber Strategies), Dilwyn Howells (Premier Forest Group), Tim Dicker (BSW) and Crispin Golding for the opening event of the Confor Woodland Show held at Longleat on 10 and 11 September. It was chaired by Sir Harry Studholme, Chairman of FC and the subject for discussion was future wood supply and new planting in the south-west of England. The panel fielded some interesting questions from a packed floor.

With a predicted shortfall in future timber supplies why is it that, since 1980, the Forestry Commission have planted 4300 hectares of conifers but none at all since 2003? The private sector has planted 15,700 hectares but only 1100 hectares since 2003. The FC's viewpoint was that owner objectives are changing with a move away from productive species to



broadleaf. The feeling from the floor was that grant schemes favoured broadleaf planting and the perceived barriers to conifer planting and lack of public understanding of modern mixed forestry were still huge hurdles to overcome. We need to think beyond grant regimes and government terms. The reality is that our future woodlands and forests will include variable species and diameter mixes. How will the industry adapt? End users will need information on structural properties and woodland owners will need an understanding of a range of silvi-

cultural systems. Processors may need to invest to be able to take over stood timber and larger diameters. The need for vertical integration in the supply chain and investment in localised, cost efficient, processing was strongly voiced. Crispin Golding gave the quote of the day, "our industry comes second to heather, ramblers and birds". That being the case, how are we going to attract investment and new productive planting so our industry has the timber supplies it needs so it can continue to contribute so strongly to a low carbon economy?

Can we rebuild our relationship with beavers and pine martens?

Friday breakfast Q&A panel

Following up on a comprehensive discussion of the topic of pine marten reintroduction in FTN (June and August issue 2015), Confor hosted an exciting panel session on reintroduction of both martens and beavers in England. The panel represented a well-balanced mix of stakeholders and viewpoints and was well-prepared to respond to the many questions and comments from an audience which greatly exceeded the capacity of the Confor marquee.

FC England's director Ian Gambles introduced the session with a general remark on the Commission's positive disposition to the reintroduction of both species, with the caveat that things shouldn't be rushed – relying on conclusive research results and following proper processes are key requirements. Jonathan Spencer (Head of Planning & Environment Forest Enterprise) agreed on this point, being particularly positive about the value of adding pine martens to our ecosystem. For both species, opportunistic kills of wildlife and game species would be a challenge, and proper management and response mechanisms would need to be in place.

Scottish ecology consultant Derek Gow replied to this that the meaningfulness of extended preliminary research should be assessed – advantage can be taken of comprehensive pre-existing research conclusions on beaver reintroductions from the continent. He made a strong point that beavers create natural sponges for flood control and should be reintroduced; waiting and letting time pass also comes with an inherited risk.

David Bullock of the Vicent Wildlife Trust reported on the organisation's activities for the reinforcement of marten populations in Wales.

'Star' pine marten researcher Emma Sheehy (University of Aberdeen), summarised some of her research results from Ireland (see FTN June 2015), in particular the potential for Pine martens to suppress grey squirrel populations and co-exist with red squirrels.

Responding to enquiries from the floor, she made the point that establishing a marten population dense enough to have a controlling effect on grey squirrels will take time (10-15 years). She raised the question that with grey squirrels being a short-term problem, whether landowners could be kept on board until results from a marten reintroduction become visible.

David Gervers (BASC) represented the shooting community. He stated that healthy landscapes are a common interest for both the game and the conservation lobby. He stressed, however, the importance of assessing long-term impacts of any reintroduction. Pine martens reintroductions would need to be underpinned by very robust management strategies to avoid a conflict of interest with the (bird) gaming sector. Dr. Sheehy provided a positive feedback from Ireland, where martens are not necessarily perceived as a problem for game; a management option for occasionally arising problems would be the relocation of problematic populations. David Bullock reminded the audience of the existence of VWT guidelines to marten-proof pheasant pens. He also reassured the audience that reintroduction sites are normally chosen considering not only suitability of habitat (low



road density and high habit connectivity) but also low levels of game interest.

Some landowners were curious to know whether the existence of pine martens would interfere with grey squirrel control on their land. Control can continue, of course, but by regulation only live traps can be used in the presence of both pine martens and red squirrels.

Dougal Driver, who chaired the event, concluded the session with a remark on how relaxed the panel and audience as a whole seemed to be about the reintroduction of both beaver and pine marten.





Confor Woodland Show 2015

140 exhibitors – up 30% on 2013

2026 visitors – up 15% on 2013

Talking business



Rural crafts and business



Timber sports



Machinery at work



“An excellent show with some very positive feedback. I would like to thank the Committee, the groundworks crews and the volunteers for all their hard work. It is them that makes the show what it is.”
Nick Hoare, Show chairman



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New deal for small carbon projects

A streamlined and more cost-effective process for certifying and managing small woodlands to the standards of the Woodland Carbon Code (WCC) was launched on 10 September) at the Confor Woodland Show at Longleat Estate, Wiltshire.

Sir Harry Studholme, Chair of the Forestry Commission, who launched the new deal, explained: "To be robust and credible, a certification scheme must be rigorous in its auditing and inspection regimes. However, this incurs costs, and it became clear from experience that the administration and costs involved were prohibitive for smaller projects.

"Now, with a simpler but conservative approach to predicting carbon and dealing with risk, as well as streamlined administration and reduced monitoring requirements, we hope that

the small woods process will prove cost-effective to land owners who are looking to undertake smaller woodland creation projects."

Sir Harry explained that carbon funding can make it possible to establish new woodlands which might not otherwise be possible.

"For example, if you get a woodland grant, but it won't cover all your costs, or if you're unsuccessful in winning a grant, carbon funding for a WCC-certified project could bridge the financial gap and help you to finance a woodland creation project of any size."

The small woods process can be used for eligible projects planting from 0.1 to 5 hectares net planted area (ie the area excluding open ground). Projects smaller than 5ha net currently make up less than 5% of the carbon sequestration predicted for all WCC projects.



Full information about the small woods scheme is available on the Forestry Commission website at www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode or contact climatechange@forestry.gsi.gov.uk.



Read all Confor Woodland Show tweets here: <https://storify.com/andyheald/confor-woodland-show-2015>



UKWAS 4 Draft for consultation

Certification was a key topic of conversation at the Confor Woodland Show at Longleat, and both FSC and PEFC had well attended stands, and the new UKWAS4 revision was available for inspection in the Confor Tent.

The UK Woodland Assurance Standard is reviewed and revised once every five years, and the current consultation is open until 30 October 2015; so if you are interested in Forest Certification now is the opportunity to comment on the revised draft of UKWAS4, which is available via <http://ukwas.org.uk/>

Many foresters commented on the revised standard at the show, with some saying they welcomed the revised structure and clarity on issues such as dead wood, but concerned about the focus on native species, in the face of impending climate change.

Confor's Andrew Heald said "Numbers count with any consultation and it is essential that as many FTN readers as possible, take this opportunity to have their voice heard. UKWAS is only reviewed once every five years so it will be 2021 before the next chance."

UKWAS Executive Chair, Peter Wilson said: "The Steering Group has concluded work on a Consultation Draft. It is a radical revision so we are looking forward to hearing your feedback on how you think the draft version measures up to stakeholder expectations."

Portal to inspire a new generation

A unique on-line forestry careers portal, supported by a wide range of organisations and hosted by the Royal Forestry Society (RFS), was officially launched at the show in time for the new academic year.

Developed in partnership with the Forestry Learning and Development Group, the Portal is the first on-line resource of its kind.

Recent statistics suggest that 53% of forestry workers are over 40, and only 11% are under 25, indicating that in the coming years we will see a shortage of skilled and experienced foresters. This potential shortage could become of greater concern if the Government's proposals to increase the number of UK woodlands and foresters under management are met.

The site has been designed to be useful for prospective students and their parents, for those looking to change careers and to

enter forestry for the first time and for those seeking to move on within the sector.

It offers information and guidance on how to enter the sector, qualifications, education providers, apprenticeships, careers, continued professional development, jobs and further opportunities.

The Forestry Learning and Development Group includes BiFor (B'ham Uni), CLA, Confor, Crown Estate, Duchy of Cornwall, Forestry Commission England, Forest Education Network, Forestry Learning Network, Forest Schools Association, ICF, Lantra Harper Adams Uni, Hereford and Ludlow College, RFS, Schumacher College, Smallwoods, Sylva Foundation, UPM Tilhill and independents – Ros Burnley and Ted Wilson.

The portal can be accessed via a careers portal tab at www.rfs.org.uk or at www.rfs.org.uk/forestry-career-portal/



Chainsaw goes to Confor member

Paul Johnston (FC England) was the lucky winner of a STIHL MS 150 C-E chainsaw in the Grown in Britain prize draw made at the show.

Two Silkyfox pruning saws go to lucky raffle winners. Below, Stuart Goodall (left) hands over the first Silkyfox saw to Mark Prior (Forestry Commission SW England), winner of the Thursday raffle.

HAVE YOUR SAY...

Email comments to the UKWAS Support Unit on ukwas@confor.org.uk by 30 October 2015







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FC publishes annual statistics

FC Forestry Facts & Figures 2015 have been published. Some of the key points from the latest releases are:

- The woodland area in the United Kingdom in 2015 is 3.15 million hectares: 1.38m ha (44%) are independently certified as sustainably managed.
- 10,000ha of new woodland were created in the UK in 2014-15.
- 11m green tonnes of UK roundwood (softwood and hardwood) were delivered to primary wood processors and others in 2014, representing a 3% increase from the previous year.
- Wood products imported into the UK in 2014 were valued at £7.2bn and included 6.4m m³ of sawnwood, 3.3m m³ of wood-based panels, 7m m³ of wood pellets and 5.9m tonnes of paper.
- A total of 204 projects were registered under the Woodland Carbon Code at 30 June 2015, covering an area of 15,400 ha of woodland and projected to sequester 5.7m tonnes of carbon dioxide.
- Over one half of the UK population had visited woodland in the last few years.
- The Annual Business Survey reported average employment in 2013 of 14,000 in forestry and 26,000 in primary wood processing.
- Gross Value added (GVA) in primary wood processing (sawmilling, panels and pulp & paper) was £1.40bn in the UK in 2013. GVA in forestry was £0.50bn.
- The UK was the third largest net importer (imports less exports) of forest products in 2013, behind China and Japan.

www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/inf-d-7aqdgc

Forestry sector 'coming out of wooden box'

The XIV World Forestry Congress took place in Durban on 7 – 11 September 2015. This is a statement from Rod Taylor, Director, WWF Global Forest Programme, on the Congress and the resulting "Durban Declaration".

"The Congress showcased numerous examples of the role forests can play as a solution to climate change and in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

"Forestry as a sector is coming out of its 'wooden box' into the wider landscape – mixing more with farming and responding more directly to the diverse aspirations of people, from local communities to urban consumers.

"From responsible forest management to tenure reform, a host of solutions are needed to conserve forests and deliver on their full potential as a solution for people and climate."

Minister set to launch third Grown in Britain Week

The third edition of this week-long festival, which starts on 12 October, celebrates our forests and woods and the amazing array of products they produce for society's benefit.

Every year, Grown in Britain week encourages people out of their homes and into our woodlands and gets them thinking about the sourcing of the wood products they buy.

In order to connect to the public masses, this year the Grown in Britain team will be taking the working forest and sawmill into the heart of London. The main display floor at the Heal's designer furniture store in Tottenham Court Road will be host to an array of Grown in Britain round logs, sawn material and wood components.

The journey of wood from the forest through to furniture on display in the store, will be clear for tens of thousands of visitors throughout October, connecting and educating people who may have never considered where their wood comes from before.

Rt. Hon. Elizabeth Truss, Secretary of State for the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs will launch this year's Grown in Britain week at an exclusive event held in Heal's store on Monday, 12 October.

"We want the great British public to think about the wood products they buy, and ask whether it's made from home-grown trees", says Grown in Britain CEO Dougal Driver.



Rt. Hon. Elizabeth Truss, will launch the week

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Monday, 12 October

Grown in Britain Week opening event, Heal's flagship store (Tottenham Court Rd) Secretary of State will give keynote address, before visiting a construction site (tbd) to see first-hand how British timber is making its mark in UK construction.

Tuesday, 13 October • AASA Hooke Park

A day at the Architectural Association School of Architecture for an insight into its work on experimental buildings built using timber from its own 140ha mixed forest.

Wednesday, 14 October • Education Day

The University Institute of Forest Research is hosting a masterclass at the University of Birmingham, which will explore how UK forests are responding to elevating atmospheric CO₂.

Thursday, 15 October

National Woodfuel Conference

The Conference coincides with Grown in Britain Week and is a 'must attend' for anyone looking to generate income from wood; understand more about growth opportunities through renewable energy; or

sustain a business in the wood fuel market. 8am to 4.30pm, Epsom Downs Racecourse Register at www.thewoodfuelconference.co.uk

Friday, 16 October • Open Forest Friday

This is a new feature for 2015 and will feature in every Grown in Britain week in the future, where forests and sawmills open their doors to their supply chains, clients and the public. First to feature for this new day in the calendar, is the Royal Forestry Society who in conjunction with the Chiltern Society, is running a volunteer work party in its 'exemplar' woods. At the event the RFS will be awarded its recently gained Grown in Britain licence that gives independent assurance of good management a support for home grown timber. Pancake and Hockeridge woods, contact euanrussell@tesco.net if you are interested in taking part.

More info on www.growninbritain.org/getinvolved/grown-in-britain-week

Book your event for next year's Grown in Britain Week! 10 - 16 October 2016 Contact: enquiries@growninbritain.org

And the best article award goes to...

Mike Henderson, who judged the Alan Mitchell award for the best FTN article of 2014, explains his decision

If my initial thoughts on being asked to judge entries had ever been along these lines, "Only 75 articles, on every possible topic of interest to the forest industry. Just choose a winner, can't be that difficult. One article is bound to leap off the page and head for the podium. Besides, if people disagree with my choice, tough", I was in for a reality check.

What, I've got to pick a second and third, and say how I reached my decisions!

Not so straightforward now is it?

Where to start? I know, read the six FTN editions. Yes, done that, and what an eye-opener. Reading six editions from cover to cover in a single sitting left me with one overriding impression. In the competition entrant articles, and those of Confor staff and paid contributors, readers have the benefit of vast experience and expert input from some very bright people. Each FTN edition is a well-rounded amalgam of big, medium and small forestry. If, as busy shakers and movers, you try to skip from headline to headline, you

will miss some gems! Reading one edition every two months can get to be just part of a routine. Readers may not always have the luxury of time to really appreciate the thought and expertise invested in the articles. Readers do well to acknowledge the effort of these authors.

Now, to judging the award. Better have some guidelines. I know, an objective scoring matrix, that's the ticket. Makes it all just a matter of numbers, and removes personal prejudice. Let's see, what criteria do I use?

Some authors have six entries, most only one. I'll have to be careful here to judge each individual article on merit, and not subconsciously link multiple inputs. But then, surely consistent high quality input deserves some reward?

Some topics are inherently more interesting than others to more people. That's not the fault of the author, so concentrate on what they make of the material they're given.

Can I ignore my natural prejudice in favour of large-scale commercial forestry? I'd better make a concerted effort to be impartial in that regard. Besides, I've always had a sneaking regard for the underdog.

Should the fact that I lose the will to live when articles are peppered with IT terminology count against those clever enough to master the technology? Of course not, so I'll have to make a

determined effort to understand what they're on about! Oh dear, this matrix stuff is turning out to be harder than I thought. No obvious, objective criteria appearing yet. Scrub that idea. Switch to plan B. Time for a long ride on the bike to work out a way forward.

After reading all articles again, reflecting, agonising and finally feeling decisive, in equal **third place**, I've picked: August, "What has happened to forest mensuration?" and "Can 'Big Data' help to monitor *Phytophthora*?"

Both articles take the reader into a world of technology which would have been unthinkable just a short time ago. Both herald benefits in providing decision-making tools which could hold great potential for improved forest management. The follow-up to both projects should be fascinating if it matches the billing in these two articles.

In **second place**, I've picked: February, "Ten steps to selling your timber". OK, I admit to being slightly swayed by Oliver Combe's consistently high-quality input (though matched by several other regular contributors for quality).

This article contains sound, practical advice for owners who may be new to selling standing timber. It has that extra impact which could make it an article to which sellers may refer in the future. It's well-presented, and if it prompts a seller to consider one step that may otherwise have been overlooked, it has achieved its aim.

In **first place**, I've picked: December, "With chainsaws to the rescue". It got me thinking about media coverage of disasters in far-off places, showing people without food, shelter and often hope. I'd always assumed that, like mobile phones and Coke, chainsaws were everywhere, albeit often used, alarmingly, by people wearing flip-flops and shorts. Apparently not, and certainly not used with any degree of skill in disaster situations. We watch scenes of relief planes being loaded, and well-meaning experts heading to the rescue. This article reminds us that planned aid we see on screen may not reach the intended destination in time to be effective, without someone with the necessary skill in clearing access.

It has been a privilege to be asked to judge the entries. There are no losers. Well done to all.

www.dartinternational.co.uk



Gary Bailey of DART receives the Alan Mitchell award from Confor England Manager Caroline Harrison and, above, the article in December's FTN.

Putting a price tag on woodland ecosystem services

The Office for National Statistics has published UK Environmental Accounts, 2015.

On page 73 of their report it covers the value of woodlands saying that the net present value of the three woodland ecosystem services (timber, carbon sequestration and recreation) was £92 billion in 2013. Other ecosystem services, such as water management, air quality etc. are difficult to measure and not included.

The split of total value between the three services is:

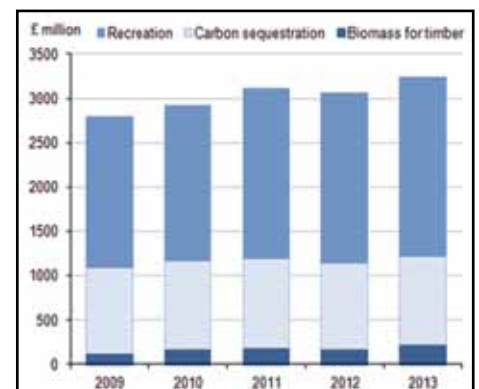
1. Timber removals were valued at £216m in 2013, up from £79m (in 2013 prices) in 2004. This increase is due mainly to an increase in the

stumpage price over the period.

2. Carbon removals were valued at £995m in 2013, up from £911m (in 2013 prices) in 2004. This increase is due to the increase in the value of carbon over the period, with a 7% fall in the volume of sequestered gases

3. Recreation services were valued at £2028m in 2013, up from £1701m (in 2013 prices) in 2009. This increase is entirely due to the change in the number of visits made, as the value of each visit has been assumed to be constant over the period.

www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/environmental/uk-environmental-accounts/2015/index.html





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The future of private forestry grants in Northern Ireland

Following the feature on UK forestry grants (FTN August 2015), **Tony Johnston** outlines the grant situation in Northern Ireland



The new Northern Ireland RDP was formally approved by the European Commission at the end of August 2015 and it is hoped that support measures for forestry will be announced this autumn. The key headline is the switch to a focus on larger-scale commercial planting on ground of limited agricultural productivity. Support will remain for smaller broadleaved woodlands, such as those supported in the last programme, and these environmentally-focused woodlands will be grant-aided through the new agri-environment scheme. The private forestry sector in Northern Ireland are optimistic that the new support structure will give a much needed boost to new afforestation as the amount of woodland established over recent years has dwindled to a level of about 200ha per annum.

Availability of land to increase forest cover

With many land uses competing for a finite resource it is the effect on a landowner's annual income that will be the critical factor in determining whether forestry is an option. Primarily, it is the ability to retain farm subsidies that will

decide whether the aspiration to plant will be converted to an actual project on the ground. As many landowners in Northern Ireland are no longer classed as active farmers, and will lose their eligibility to claim the Basic Payment Scheme (what was the Single Farm Payment), we could lose a significant amount of potential planting ground unless we can find a way for them to regain these entitlements. It is this area that has exercised much of Confor's efforts, with some way still to go.

A significant proportion of land in NI is not farmed by the owner; to lose the opportunity to be able to claim forestry grants on this ground is undoubtedly going to have a large impact on the potential area we could plant. However, there are positive changes to the new Rural Development Regulation which make forestry more attractive to land owners whose non-agricultural income resulted in a cap being applied to annual premia payments. This could be a significant boost to land managed under a short-term letting system known in Ireland as 'conacre' which accounts for about 30% of agricultural land in NI.

Forestry and food production co-existing

The other key hurdle has been convincing the agricultural lobby that forestry is not a threat to the production of food. This work has been largely successful and we look forward to support from the two key farming bodies in NI. They now accept forestry as a legitimate alternative to livestock production on land that

is naturally constrained. Unfortunately, this ground is currently subject to an annual top-up payment that will be lost if it is planted; a review of this area-based scheme in 2017 will hopefully lead to this barrier being removed. One area that could play into our hands will be the requisite to maintain ground in Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC) in order to retain area-based payments. If, as a consequence of planting, this burden (particularly on ageing farmers) is reduced we could see forestry further incentivised.

“Primarily, it is the ability to retain farm subsidies that will decide whether the aspiration to plant will be converted to an actual project on the ground.”

The private forest industry in Northern Ireland welcome the opening of the new Forestry Grant Schemes, particularly since there has been no real planting since the spring of 2014. The delay in getting new grants open has been frustrating; however, the new programme seems to offer the real prospect of reinvigorating commercial forestry after a number of years in the doldrums. Optional paragraph

Tony Johnston is a forestry agent who over the last two years has represented Confor on the Rural Development Programme for Northern Ireland, Stakeholders Consultation Committee. He has also represented Confor in negotiations with the Northern Ireland Forest Service concerning the formulation of the future Forestry grant measures.

THE GRANTS OFFER IN NORTHERN IRELAND

The main grant under the new forestry measures is to be known as the **Forest Expansion Scheme (FES)**. This could see up to 100% of establishment costs funded for projects over 5ha. Primarily intended to encourage commercial coniferous forestry it does not exclude the planting of any woodland type. In addition to supporting all reasonable establishment costs (including access, fencing and ground preparation), it will give 10 years of 'income foregone' payments at a rate yet to be announced, but expected to be slightly higher than the previous rate that averaged about £250 per ha per year. Eligible landowners will retain Basic Payment Scheme entitlements on the land they plant under FES.

The **Native Woodland Tree Planting option** under the new Agri Environment Scheme (Environmental Farming Scheme) is aimed at creating new native woodland and can support projects from 0.15ha up to 5ha. It will focus on broadleaved woodland with more of a biodiversity, wildlife, environmental or aesthetic aim and will be a standard grant payment. This grant will not be administered by the NI Forest Service, but by the farm

inspectors from the Countryside Management Branch as part of the agri-environmental measures within the RDP. Whilst we are optimistic that having more advocates on the ground in terms of inspectors could offer a greater opportunity to extol the virtues of woodland, we worry that agricultural staff will initially have limited forestry experience and may be reluctant to promote tree planting as a good option. Confor will continue to work with the Department of Agriculture and farmers to maximise uptake. This grant will probably not see any stems in the ground until the 2016/2017 planting season.

Other grants include the **Woodland Investment Grant (WIG)** for improving woodland resilience and environmental value (restocking, restructuring, invasive species control and public amenity access). The **Forest Protection Scheme (FPS)** for prevention or restoration, before or following disease or catastrophic events. And a **Forestry Competitiveness Scheme (FCS)** aimed at bringing smaller forests into economic management. This should see support for infrastructure that aids harvesting and management access.

“The private forestry sector in Northern Ireland are optimistic that the new support structure will give a much needed boost to new afforestation”



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Is brown the new green?

David Gilbey, renewable energy specialist at UX Energy Service, puts woodfuel into a wider renewable energy context

Energy costs have soared in recent years, well above the level of inflation. Energy consumers are being encouraged away from fossil fuels. The most widely recognised alternatives to fossil fuels are solar PV and wind, perhaps a less obvious alternative is wood.

Biomass – competitive renewable fuel

Whilst it is impossible to calculate fuel costs into the future with pinpoint accuracy, it seems likely that wood fuel prices will remain lower than their fossil fuel counterparts, as observed in all mature wood fuel markets.

Woodchip prices in the UK have remained between 2.5 and 3.5p/kWh for the last decade. This very low level of volatility in prices makes energy generated by a woodchip burning biomass boiler increasingly attractive to businesses. The advent of the non-domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) scheme in November 2011 has seen a huge increase in the number of biomass boilers now being deployed across the UK. Biomass boilers range in size from small domestic 10kW units to industrial scale 60MW+ plants. Larger plants can also be used in conjunction with steam or gas turbines to generate electricity, where the boiler becomes part of a biomass CHP plant.

The pros and cons of biomass boilers

A major advantage to biomass boilers is the ease of integration into existing heating systems. Biomass boilers deliver heat at temperatures in excess of 70°C and can deliver steam in both the superheated and saturated state. Most biomass boilers can connect into the hydraulic circuit of a building, replacing oil/LPG or gas with no discernible difference in terms of thermal comfort. There are disadvantages to biomass boilers:

- The presence of emissions (although RHI regulations are extremely tight)
- The transportation of biomass fuel to site
- Access to the boiler
- Maintenance required.

Quality assurance

Wood pellets must conform to BS EN 14961-2 and wood chips need to comply with the requirements set out in BS EN 14961-4. On commissioning, it must be demonstrated that a boiler has been tested to use a specific fuel and this fuel must continue to be used throughout the life of the boiler.

Moisture content is the key to the calorific value of the fuel. Wet fuel with a moisture content of around fifty percent can still be burnt but special biomass boilers are required. The moisture content of a typical woodchip ranges between twenty and thirty percent.

Sourcing woodfuel

Local virgin waste wood can be used if the source can be managed effectively, and can also generate jobs for the management and processing of the wood. Waste wood often proves a cheaper alternative to bought-in pellets and chips, with the latter typically costing £200/tonne and £150/tonne respectively.

Points to consider when sourcing fuel for a biomass boiler are:

- Is the source approved as part of the ongoing proof of quality fuel
- Security of supply – how long can the current source be maintained
- Shipping to site – can transportation be arranged
- Drying and processing of the wood into chips
- Consistency of chip size and shape to prevent blockages in the auger between store and boiler.

Worried about cost of renewable energy?

Clean renewable energy is more expensive to produce but it is now competing in many parts of the world with traditional forms of electricity and heat production. Subsidies (the feed-in tariff for electricity and the RHI for heat production) have played a major role in this. Around 15% of electricity generation is now from renewable sources and the UK is on track to reach the government target of 20% by 2020.

However, two of the best ways to reduce energy costs remain:

- Manage your energy consumption effectively
- Use less energy.

This is obviously more easily said than done but the Energy Savings Opportunity Scheme (ESOS) audits are currently identifying some huge savings opportunities for many users across the UK.

UX Energy Services has been working in the energy sector for over 20 years, assisting end users obtain better value from their energy suppliers. Our knowledge extends from the more traditional approach to energy through to the most recent renewable offerings. Our dedicated staff and network of experienced independent consultants recommend the best solutions to meet our clients' needs.

www.uxenergyservices.com

'Use BSL Woodsure suppliers or risk your RHI payments being stopped'

As autumn arrives so do some important changes to the government's Renewable Heat Incentive, which suppliers of woodfuel need to be aware of. From October 2015, all biomass participants in the RHI will have to use fuels that meet sustainability criteria, or risk their payments being stopped.

As the renewable heat market grows, DECC is using the new rules to ensure that biomass meets the government's carbon and environmental targets. This will affect all domestic and non-domestic RHI participants as well as producers and suppliers of biomass fuels.

To comply suppliers must demonstrate that their BSL-registered fuel meets greenhouse gas emissions targets; that it is from 100% legal sources; and at least 70% is from sustainable or deemed as sustainable sources.

Whilst systems 1MW and over are already required to report on sustainability of fuel and feedstock, the new criteria will also apply for smaller systems.

The easiest way to comply with the new rules is to purchase fuel from suppliers listed on the

Biomass Suppliers' List (BSL), which show approved suppliers that meet the new RHI criteria.

There are thousands of suppliers' on the BSL to choose from, but those that carry the Woodsure logo come with the added assurance that you're getting a quality woodfuel product every time. Tick the Woodsure box to filter your re-

sults to quality fuel.

An appliance is only as good as the fuel that goes into it. By choosing fuel from a certified Woodsure supplier on the BSL the quality of woodfuel is guaranteed and consumers can get the best efficiency from their appliance and RHI payments.

Over 200 suppliers are Woodsure certified and the list is growing with consumer demand. If you produce or supply woodfuel and want your product to be quality assured, visit www.woodsurre.co.uk or call 01179 582188 for more information.

What are the criteria?

- Fuel must meet a lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions target of 34.8g CO₂ equivalent per MJ of heat generated
- Biomass fuel will need to come from well managed forests or from crops managed in a sustainable way
- Woodfuel sustainability criteria are outlined in the UK Timber standard for Heat and Electricity



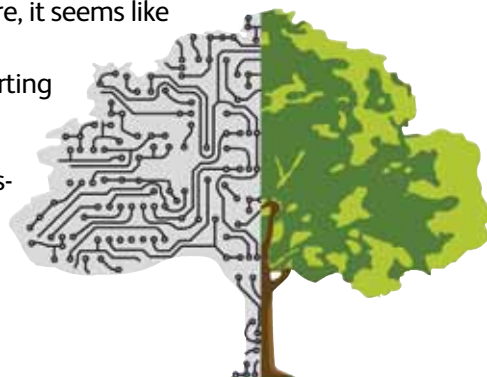
Can our forest go virtual?

As part of this issue's technology feature, I would like to introduce the German project *The Virtual Forest (Der Virtuelle Wald)* and encourage a discussion on several technology-related topics within the UK forestry and timber sector.

I have invited a range of companies and individuals to submit a brief comment on the potential they see for such systems, where the forest is 'fed into the computer' to streamline our supply chains. Once more, it seems like scale and cost is an issue in our country.

Taking *The Virtual Forest* concept as a starting point, I was also interested in hearing our industry's point of view on related topics like supply chain optimisation, cross-ownership management, data gathering, the use of new technologies in our sector or the importance of visualisations for stakeholder engagement.

Stefanie Kaiser



Der Virtuelle Wald in North Rhine-Westphalia

Today, in several fields of application virtual models already provide a basis for solving varied problems. New districts can be virtually experienced, digital factories already produce virtual products before first cut of spate, pilots are virtually training risky manoeuvre, physician are virtually planning and practicing complicated operations and forestry machinery operators are virtually training timber harvest technique. The same now goes for the application field 'forest and wood'. Applications like forest inventory and forestry planning, planning of fellings, optimization of harvesting and accounting processes, improvements of timber logistic, evaluation of damaging events etc. are expecting a realistic virtual illustration of the real forest.

For this reason the Virtual Forest "feeds the forest into the computer". Within this project, the preconditions for building up a single central database – the Virtual Forest – describing the extensive area of North Rhine-Westphalia in Germany are constructed. This database contains a mathematical description of biological (eg stocking degree and breast-height diameter) and technical (eg road network and property) aspects of the real forest in different detailing (eg forest and single-tree consideration) and different precision. All insights of North Rhine-Westphalia's forest, which have to be stored, expand into this database and all working processes should almost automatically contribute to construction and upkeep of the extensive forest description.

With those aims the Virtual Forest is the pivot of extensive measures to improve the competitiveness of the forestry and timber sector. Especially regarding the surmounting of structural weakness concerning midget private forests, the Virtual Forest provides the information-technical basis for compensation of shattering of midget private forests and for mobilization of midget

forest owners. The Virtual Forest serves as a foundation for abstracts of different economy units, which are from case to case both business and economically profitable, and with it for the management of larger amounts of wood at lower costs.

Mapping physical forests into mathematical models allows for the simulation of complex developments in the forest. Therefore, different alternative strategies (eg silviculture, harvesting methods) can be tested, verified and enhanced using this model. Similar to simulations in aeronautics, spaceflight and automobile industry, several alternatives can be evaluated in very short times and optimal process chains can be developed and trained. This saves time and money.

That is why the Virtual Forest is the central focal point for varied data. It reduces information gathering to a minimum: from standardization of data via standardization of quality-assured data to simplification of applications on place. Beyond that, it is diversely extendable – additionally outside the sector of forestry, eg rescue, nature preservation and tourism.

The text above is an excerpt from The Virtual Forest website –

www.virtueller-wald.de/en/the-virtual-forest

- The research project *The Virtual Forest* was successfully completed in November 2014. It led to contracts from two German Bundeslaender to develop a cutting-edge forest management tool. This work is currently being conducted by the RIF Institute for Research and Transfer and the Institute for Human-Machine-Interaction (RWTH Aachen), in collaboration with the company CPA ReDev GmbH. Other components of the *Virtual Forest* are being further developed as part of follow-up research projects.

Prof. Iain Woodhouse, fou



I have no doubt the detailed recording and visualisation of trees in woodlands and forests will become increasingly valued. Technology already

allows almost complete 3D reconstruction of a forest using combinations of terrestrial laser scanners with airborne LIDAR and multispectral imagery, or structure from motion. Virtual gaming is also driving down the price of tools for interacting with such data — Microsoft's virtual reality glasses, for instance, will make interacting with this kind of data second nature to the upcoming generations.

Will it really be useful for forest management, though? I wonder. It provides a great way to train people to use mechanical loggers, but do you need to have the exact replica of a real forest to train? Sure, getting information about the forest prior to logging can optimise the extraction and minimise damage, but do you need a virtual representation of all the details in order to do that? I doubt it.

The key challenge will be the pricing. If such information comes at low cost and with optimum ease of use, you might imagine that it

Mike Bracken, Ward Forester



Ward Forester works primarily with private woodland owners of neglected and undermanaged woodlands many of which are small.

Although the benefits of a visualization system such as this are undeniable, at present the profits gained from actively managing small woodlands, even by treating the woodlands as compartments of a much larger estate (eg the Ward Forester database) are highly marginal.

As such, our data collection is stripped down to the absolute minimum necessary during the completion of the management plan in order to estimate volume within parcels and invite tender offers based on price per cubic metre (the final volume determined on output). This therefore does not even extend to standard tariff methods except in cases of very high value timber (which most neglected woodlands are not).

In conclusion, it seems likely that these methods would not be appropriate to small cross-ownership landowner management as the data collection costs necessary would be prohibitive. However, there may be value in the possible translation of remote sensing such as LIDAR technology in order to better estimate inventory data, and of course, this would depend on the cost of the data.

www.wardforester.co.uk



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will be adopted in many logging areas. Perhaps a cheaper alternative is to have robots do the logging, not humans.

Carbomap contributes to the collection of detailed forest information using airborne lidar, which is the most effective way to collect detailed forest data over a large area. Most recently in a

project in Ireland (visualisation pictured below) using UAV Lidar and also with the novel use of multispectral lidar, which will provide additional information that would not be visible in a “true colour” virtual forest. www.carbomap.com



Gavin Mann, area manager for Central Scotland, EGGER Forest Management

Reading the project description of the Virtual Forest, my immediate thoughts are the following:

- Extensive data collection

(and processing) would be required, well-beyond what we already do for everyday management and harvesting, eg LIDAR and/or ground-based laser scanning of entire woodlands.

- This will be very expensive and time-consuming; who would pay for it?
- Would private woodland owners want intimate details of their asset held in a central database and shared with third parties?
- Who would develop and administer a UK system? Creating accurate models for all scenarios would be an extensive (and continuous) process.
- Who would use it? There are multiple agencies and companies with their own GIS that already provide the essential functions.

- Is it really likely to assist the supply chain and make the industry more efficient? Timber buyers will still want to walk sites and make their own measurements when tendering for parcels.
- Would a virtual forest add value to management or is it just a gimmick? We foresters do like to get out to the woods whenever possible.
- German forests exhibit silviculture and have a greater element of long-term and permanent structure where intimate management is important. I can see some application in harvesting of individual, high-value trees but

this is very rare in the UK (mostly hardwoods in England) and the costs will significantly outweigh the benefits.

www.egger.com/UK_en/egger-forestry.htm



SOMETHING TO SAY?



Want to comment yourself?

Submit a letter to the editor and share your viewpoint in the next magazine. The December issue will follow up on this topic with an article on the VARMA project to optimise wood raw material allocation and processing, by Woodlilee Consultancy and James Jones and Sons.

Essential Forestry APPS

In an industry where accuracy and attention to detail are of vital importance, software and smartphone tools can play a vital role. Here, we take a look at the best apps for forestry.

1
Best for Tree Height

iHypsometer Lite

Available on: iTunes

Cost: Free

Rating: 4+ stars

Features:

- Free app that **measures tree height** as well as **topograph** rates and **landings**.
- Uses **trigonometry** in its measurements so all of the work is completed for you.
- Takes **sloping ground** into consideration.
- Requires that you **measure the height of a person or object** standing next to the tree first.

4
Best for Data Collection

Plot Hound

Available on: iTunes

Cost: Free

Rating: 4+ stars

Features:

- Allows user to **record diameter, height, species and grade**.
- Enables users to **navigate to plots** and to **view maps of plots**.
- Companion website** allows user to **set up their cruise** and to **download results**.
- App tells user where to go to **measure the most critical trees** to get an accurate picture of the overall plot.

2
Best for Stand Basal Area

iBitterlich

Available on: iTunes

Cost: Free

Rating: 4+ stars

Features:

- Free app for calculating forest stand basal area.
- Uses **Dr. Walter Bitterlich's method**.
- Uses iPhone or iPad camera as a **viewpoint to count numbers of trees** of different categories.
- Once **360 degree sweep of forest** has been completed, and all trees have been counted, the **average height** is then entered in another field.
- Form factor is then adjusted, and the **stand basal area** is displayed at the top of the screen.

5
Best for Field Guides

Leafsnap

Available on: iTunes

Cost: Free

Rating: 4+ stars on iTunes

Features:

- Uses **visual recognition software** to identify trees.
- Currently contains over **300 different species** of tree.
- Contains **2,500 high resolution, detailed images**.
- Browser option** allows user to search through the database by **either leaf, seed, flower or berry**.
- Snapshot feature** enables user to photograph a leaf presenting possible match results.

3
Best for Mapping

ViewRanger GPS-Trails and Maps

Available on: iTunes

Cost: Free

Rating: 4+ stars

Features:

- Shows **GPS mapped locations** even without mobile coverage.
- Enables **recording of tracks** or **trails** and **addition of plots**.
- Open this location, starting and tracking**.
- Ability to **record a track, navigate and view track stats** with **Android Map**.
- Enables the **use of waypoints**.
- Free access** includes **long term** history and **route maps**.

6
Best for Counting Log Stacks

ifovea Counter

Available on: iTunes

Cost: Free

Rating: 4+ Stars on iTunes

Features:

- Count **1000 logs** in a second by just **four sweeps**.
- Enables user to determine **amount of logs** in a **stack pile** within seconds.
- Provides **snapshot of the GPS data** of the **log stack** and **the results of the measurement**.
- Enables user to **export to an image**.
- Features **color key** which is **generous** **orange** and **red** for **logs** marked with a **green** **leaf**.
- Data** in the number of **logs** and **total log volume** are added to the **image in each image**.

7
Best Pocket Guide

Service Forester's Toolkit

Available on: iTunes

Cost: Free

Rating: 4+ stars

Features:

- Used by **foresters and natural resource professionals**.
- Acts as a **quick reference guide** for **basic forest and land measurements**.
- Allows users to **access tree measurements, volume tables and site index charts**.
- Can be used on **iPhone, iPad and any Android device**.

Infographic courtesy of Jarrimber, Australia www.jarrimber.com.au

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De-risking a risky business



Gert Riemersma, of Trackplot, looks at how technology can keep lone workers safe

Why do I need to consider lone worker safety?

The forestry industry is one of the most dangerous sectors in which to work in the UK. In the five years up to March 2012, there was an average of 10.4 fatalities per 100,000 workers. This is more than three times the fatality rate for the construction industry.

Lone workers are susceptible

People who work alone are exposed to significant risk – simply because they work alone. Often lone workers behave differently to workers in teams. In fact, injuries for lone workers seem to be worse than for those who work in teams. Combined with the poor health and safety statistics in the forestry industry this demonstrates a clear need for an improved approach to lone working safety.

In addition, there are legal implications. Employers have responsibility for the health, safety and welfare at work of all of their employees, including self-employed people and contractors who may be affected by work activities. Every employer needs to comply with their legal duties towards any lone workers they have under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974; the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007 (in the worst case scenarios).

Technology considerations

Don't jump straight in here! You need to consider risks first, decide what level of risk you are comfortable with, as this will inform decision-making on the technology that will be most suitable. So consider the foreseeability of risk and develop a process to identify and manage risk.

Choosing the best technology for you

Consider the knowledge and background of the technology suppliers you have shortlisted. For instance, Trackplot is a complete lone worker system, designed specifically to keep outdoor lone workers safe.

Gert Riemersma is the founder and technical director of Trackplot Ltd. With a background in surveying and remote working in the oil and gas industry, he was well aware of the risks of working in hostile environments. He developed Trackplot in 2008 and uses his expertise in GPS and GIS to ensure the latest technological advances are included.

Guide to assessing lone worker technology

Use your risk assessment to assess and choose the best lone worker system for your needs.

STEP 1: Consider your lone workers in detail

How and where do your lone workers operate - urban, rural or remote locations?	This will determine whether you can rely sufficiently on a mobile phone network-based system or if you need a satellite-based system or a combination of both.
What time of day do your lone workers work?	Night time risks can be quite different to those faced during daylight hours. This will impact on the appropriate reporting, response and back-up mechanisms you may need.
How risk-tolerant and risk-aware are your lone workers?	Some people are intrinsically safer than others. Choose a lone worker system which supports the concerns your lone workers may have and the processes you put in place.

STEP 2: Consider what you need the lone worker system to do

What communications technology does the system use?	Is the system mobile phone network, radio or satellite based?
Does the environment of the lone worker limit the functionality of the system?	Will the system work in remote areas?
What type of communication do you need to establish with your lone workers?	Does this need to be one way, two way messages or voice communication?
What are the main benefits of the system?	How easy is it to use? How much flexibility do you require in the system? Can you monitor the use of the system? How often do you have to charge the device? Do you need detailed mapping to locate exactly where your lone workers are? Can you access historical data?
How does the system work?	What check in and check out procedures are required? How will an alert be responded to and how quickly? How secure is the system? What type of reporting do you require to ensure all your lone workers are safe?

STEP 3: Procedural considerations

You will need to develop procedures that support and dovetail in with the system you choose.	Consider who internally will be responsible for monitoring the system and the lone workers that use it; how alerts will be managed and responded to and what office back up you need.
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STEP 4: Commercial considerations

Having assessed the benefits and technical specification of your chosen system, there are commercial points to address.	What length of contract do you need? What pricing model would you prefer? What training and customer support is on offer?
---	---

Keeping your workers safe



About Trackplot

Trackplot is an online mapping tool designed for people who work outdoors. It provides a way to locate and communicate with people in rural and isolated areas not covered by a mobile phone network. The system works across the whole of the UK including all remote areas.

Trackplot uses the Global Positioning System (GPS) to find each lone worker's location and integrates with a range of devices to transmit messages via communication satellites (or the lone worker can switch to a mobile phone network if in range).

www.trackplot.com

Firm favourites

We asked some Confor members to recommend their most cherished pieces of kit...



Haglof DP2 Calipers Haglof Vertex 4

Recommended by
Steve Fox, Barle Valley Forestry (Somerset)
Our Surveying and Inventory Service incorporates the latest woodland surveying technology and specialist knowledge, to give woodland owners and managers accurate data about their timber stocks and woodlands.

We utilise Haglofs' DP2 Callipers and Vertex 4 to gather data efficiently and reliably. This data is formatted using TIMS (Timber Inventory Measurements System) and can be utilised within numerous aspects of woodland management.

www.barleforestry.co.uk

Tractor-drawn forwarder for CCF

Recommended by
T.R.E. Cook, Sennowe Estate (Norfolk)
The most important machine that I now have in the Sennowe forest is a tractor-drawn forwarder which has been in operation for two years. The Timber tractor is a Forest-equipped Valtra N121, the forwarder a MOWI 400. With the hardening of the firewood and chip wood market, we are able to extract both low-grade timber and quality saw logs from our continuous cover forest without damage.

www.sennowepark.com

Posch splitter and friends

Recommended by
Kerry Cooper, Lakes Biomass (Cumbria)
Growth in our firewood business prompted us to look for a faster processor capable of producing both short logs for stoves and long logs for biomass boilers. Just recently we took delivery of our brand new Posch 360 splitter and it hasn't stopped since it was taken off Jas Wilson's lorry. Already it has a layer of sawdust growing on top! Here it's pictured with two

of our trusty regulars. Our JCB telehandler has been in our yard since day one but it's such a reliable and versatile machine it's always at the centre of any processing whether logs or chip. But we won't forget our little New Holland tractor in the back. We know her as Blueberry! She might always be in the background, never centre stage but she just keeps on going and going!

www.lakesbiomass.com



One bit of kit does it all!

Recommended by
Edmund Dorman, OxLodge Wood (Herefordshire)
In 2008 when I acquired OxLodge Wood, or rather became it's custodian, it became clear that to deal with round-wood in tree length logs, firewood production, storage, delivery, and sawn timber would need several material handling devices. Sage advice implied a forwarder with crane, a forklift and a crane for the long lengths. But for 24 acres that was totally uneconomic. Against all advice I chose to get a 'multi-purpose material handling machine'. This took the form of a tele-handler with a 13 m reach having a 3.5 tonne lift close in and 0.50 tonne at max outreach, fitted with both a 360 degree rotating grab, forks, all-terrain 4 x 4, all wheel steering, tilting body, and a man-cage.

Our Merlo is 'a construction site model' with a tilting body allowing forks to be tilted left or right to compensate for uneven ground or packs that have sagged. The body slews left or right to give a side shift enabling precise handling close in or at distance. The 4 x 4 steering means the kit can be used without

difficulty in tight areas, while hydraulic controls give a smooth and controlled management of the lifts.

With this versatile bit of kit we extract felled logs, forward them to the log storage area, pile cordwood to dry, move logs from store to place them gently on the mobile sawmill carriage, move sawn timber to the stacking area, lift stripped packages into the shed [without the need to bring the machine into the building] and removed them when dried. Slab-wood is carried to drying piles beside the cordwood (where appropriate used alongside the cordwood). When processing firewood the builders bags are suspended on the fork, when full moved to drying piles, then removed when dry. Firewood, sawn timber and beams are all loaded to delivery transport. Our trees are very close together with the result that we need to tidy broken branches and generally improve the crown. For this we use the man cage and can work at up to 13m height.

We are of course grateful to Confor and others who assisted us in making this fine acquisition that has made our woodland development and management a practical success.



Mini harvester

Recommended by Mark Seed, Cross Border Harvesting Ltd, a subsidiary company to Mark Seed Forest and Land Management Ltd (Dumfriesshire)

I am flagging up a new mini harvester with stoke delimber head that I with another director have just had created from Kobelco 8t zero tail swing tracked excavator base with a AFM 4000S.

It's innovative and more efficient than hand cutters and forms an essential part of our company's equipment. It is the solution to small-scale woodland harvesting!

We use the excavator to dig in tracks etc. as well as harvest trees and then also mound site if needed and so it's versatile ideal for small woodlands / shelterbelts / thinning and access improvement.

www.seedforestandland.co.uk

Delivery lorry

Recommended by Hamish Oliphant, NewFUEL (Aberdeenshire)

Our new sparkly woodchip delivery lorry is designed and fitted with a demount system so different bodies can be easily put on the chassis, so the chassis can be used for multiple jobs. The photos show the wood chip container body, which has a walking floor and also fitted with a blower for blown deliveries of wood chip. The walking floor has the advantage that we can deliver into buildings where there isn't sufficient roof height for a tipping body. Alternative bodies that can be fitted are a log body for the transport of roundwood or a self-powered chipper. A log crane can be fitted via a separate demount system at the back of the chassis. The bodies can be changed over in minutes.

www.new-fuel.co.uk



Cloud-based forest management plan platform

Recommended by Andy Howard, Pennine Biomass (Yorkshire)

We're introducing a brand new mobile cloud-based forestry management plan platform.

It's a Finnish system, developed and proven in the forestry industry there, and it was launched into the UK at the Confor Woodland Show in September.

It makes forestry management plans far more accessible, and easier and more efficient to operate and work to. It also brings in enhanced features such as being able to estimate the value of the timber as the management of the forest progresses. All the information being easily available wherever you can get access to the internet over a phone or tablet device.

www.penninebiomass.co.uk



Axe and cross-cut saw

Recommended by Dafydd Cadwaladr, Tree Care, Fencing, Woodland Management & Firewood (North-West Wales)

Having spent most of the summer either organising, displaying or contesting Woodchopping or Lumberjack competitions around the country, the trusty axe and cross-cut saw would be difficult to beat.

Having a very low carbon footprint it ticks many boxes regarding environmental sustainability and healthy outdoor activities. Its effectiveness is not limited to requiring proximity to power supplies, charging sockets & adaptors or filling stations, and its operator functions on relatively low levels of kindness & consideration, a bowl of porridge, and is charged up for action with a steak and a few well directed pints of Guinness.

<http://dafydd-cadwaladr.co.uk>



Improvements to ForestGALES: the forest wind risk tool

by Sophie Hale, Bruce Nicoll and Suzanne Martin, Forest Research

Why should forest managers take account of wind risk?

Wind storms cause major disturbance in both natural and managed forests, and can have serious impacts for all of us, and for our environment. For the forest industry, wind damage results in a loss of income in several ways: unanticipated and increased harvesting costs; loss of volume production when trees are blown prior to their intended felling year; and the lower timber prices often caused by increased volumes of timber entering the market.

Across Europe wind damage to forests has increased over the past century. In Britain major storms have caused over one million cubic metres of timber damage at least five times in the last 50 years, with lesser storms also causing damage most winters. Climate change is expected to make this worse with wetter and warmer winters (leading to longer periods of saturated soils) and more frequent and severe extreme weather. In fact, the period from mid-December 2013 to mid-February 2014 saw at least 12 major winter storms resulting in the wettest December to January period in the UK since records began. Wind damage will therefore continue to pose a risk to our forests.

Wind damage is a particularly serious concern in forests planted on exposed sites in Britain, and in some regions up to 50 % of the area is considered too high risk for any thinning. Forest management decisions, for example the type of cultivation, timing of thinnings and the age at which trees are felled, can greatly influence the risk of damage. Typically, as forest trees grow taller, they become more at risk. Early thinning produces more tapered stems, which are less prone to snap. Good, deep rooting makes trees less at risk of uprooting. Newly-formed ('brown') edges on forest stands (following harvesting or road building) are particularly vulnerable, especially those facing the prevailing wind direction. Wind damage risk ('wind risk') is therefore something that foresters can, and do, actively reduce through good forest management practices.

How can we assess wind risk to forests?

Until the 1990s the Windthrow Hazard Classification (WHC) was the accepted method for assessing vulnerability of forest stands to wind damage.

Whilst useful for comparing sites and guiding decisions on thinning, its predictions were not very accurate, mainly due to its use of subjective estimates of the influence of wind strength and rooting on the timing of wind damage. WHC was also unable to show differences in vulnerability between different silviculture and species.

ForestGALES is a computer-based decision support tool developed by Forest Research. It takes account of research into forest wind risk since the WHC was developed, and provides quantitative estimates of wind risk for any conifer stand in Britain. It replaced the WHC in 2000 as the recommended tool for assessing wind risk, and the current version (ForestGALES 2.1) has been in use since 2006.

Using information on stand and soil characteristics and the variation in wind exposure experienced across British forests, ForestGALES estimates the risk of damage to stands by calculating three things:

1. The force needed to uproot or break the average tree in the stand
2. The wind speed which produces that force
3. The chance of that wind speed occurring, based on the windiness of the stand location. This uses the DAMS (Detailed Aspect Method Scoring) windiness score, which is calculated from tatter flag observations, elevation, aspect and topography. DAMS scores for Britain are provided with ForestGALES.

ForestGALES outputs reflect that, for example, thinning in exposed sites is more likely to result in wind damage than in sheltered sites; and on sites with deeper rooting, the risk of overturning is reduced. ForestGALES can therefore be used to easily compare the impact of different thinnings, or of edge creation, on the risk of wind damage. Differences between the main conifer species are accounted for.

For each stand ForestGALES expresses the likelihood of wind damage as a 'return period', which is the average number of years between storms that would damage the stand. This is more realistic than stating a precise stand height at which damage would be expected to occur (as with the WHC), as the occurrence of damaging winds varies from year to year.



Damage in Greskine forest, Dumfries and Galloway, caused by the storm of January 2012

Why create a new version of ForestGALES?

In users' experience ForestGALES 2.1 (FG2.1) tended to predict more damage than was observed, which has been supported by recent research into the science of wind risk in forests. ForestGALES 2.5 (FG2.5), available now from Forest Research, is an important upgrade which includes the latest scientific understanding. In particular:

Recent measurements of 'gustiness' (how trees respond to strong winds) have provided lower values for the new version, meaning that FG2.5 predicts most stands to be substantially less at risk of damage than FG2.1.

Information on rooting depth is used instead of cultivation and drainage, providing more accurate estimates of root anchorage.

'Real-world' evaluation of ForestGALES

The damage caused by the winter storm that crossed central Scotland on 3rd January 2012 provided a rare opportunity to test the predictions produced by the WHC, FG2.1 and FG2.5. We looked at almost 7000 sub-compartments in Cowal and Trossachs Forest District and compared ob-

Table One: Comparison of the number (and %) of sub-compartments with observed wind damage and predicted damage

Damage predicted by WHC	Damage predicted by FG2.1	Damage predicted by FG2.5	Observed damage
1805 (26%)	1054 (15%)	280 (4%)	134 (2%)

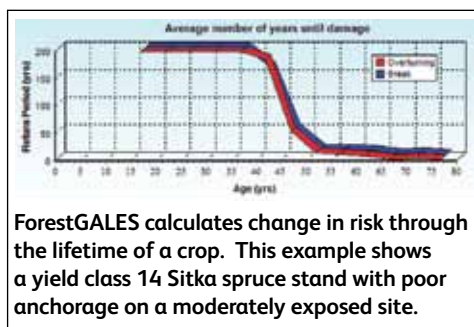


served damage from an aerial survey with damage predicted by WHC, FG2.1, and FG2.5. The WHC predicted considerably more damage than was observed, followed by FG2.1 (see Table One). In contrast, the number of sub-compartments with damage predicted by FG2.5 was very close to the observed level of damage.

The difference in wind risk predictions between FG2.1 and FG2.5 is roughly equivalent to reducing windiness on the site by 2 - 3 DAMS points. FG2.5 is therefore less conservative than FG2.1, indicating that thinning would be possible on more exposed sites. However, it is important to note that this is only a general indication of the differences in predictions between FG2.1 and FG2.5 and the difference will vary between sites.

The potential benefit of managing a stand guided by FG2.5 compared to using FG2.1 can be illustrated with this example: a yield class 14 Sitka spruce stand on an exposed site may be grown without serious risk of wind damage for approximately 15-20 years longer according to FG2.5 than if using FG2.1. This could yield an additional 200 m³/ha of timber. Managing stands according to predictions based on WHC would have involved felling earlier than either the old or the new version of ForestGALES, with a large associated loss of volume.

Both versions of ForestGALES show the same overall pattern of wind risk during a rotation (see Figure One), with very low risk of wind damage for a number of years from the start of the rotation, followed by a period of 10-20 years when this risk increases rapidly until at some stage damage



would be expected in any year (return period of one year). The difference is that with FG2.5 this period of rapid change is delayed until later into the rotation, and for some stands will not occur at all.

Things to remember when using ForestGALES

ForestGALES is designed to be used at a forest scale, and can be used to illustrate the average wind damage risk of a large number of stands. This will enable forest managers to manage towards a reduced risk across a forest, although due to variation in local site conditions and wind speed, ForestGALES may not always be accurate at the individual stand scale.

Local knowledge of a site should always be considered in conjunction with the information generated by ForestGALES. For example if the site in question is particularly wet, or if damage has already been observed on a site, it would be sensible

to presume that the stand might be more at risk than predicted.

In summary

The comparison of ForestGALES predictions against actual wind damage, along with inclusion of the latest understanding of wind risk, has been a major step forward in the development of the ForestGALES decision support tool. We hope it will provide forest managers with increased confidence that ForestGALES provides realistic estimations of wind risk that they can use in making forest management decisions. The user-interface remains largely unchanged, and will be familiar for existing users. ForestGALES is now available as a simplified web-based tool on the Forest Research website or as a full version for installation by users.

To obtain further information on ForestGALES, including information on how to register for the on-line version please visit www.forestry.gov.uk/forestgales

Further information
Contact: bruce.nicoll@forestry.gsi.gov.uk
Tree stability and climate research:
www.forestry.gov.uk/fr/stability

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OPM fulfils its promise for 2015

Spread of OPM in 2015 is greatest since 2006. Twenty-four of London's 32 boroughs and four districts in Surrey recorded breeding populations. Nests were found up to 5km from the outer limit of the 2014 infestation. This compares with a previous average annual spread of 750m.

Three separate infestations now affect London and Surrey:

- Main west London outbreak (2006) in 17 London boroughs and 3 Surrey districts
- Bromley outbreak (2012) also in Croydon and Lewisham
- A new east London outbreak apparently related to an infestation found at the Olympic Park (Newham) in 2014 which FC claimed to have 'nipped in the bud'. This year nests were found in Newham and adjoining Hackney, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest.

Present control strategy based on 'Core', 'Control' and 'Protected' zones and treatment with the biological insecticide *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *Kurstaki* (Btk) is not working. Core Zone contains some of the largest woodlands and parklands in London. These include Richmond Park, Kew Gardens, Hampton Court, Wimbledon Common, Putney Heath and the London Wetland Centre. Many if not all are Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which restricts insecticide spraying. There is no legal obligation on landowners in the Core Zone to control OPM.

Core Zone has subsequently become an

OPM 'Boiler House' making control operations in the surrounding 'Control Zone' futile. According to latest FC maps more 'Boiler Houses' are threatened with OPM precariously close to the southern end of Epping Forest in the London Borough of Waltham Forest. And a significant new 'cluster' in Camden closely matches the location of Hampstead Heath with wide expanses of oak woodland and SSSI Status. City of London Corporation which manages Hampstead Heath has confirmed OPM infestation of oak trees there.

Reliance on Btk means FC is 'boxing itself in'. Btk lacks persistence and potency and acts entirely through ingestion, factors which combine to minimise the window of effective spray treatment. Application can't realistically begin until oak tree re-foliation reaches 60 per cent and the spray window (using Btk) effectively ends once larvae are much beyond the L2 stage.

The latest FC Map (17 August 2015) shows a single nest in Guilford District deep inside Surrey and close to the Surrey Hills one of the most heavily wooded areas in the country. It is 10km from the outer limit of the 2014 infestation and 5km greater than maximum recorded flight distance for female moths. If correct it looks suspiciously like a new separate outbreak originating from another introduction of infested planting material from Europe.

Terry Mabbett



Nests are now being found up to 5km from the edge of the 2014 infestation

Picture courtesy Forestry Commission

Chalara update

RSB reports that an international forestry expert has warned that more than half a million ash trees in Cumbria – some dating back to the Tudors – are directly threatened after new cases of *Chalara* were confirmed in the Lake District.

Professor Ted Wilson, Director of the Penrith-based Silviculture Research International, said reports of the disease in ash trees in Cumbria was the "news we have all been dreading."

The latest information released by the Forestry Commission shows confirmed reports in

the Borrowdale area, the Kendal to Windermere corridor, the south-east lakes area, the Eden Valley and near Carlisle and Longtown.

Scotland: *Chalara* takes hold but the battle goes on

On 15 September, FC Scotland reported that it will no longer be issuing Statutory Plant Health Notices requiring the removal of *Chalara*-infected, recently planted ash trees in the 'sheltered area' of north-west Scotland and its associated 'buffer'. The move follows the confirmation of *Chalara* ash dieback in the wider environment

at a number of sites in the buffer area last summer and then in the sheltered area earlier this year. This change in approach has the support of the Scottish Tree Health Advisory Group comprised of representatives across the Scottish Government, the Forestry Commission, environmental bodies and the land use and commercial sectors. The sheltered area and 'buffer' were established in 2013 in a bid to slow the arrival and spread of the pathogen in the wider environment to help protect its high nature conservation value ash woodlands in that area.

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Top marks for Longleat Show

Forest Carbon directors **Steve Prior** and **James Hepburne Scott** rated the Longleat Show 10 out of 10

James said: "We had a very full two days, meeting old and new friends among the woodland owning and management community. And we had a visit from three people representing a large UK financial institution which wants to support new woodland creation in the UK through investing in carbon credits under the Woodland Carbon Code. Their principal reason for coming was to learn more about the multiple benefits of productive woods. Within an hour we were able to introduce them to woodland owners and managers, two sawmillers, a tree nursery, the Forestry Commission and Forest Research. They were amazed by the mega-woodchipper demonstration and their walk through some of Longleat's magnificent Douglas Fir. Where else could

you achieve all that? "We were pleased that we could help Vicky West at her seminar on the Woodland Carbon Code by assuring members that we can assist creation of new woods of all sizes including those designed for timber production. The important thing is to contact us as early as possible in the planning process to find out how carbon funding can help take a project forward.



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WALES

Martin Bishop, Confor national manager for Wales
tel 07876 029482
martin.bishop@confor.org.uk



Confor steers BBC forestry feature

BBC Wales recently invited Confor to participate in a feature on Welsh forestry. Over several days, the BBC film crew took footage from the Welsh forests and at Pontrilas Sawmill. Our aim was to show the scale of forestry in Wales, how each of the links in the timber

supply chain is reliant on the timber resource being replaced and expanded, and to highlight our concerns over the reduction in the area of commercial forestry in Wales and over the forecasted decline in timber production that it will lead to.

While filming at Pontrilas, the film crew were shown the levels of investment needed to process timber and the highly skilled jobs investing in wood processing can bring to Wales.

Later in the day, Confor's National manager for Wales, Martin Bishop (on the right in the picture), gave an interview in a commercial forest to emphasise the importance of commercial forestry to the economy of Wales.

SCOTLAND

Jamie Farquhar, Confor national manager for Scotland
07817 374906
jamie.farquhar@confor.org.uk



New Chair for Forestry Forum

On 09 September, FC Scotland welcomed Dr Michael Foxley as the new Chair of Highland and Islands Forestry Forum.

The Forum, which advises the Commission on forestry policy and practice in the region, is made up of 12–15 members, who represent the economic, environmental and social forestry interests across Highland and Islands Conservancy.

Dr Foxley said; "Forestry in the Highland and the Islands is providing much more benefits than ever before by increasing timber production, by native woodland restoration and by expanding community forestry. A key focus for the Forum is that these actions continue and that we have a friendly debate about working together and minimising conflicts."

A former Fort William GP and local Councillor for 26 years, Michael Foxley went on to become Leader of the Highland Council where he actively promoted the use of local timber. With a long interest in forestry and crofting he was the founding chair of the Sunart Oakwood Initiative.

Dates for the diary

More info on www.confor.org (news and events)

North-east Scotland regional meeting
20 October 2015, Gordon Arms Hotel, Huntly

South Scotland regional meeting
22 October 2015, Lockerbie

Mid Scotland regional meeting
28 October 2015, Stirling Management Centre

ENGLAND

Caroline Harrison, Confor national manager for England
07500 927482
caroline.harrison@confor



Confor Woodland Show

See pages 5-9 for a review of the show help at Longleat, Wiltshire.

Dates for the diary

More info on www.confor.org (news and events)

North autumn meeting
Forest Management planning and silviculture resilience
16 October 2015, Dalby Forest
Confor joint event with the ICF



NEW MEMBERS

Arden Forestry Management, Dublin
Balbirnie Home Farms, Fife
Biomass Cymru, Powys
Carbon Compost Company, Devon
Hawarden Estate, Flintshire
Perthshire Forestry, Perthshire
Strathmore Estates Ltd, Dundee
Sustain Forestry, Cumbria
Trackplot, Edinburgh
Westcountry Woodlands Ltd, Devon
Annabel Martin, Inverness-shire
Arthur Bletchly, Cardiff
Craig Evans, Llanelli

David Ebsworth, Carmarthenshire
Tom Roberts, Shropshire
William Livesey, North Yorkshire
Say it with Wood, Hereford

EVENTS

More info on www.confor.org (news and events)

Conference: Modern Forestry: unleashing the rural potential
10 November 2015, Westminster.
See page 4

Woodland Communication Day 2015
13 November 2015, Horringer Community Centre

APF 2016
15-17 September 2016, Ragley Estate
www.apfexhibition.co.uk

Alba Trees...the home of Douglas Fir

The hidden benefits of cell-grown trees when using Douglas Fir

Everyone knows that trees establish more easily when using cell-grown trees and it is natural to choose cells for sensitive species, such as Douglas Fir. But as Douglas Fir increasingly makes its way onto our species lists, forest managers at the Confor Woodland Show in September were trying to deepen their understanding of how the species establishes.

There was a lot of interest in how Alba Trees Nursery has worked hard to develop the best possible root system for long-term success. The Sales Director, Grant Murray, explains: "Unlike many other species, Douglas Fir has a highly determinate root system, meaning that new roots will only develop from pre-determined areas within the root system. This is quite different from species with adventitious roots, such as Sitka Spruce, and it highlights the crucial role that nurseries play in the development of strong roots. Douglas Fir grows with a strong tap root for the first 10 years, after which time the tap root dies out and it relies upon shallow, lateral roots for stability and uptake of nutrients and water. If these lateral roots have grown too deeply, by the time the tap root dies out, they cannot support the tree and your crop can become unstable."

This is why cell grown trees are particularly suitable for Douglas Fir. Research indicates that in root determinate species, cell grown trees develop a much more intensive lateral root system at a much shallower depth than can be achieved in bare rooted production. It is because of the early root pruning of cell grown production that these strong root system can be developed and is the reason why cells should be preferred when growing Douglas Fir. Research has also shown that narrow container types can prevent the growth of these lateral roots, which is why Alba Trees selects wider containers for Douglas Fir and does not use narrow, bullet-style containers.

Cell-grown Douglas Fir, 12 weeks after sowing

Peat has been washed off to show root structure



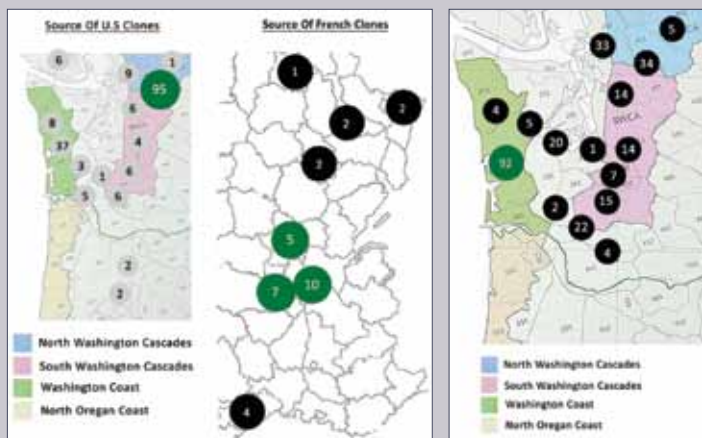
Second Order Lateral Roots already being generated

Generation of many **First Order Lateral Roots** early during root development, before the roots cork up and can no longer generate new roots

Early **Air Pruning** at the bottom of the container a few weeks after germination

Improved seed sources

France has a long tradition of seed improvement in Douglas Fir and Alba Trees found that many of the original clones were from the same indigenous areas in North West USA recommended for UK sites. Alba offers the best of these orchards and British foresters can now benefit from France's decades of work. "La Luzette" has a higher level of improvement than the other orchards and was of particular interest at the Confor show.



Origin of La Luzette seed orchard clones and, right, origin of Washington 003 clones



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Downturn – with a difference

Timber market report
by **Peter Whitfield**
Timber Operations
Director Tilhill Forestry



There is no question that we are in challenging times, albeit very different from the last downturn we saw in 2008/2009. Sawlog demand is at an all-time low with prices continuing to fall whilst small roundwood demand appears to be holding up well driven by strong demand for biomass and to some extent by a shortage, at least perceived, of sawmill co-products. This has led to a position where standing sale prices are holding up well with little change from a year ago. It is hard to reconcile this with the sawmill processor position and can only point to the fact that small round prices have held up and indeed risen. We are clearly in a different sort of downturn than previously experienced, which has always been led by exchange rates and sawlog prices whilst this time around the impact of the importance of biomass as a product cannot be underestimated.

The exchange rate continues to be the main factor in depressing sawlog demand as sawn timber imports can undercut domestic production, whilst small round wood demand is now less impacted with the importance of biomass, which is supported by incentives from central government and less exposed to the vagaries of imports and exchange rates. Exports of roundwood and logs has all but dried up as the inverse for exchange rates applies and there is a plentiful supply of wood within Europe.

The uncertainty in the economy and the worrying swings in stock markets is disconcerting to say the least. The FTSE has fallen some 12% on average over the past few months. However commentators would point to the fact that we should not react in panic and rather hold our ground. In this context the importance of China may be over amplified, when one considers that of the total UK exports only some 3.2% head to China. There is no doubt that China's hunger for com-

modities, with timber being an important one, is much diminished. Forecasts for China's GDP in 2015 have fallen to 4.5% having been at 7% for the first six months. This change may reflect China's move from a commodity hungry manufacturing economy to more of a service based economy.

It is difficult to find too many positive aspect to the current position, however the oil price is keeping low and lends some much needed succour to the industry. Prices are sub \$50/ barrel for Brent crude and forecasters would point to only modest rises heading into 2016. The more important impact on our contractors and hauliers is the obvious lack of activity and there are a number of machines parked up and concerns about the future, as to how having lost operators we will persuade them back when the upturn arrives.

The timber industry needs to find some form of stability in order to give growers and processors alike a degree of comfort.

The timber industry needs to find some form of stability in order to give growers and processors alike a degree of comfort. We know that we exist in a cyclical market, largely governed by exchange rates, and it is recognised we will have ups and downs. We need to protect the processors investments and to do this we need to have a regular supply of standing timber come to the market and that is up to both sides to play the game. It is also extremely important that we provide continuity for our contractor and haulage resource which has modernised and grown in line with the annual harvesting cut. Once we lose this resource it is a major uphill battle to regain it. We cannot simply switch on and off mills or our harvesting and haulage resource. Let us hope that 2016 brings us the stability and certainty we need.

Timber trade body backs WWF campaign

The foremost organisation representing the timber trade in the UK has officially signed up to support WWF-UK's Forest Campaign, allowing the campaign's sustainability message to reach much of the UK's timber industry.

By signing up to the campaign, TTF has made the following pledges:

- To support the market to buy timber and timber products from sustainable sources by 2020, including making members' aggregated performance public;
 - To support the call for the EU to close the loopholes in the current EU Timber Regulation so that all timber and timber products must be from legal sources; and
 - To support the call for the UK government and the EU to complete the transition to a market in sustainable timber and timber products by 2020.
- To ensure the TTF plays a proactive role in supporting delivery of these pledges, it has agreed a number of more focused commitments to ensure the work undertaken on responsible sourcing over the past 10 years or so can be further developed to move the industry forward, including using its influence to encourage its many members to voluntarily make an individual declaration of support to the campaign.

Julia Young, Manager of WWF's Global Forest and Trade Network Manager in the UK said "Trade bodies like the TTF can and do play a significant role in bringing about new business norms that create sustainable industries as well as sustainable forests.

The TTF joins over 40 other business signatories to the WWF Forests campaign, which span supermarkets, construction industry giants, and many others, who together it is hoped can make a huge improvement to the sustainability of timber and timber products in the UK and beyond.

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Imports continue to put market under pressure

Timber Auctions market report by **Oliver Combe**



Continued pressure on construction timber from imports is having a knock-on effect on other market sectors.

Softwoods

Aggressive selling of Swedish and Irish stock continues to depress the market for the UK mills. The strong pound continues to give im-

ported timber a real competitive advantage in a market that is still import led.

Landed stock levels on the quays are high with good availability of most dimensions, this enables merchants selling imported stock to react quickly and effectively to most enquiries.

In early September kiln-dried and strength-graded material was available at very competitive price levels. Swedish stock is being offered as: C16 at £165/m³ and C24 at £170/m³. Irish C16 stock is even cheaper than this.

These prices have enabled imported timber to regain a lot of customers along the east coast and into England who had been converted to homegrown material over the last two to three years. So not only are the UK producers under pressure on their prices but they are also hav-

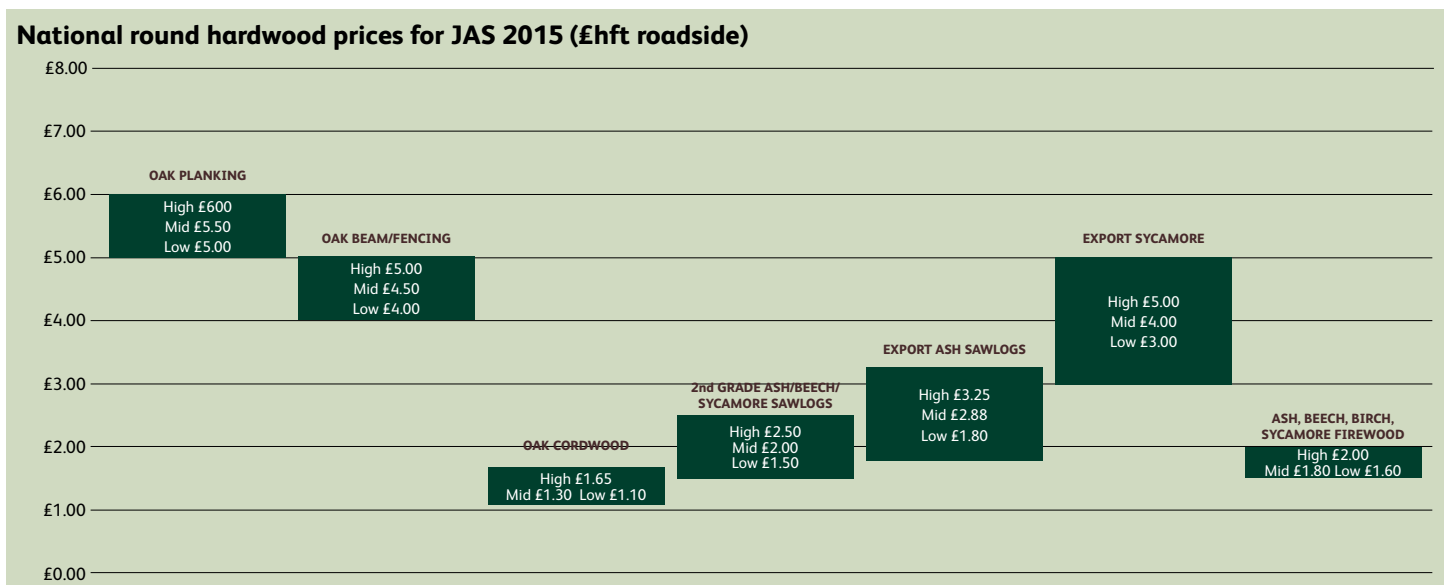
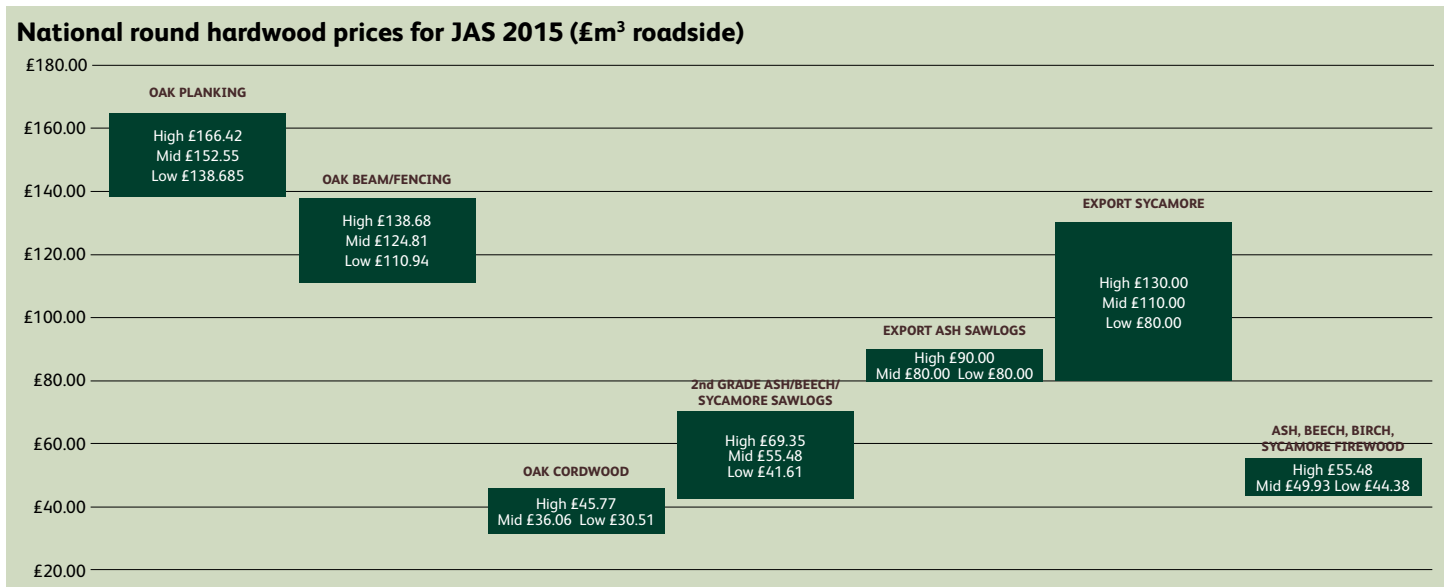
ing to fight hard to retain the hard-won market share. Competitive pricing, good product range and quick turnaround of customer enquiries all help in the short-term but eventually production levels will have to be reviewed. Currently, domestic mills are working very, very hard to manage their assortments to keep stock profiles under control and also keep raw material stocks at levels appropriate to the current sales.

Whilst there has been a bloodbath in the carcassing market, the market for unseasoned timber and packing material has held up reasonably well so far but this could change quickly if carcassing mills switch to producing unseasoned timber and create an oversupply situation.

Inevitably, log prices have fallen as a result of the falling sawn timber prices and although there are signs that the market is bottoming out it is currently a very tough market for the home-grown processors.

The **pallet and packaging market** has not experienced the pain that the carcassing market has gone through but there has been some softening of prices.

The **industrial roundwood** processors re-



UK mainland roundwood prices JAS 2015 (£T delivered)



North England and Scotland roundwood prices JAS 2015 (£T delivered)



main under similar pressure from imported products to sawmills and prices for raw board have been under pressure. Added-value products such as faced and coated board have seen sales hold up surprisingly well. Whilst the industrial processors have very good reason to look at reducing their raw material prices, biomass prices of £38 to £42 per are available locally and are now a significant influence on the market.

Fencing prices remain in the region of £50 to £52 per tonne delivered, depending on area, whilst demand remains reasonably good against patchy supply of a product that is demanding to produce.

Hopefully the slight easing of the Sterling's strength against the Euro in the last week will continue through the autumn and reduce the competitive edge that imported products have gained.

Hardwoods

The hardwood market remains cyclical and is prone to changes in fashions.

As we move into the start of the hardwood

falling season it is interesting to look at the current trends in the market.

Oak remains the dominant species with good demand for quality parcels particularly if they are FSC-certified. Whilst long length and large diameter oak will command good prices, the market for beam oak is excellent and does not require large trees. 12 to 16" quarter girth (40cm plus) and length above 15'.

Ash: the export season is just about to commence again and there is good demand for logs of greater than 40cm mid-diameter and length above 3.3m. Whilst currency and competition from other European countries have caused adjustment of prices this remains an excellent market opportunity.

Poplar: export demand for poplar continues to grow and are a good opportunity for growers to realise some value from a species that has become difficult to market.

Beech: there is potential interest in first-quality beech but it is difficult to develop any momentum in this market until material comes to the market for sale.

Sweet chestnut appears to be coming back into fashion and the prices for good quality planking material are very good this year. 13" quarter girth, 10 ft and longer straight, clean and without spiral grain, chestnut can attract prices comparable to those for oak.

Unfortunately, demand for **Yew** and **Sycamore** has fallen away (with the exception of sycamore with figured grain) as fashions and styles have changed. Growers with these species are advised to hold onto them as demand for decorative timber runs in cycles and these timbers will come back into fashion in the future.

Specialist conifers

There remains strong interest in:

Larch: tree length (approx. 12m), 30cm plus top diameter,

Douglas fir: 6.2m and longer and over 40cm top diameter

Western Red Cedar: rot-free, 3.6m and 4.8m 30cm plus top diameter.

Decorative timbers

Buyers are interested in single trees and small parcels of the following:

- Burrs and patch burrs of oak, elm, ash, London plane and horse chestnut
- Walnut, sound stems
- True Cedars (Deodar, Atlas and Lebanon).

As always, growers should consider getting hardwood sales prepared early in the season and offered to the market in good time to allow felling and extraction to take place in the winter whilst logs are in prime condition.

If you wish to discuss parcels of timber you would like to discuss or for further information please contact Oliver Combe on 07771 958975, oliver.combe@timberauctions.co.uk for free independent marketing advice.



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Supporting forestry businesses in England

by **Martin Glynn**,
FACE



Increased demand for home grown timber and the resulting price increases have seen forest managers and contractors take the opportunity to invest in new equipment, facilities and skills, with new harvesters and forwarders, firewood processors and seasoning sheds appearing in many forests and timber yards around the country. In England, much of this has been supported through the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE), the same funding programme that supports woodland management, creation and improvement through the EWGS and now Countryside Stewardship. The launch of the current RDPE has seen the advent of new grant schemes to support investment in businesses and the coming months will provide opportunities to apply for funding.

FC England is helping businesses who may be considering applying for this funding through their 'Woodlands into Management' initiative (#makingwoodlandwork). This includes a series of workshops and seminars, a 'one-to-one' business support service and a number of machinery demonstrations, including one at the recent Confor Woodland Show at Longleat.

FACE offering one-to-one business support

The one-to-one support will be provided by FACE (Forest Advisory Consortium England) under contract to the Forestry Commission. FACE is a group of forestry organisations and advisors who have come together to provide specialist support to forest and timber supply chain businesses in England which are considering investment in new facilities and equipment. It consists of the Community Forest Trust, Cumbria Woodlands, Kent Downs AONB, Martin Glynn FICFor, Northwoods, Rural Development Initiatives, Small Woods Association, Silvanus Trust, Sylva Foundation,

Any forest or timber supply chain businesses interested in attending these events or receiving one to one support should contact their local Forestry Commission Area office (www.forestry.gov.uk/england-areas). You can see how one applicant, John Shipp Forestry of Essex, got on with their grant application at www.youtube.com/watch?v=2s7PINDbMNM.

FACE can be contacted on 01765 609355 or info@forestryace.eu and followed on twitter at @forestryace. More details at www.forestryace.eu.

Woodnet and Yorwoods. Together they advise on business planning, marketing, financial forecasting, grant applications and technical issues. FACE can also draw on specialists to provide advice on issues such as legal business structures, co-operative working and VAT.

Attend a pie & pint event

Local Forestry Commission Areas will be running a series of 'pie & pint' evenings throughout England in the next few months to highlight what funding opportunities are available and how the 'one to one' support can be accessed. Grant application masterclasses will also be held, giving businesses the opportunity to receive up to date information on grants as well as highlighting guidance for the application process. Machinery demonstrations will showcase a range of small-scale harvesting and extraction machinery and give contractors the chance to see them in operation. All events are free to attend, as is the one-to-one advice.

Small scale machinery is amongst the items that forestry businesses can apply for funding for via two RDPE schemes – the Countryside Productivity Scheme (CPS) and LEADER. CPS is a nationwide scheme, currently closed to applications but expected to reopen in early 2016, whereas LEADER is a 'bottom up' locally led scheme and will be opening during late 2015 and into 2016. Other eligible items include hardstanding and seasoning sheds, forward-



PICTURE COURTESY SJS CONSULTANTS

ers, harvesters, mobile sawmills and chippers, firewood processors and woodfuel screening equipment.

Taxation reminder

by **David Gittins**

In 1987 commercial forestry was, in effect, taken out of the income/corporation tax legislation. There was then – and still is – no need to submit accounts to the Inland Revenue/HMRC and many forestry owners immediately gave up preparing accounts or having accounts prepared by their accountant. They may even have closed their forestry bank account.

However this can produce a problem when such a property is sold (to calculate any taxable gain) or is the subject of a claim for business property relief from Inheritance Tax. For the appropriate reliefs to be valid, the forest must have been managed on a commercial basis and

evidence for this basis must be available. Very useful evidence is, among other items, yearly accounts and a separate bank account – like any other business.

Perhaps yearly accounts should be re-instated by those who have stopped preparing them.

The principal forms of taxation affecting commercial woodlands in the UK are:

- Income Tax (for individuals)
- Corporation Tax (for business)
- Capital Gains Tax (CGT)
- Inheritance Tax (IHT)
- Value Added Tax (VAT).

For more information, visit www.confor.org.uk/AboutUs/Default.aspx?pid=151 or call our taxation helpline (see below).

MEMBER SERVICES TAXATION HELPLINE



Members can get 30 minutes of free taxation advice from our associate David Gittins, a chartered accountant who specialises in woodland taxation. This is meant as a first guidance and does not constitute a full client-advisor relationship. Please mention "Confor taxation helpline" when calling or e-mailing.

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Planning for efficiency

We work hard for our business; how can we make sure it is sustainable and pays for itself? There are two important points to concentrate on, marketing and efficiency. Inspired by Japanese management techniques, **Toby Allen**, of Say it with Wood, talks about how the right planning can boost business efficiency.

As usual there is a wealth of information about improving efficiency on the internet; I'm not an expert in this, but I guarantee a bit of planning will save you money. Here I am going to explain in brief how some methods used in manufacturing industries can be applied to a small woodland business. Working with timber should be a smooth flow, with minimum handling. Ideally every time a bit of wood is touched it should go up in value. Unfortunately timber is worth the same whether it has been cut with a harvester or carried out by helicopter. As with most planning it is best to start with the end result and then plan back to the start, thinking about how the different processes impact on the efficiency and value of the end product.

Manufacturing models

Before looking at ways to improve our businesses it is worth thinking about how we operate and the different models of manufacturing that are out there. Each has its pros and cons, and most of us will be doing a bit of each, which is the best way to get the best from our operations.

Push and pull

Push is making products to sell and pull is making products to order. While push gives you the flexibility to only use the right material for the right job, set up to make components in batches and standardise sizes, it has a great risk of over-production and holding excessive stock. Meanwhile, pull systems are reactive to customer demands, require no holding of stock and you have the benefit of knowing the full specifications before production starts. It does, however, result in longer lead times, more set up time for

small or bespoke batches and can lead to a drop in quality, as not all orders will be suitable to the material at hand.

Job production

This is making bespoke products and has the advantage of being flexible and able to meet the exact requirements of the customer, but is expensive, and can lead to lower quality with a

high risk of rework. Job production needs a motivated and skilled person to be successful.

Batch production

A good example of this would be dressing and sorting hazel rods and then making the products in batches. With batch production all the components can be made to a standard size in one go and then finished either in a bespoke product made to order, or go on to be assembled in batches or as a flow system. Batch methods are the most likely for a small business and work well if several products share common components. The disadvantage is the risk of holding too much stock, over-production, excessive movement and inflexibility.

Flow production

In flow production a product is moved from one process to another from start to finish. Once the

Continued on page 41



Toby Allen (left) at the new Forest Workers Zone at the Confor Woodland Show 2015

Kiazen toolbox: avoiding the 'seven wastes'

One of the best tools for Kiazen is to study the seven wastes (Muda) and how they apply to you. Break down all the processes from felling to selling and think how waste (time and materials) can be avoided.

This is also a good thing to be thinking about when planning a worksite or methodology. We should only be spending time or money on things that directly add value and make us profit.

1 Overproduction Producing more than is asked for by the market. Are you cutting more timber than you will sell in a season, eg do you have a pile of left-over bean poles at the end of each season? How could you prevent this?

2 Waiting How much down-time do you have? How can you change your maintenance regime to improve this? Is there a backlog while you are waiting for another process to be finished? Can you change your working systems to improve?

3 Transport How can unnecessary movement be avoided? Could the working up be done at stump or is it more efficient to do it in the yard? Every time you move a piece of timber it should go up in value, that is the ideal but very rare in practice.

4 Over-processing Are you having so much fun making a product that it is being made over the specification required by the customer? Quality should always be the first consideration but are you matching the added processes to the price?

5 Inventory Are you holding stock unnecessarily?

6 Motion How can you save on movement within a process? Can you move the tools closer to the worksite? Every second counts.

7 Rework Get it right first time every time.

There is an eighth Muda, which is the wasted potential of people. Are we all using the full expertise of ourselves and our workers?

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Continued from page 39

systems are set up it is cheap to run. By using jigs and standard components the skill is taken away from the operator, it is very inflexible. While mass production will be out of most of our league, we could all learn a lot from it.

Kiazen: Continuous improvement

Kiazen means good change in Japanese, most people running a small business will already be practising this without knowing, and there are many tools to help you do this. The principles were first used by the Toyota car factory and are now used around the world.

To practice Kiazen is to be always finding ways to improve quality and efficiency; it's the small changes that add up over time to make a big difference. As you are working think about how you can shave a second off here and there or up the quality. Or can the workstation be moved closer? Can another product be made from the rejects? Try to look at your business from the outside (or ask someone else to) what would make it easier for the customer, add value and save time? Think of ways to measure your improvement, it could be with volume or by looking at the accounts.

Just in Time, or Lean Manufacturing

This is an ideal to aim for and there is not enough time or space to cover it all here. The basic tenet is to only be holding stock and carrying out processes that directly impact on the value of a product as demanded by the customer. When planning your operations try to have the right materials, at the right time, at the right place and in the exact amount, without the safety net of added inventory. I know this sounds impossible given the rustic nature of our trades, but keeping mindful of these principles will save you money.

Imagine how good it would be if a customer ordered a load of firewood, we went straight out to a tree chopped it, then delivered it directly with no extra handling or holding stock involved. Obviously if we did this we would soon have a reputation for selling green logs and lose all our custom, but when compared to the normal model (fell tree, extract to roadside, haul to yard, chop, store 2 years, load onto truck, deliver to customer) it's easy to see there must be ways to improve.

I have only scratched the surface of the many ways we can use planning to improve efficiency and make more money. Hopefully I've given some food for thought and the start of using the many tools which are out there to grow our businesses.

With the drive to bring more woodlands into management and the desire for new wood culture the future for the forest industries is looking good. Our sector has a wealth of skill, expertise and entrepreneurship, which if we step up to the mark, puts us in a prime place to be leading these changes.

*Toby Allen, Say it with Wood, Herefordshire.
www.sayitwithwood.co.uk
This article was published in Living Woods,
July 2015 issue.*

Selling your forest

by **Graeme Leith,**
Brodies Solicitors



The woodland investment market continues to perform well, and this has tempted many forest owners to seek to realise the value of their assets, either through private sale facilitated by their woodland advisors or by testing the market by means of a full marketing exercise. Before embarking on any sale process it is important that the seller engages a team of experienced professional advisors – investment agents, accountants, lawyers and woodland managers all have an important part to play in a sale, and an early constructive dialogue within the team will help ensure that all bases are covered.

There are several important practical matters which, if considered and addressed early in the marketing or sales process, will help avoid delays or obstacles to completing a sale. These include:

1. Title matters: instruct your lawyer to review your title deeds at the outset and obtain any searches and reports that will be needed to ensure that you will be able to provide a buyer with a 'clear' registered title to the forest. It is always better to identify a potential title problem when there is still an opportunity to put it right, rather than risk a sale falling through (or a lower price) because of a problem.

2. Management issues: a buyer and its advisors need to know that they will be able to carry on all of the intended forestry activity once the sale has taken place. There should be a complete package of grant scheme documentation – a buyer will need to know what grant entitlements and scheme obligations it will be taking over.

You should also make sure that someone is

thinking about access rights and timber haulage restrictions. On occasion, the actual position regarding such issues is not as expected so early due diligence will help avoid any nasty surprises a week before the sale is due to complete!

Buyers will generally expect warranties or confirmations on practical management issues so if you have not been a 'hands-on' owner then identify someone who will be willing and able to provide the necessary assurances in relation to issues such as tree health, sporting leases and potential boundary disputes.

3. Sale terms: any seller will wish to maximise the price for their forest but you should also think about any other commercial terms that you would wish to achieve and make sure that those are incorporated into the marketing process or early discussions on a proposed sale. If it is important to you that you share in any future development value (usually arising from renewable energy) in the forest then make it clear at the outset that this is to be part of the deal.

4. Taxation issues: If you wish to transfer a going concern for VAT purposes then make sure you have satisfied the various conditions, and that a buyer is made aware of this plan early in discussions.

Often a buyer will look to apportion price between land and trees so you should be prepared for this and take some preliminary advice on what would be a reasonable apportionment from your own perspective.

Most buyers will expect to manage the forest on a commercial basis. To ensure the asset qualifies for Business Property Relief from Inheritance Tax written management records and knowledgeable appointed managers can help establish a pattern of behaviour that a buyer can readily continue.

*Graeme Leith is a managing associate in the land & rural business team of Brodies LLP.
For more information, contact Graeme on 0131 656 3748 or at graeme.leith@brodies.com.*

MEMBER SERVICES LEGAL HELPLINE



Members can get 30 minutes of free legal advice from our associated specialist solicitors Brodies LLP and Atkinson Ritson. This is meant as a first guidance and does not constitute a full client-solicitor relationship. The teams of lawyers who provide our helpline and assist the work of Confor are experienced in all legal issues that impact on forest owners or those involved in the forest industry, including employment law, health and safety law, planning law, tax and property law.

**For England and Wales: Atkinson Ritson Solicitors, www.atkinsonritson.co.uk
Tel: 01228 525221 E: info@atkinsonritson.co.uk**

**For Scotland: Brodies Solicitors, www.brodies.com
Tel: 0131 656 3795 E: Confor@brodies.com**

Please mention 'Confor helpline' when calling, describe your enquiry and a qualified legal advisor will call or email you back.

The Confor pesticides helpline

Pesticides notebook
by Colin Palmer



It was through a conversation with Jane Karthaus at the APF that the idea of an advisory service over the use of forestry pesticides was initially conceived.

That was some 23 years ago in 1993, and initially the service was jointly run on behalf of the APF, TGA, FCA and the BCTGA. It continues to provide a service for the forestry and Christmas tree sectors and since inception has responded to close to 6000 enquiries.

So what are the main areas discussed? The initial queries can be summarised under some six headings:

- specific weed control
- specific pest and disease control
- pesticide products
- environmental features
- regulatory, operator safety and certification factors
- crop tolerance.

In reality most responses will need to embrace many or even all of these features.

Typical enquiry 1: Control of rushes

For example, one regular question concerns the control of rushes. Simple? Well read on!

The probable solution (other than drainage and liming) is likely to be based on the use of glyphosate. However, while glyphosate may be used in FSC certified woodlands, not all glyphosate products have UK forestry approval, and

there are advisory, and statutory (1m from the top of the bank) requirements for application near to water.

Not all crops will be tolerant, so while summer applications will need to avoid the crop altogether, winter applications over the trees are likely to be only truly tolerated by spruce and pine.

The situation will have to be explored at this juncture - is it pre-planting on a grassland site, or a farm woodland or a replant / upland site. This is relevant as 2,4-D will control soft rushes (pause to explain how to differentiate from hard rush), but only has approval for grassland, and offlabel approval for farm forestry, where it may be considered if there is a desire to retain other grasses.

2,4-D no longer has approval in upland / replant forestry, and is on FCS's "don't use" list.

Finally, the application system is also critical for good control, as rushes have a vertical waxy surface which means that the spray must be on the fine side of medium quality - this often leads to a further discussion on the topic of suitable nozzles, and the need for an appropriate adjuvant. And which adjuvant is likely to perform well without adding an increased operator and environmental burden? There is, of course an alternative option using the weedwiper...

Scrub control

Fortunately not all topics are so labyrinthine, but increasingly we have to jump through externally imposed hoops to find a solution: Typical is the current situation with scrub control now that Timbrel has been revoked. We currently (until September 2016) have a perfectly good one in Broadshot - but cannot use it in FSC certified woodlands, which leaves us with glyphosate only, which is fine on many scrub species includ-

Other hot topics

Bracken control

Asulox has emergency approval which is likely to be annually renewed until a new full approval is ratified.

Warfarin and grey squirrels

The future is not looking good, and last use will have passed by the time you read these notes.

Hylobius

Gazelle or Forester (or Alert). Pros & cons for both, but Gazelle certainly looks promising.

Grass weed control

The options of glyphosate, propyzamide (Kerb) or the graminicides Falcon & Laser are regularly explored - often highlighting the need for accurate grass identification...

Operator certification

The removal of "grandfather rights" in November, guidance on supervision of "trainees", difficulties in sourcing instructors.

Crop tolerance

Particularly use of glyphosate over dormant larch (no), douglas fir (marginal) and broadleaved trees (also no).

ing rhododendron, but it is pretty variable on gorse, rosebay willowherb and Japanese knotweed.

For gorse and rosebay willowherb there is a solution in farm forests where Tomahawk is very effective and not expensive, so perhaps we should consider applying for an off label approval for all forestry use. There does, though, appear to be some mis-information concerning the supply and use of Grazon 90 as an alternative, but this has no approval in woodland of any sort.

MEMBER SERVICES PESTICIDES HELPLINE



If you haven't used the service to date, be assured it is a free service operated by Confor's crop protection adviser Colin Palmer on behalf of Confor members. Colin can be contacted 8am to 8pm Mondays to Fridays on 01531 633500 (leave a message if necessary) or by email to: forestry@branchline.demon.co.uk



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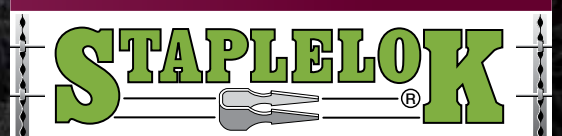
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European recognition for FR lab services

Laboratory services provided by the Forest Research agency have been recognised as being among the top performers in Europe for plant, water and soil analysis.

The laboratories have been ranked first for water analysis out of 40 European laboratories by ICP Forests, a European Union forestry programme. This ranking added to the laboratories' existing top rankings of first out of 31 for soil analysis, and first out of 59 for plant analysis.

François Bochereau, laboratory manager at Forest Research, welcomed the rankings, saying: "We always run calibrated controls with certified reference material to maintain the quality of our data, and to assess any significant drift or change in sensitivity. This means that the resulting data is suitable for detailed research analysis and publication."

Information about Forest Research's laboratory and analytical services is available at www.forestry.gov.uk/fr/testing-service.



Soil sample tubes at Forest Research

Come along to the Foresters Golf Day

This year's Foresters Golf Day will be held on Thursday 8 October 2015 at Whiteleaf Golf Club, near Princes Risborough in Buckinghamshire. The Foresters Golf Society is open to anyone with a forestry interest – owners, managers, agents, contractors, timber merchants, surveyors, accountants etc. If any Confor members would like to join in or know of any others with forestry connections who may like to be included please can you contact Heather Harris at John Clegg & Co, telephone 01844 291384 or email heather@johnclegg.co.uk



National Nursery Open Day

Eight Confor NPG nurseries took part in this national open day on 08 September 2015, and we were blessed with good weather to go with good turnouts for the occasion.

Foresters were welcomed to nurseries up and down the country, and shown all aspects of the nurseries from seeding, irrigation and crop husbandry, through to stock control, grading and despatch. Nursery tours continued throughout the day on the various sites as nursery staff showed a steady stream of visiting foresters the saleable and growing crops.

Alternative conifers and improved seed sources of broadleaves were two key areas of interest from current and prospective customers alike; what nurseries had in stock and what they may be able to supply in future. It was a great opportunity for people to meet in an informal environment and to hear other people's views and discuss the industry. A lot of interest was shown in the biosecurity measures taken by nurseries to protect against pest and pathogen infection from forest worn boots! There was lively discussion about forestry requirements in general and the low level of available Government grants, the narrow window for applications and lengthy turnaround times, and how all this will affect the coming seasons.



If you missed this open day however, it's not too late! Get in touch with your local nursery and arrange another date to visit. Your nursery wants to hear your thoughts on the future; species, seed provenance, policy or planting plans, don't hesitate to get in touch.



Open day at Alba (top) and Wyevale (above)

FISA UPDATE



- FISA **membership** is currently just over 700.
- FISA have begun the update of the **FISA safety guides** to ensure they fit with today's modern methods of timber harvesting. The Safety Documents working group are certainly generating a lively round of debate when tackling these updates! Methods on the table reflect the move to more mechanised systems - although the professional cutter remains vital in every harvesting operation.
- FISA worksite operations have added a number of helpful **safety information leaflets** to the FISA website – all available for free download. This ranges from a FWM checklist; example risk assessment; to HAVS and Lyme disease leaflets. This group will shortly release the updated Emergency Safety Guide.
- The **communications working group** are tasked with keeping the FISA message out there, and keeping members informed through the FISA website. The spring 2016 member open meeting will be a good opportunity for members to come along and discuss safety and all things FISA – you will shortly see the venue and date for this meeting in the press, and on the FISA website.
- The **FISA learning and behaviour working group** have been working behind the scenes to look into cultural change. **FISA skills & development working group** work out at the front of FISA.
- **Chainsaw refresher** is now accepted within the industry, with the need to refresh skills as equipment and technology moves forward. FISA electricity protocols will be changing to include services & utilities.
- The **timber transport working group** have recently launched the pilot driver safety booklets – and these will shortly be seen in weighbridges and timber truck cabs across the UK. The document will be free to download on the FISA website, and print copies (bound with tough pages for truck use) will be available to buy on the website.
- The FISA **plant & equipment group** is a new group, this group will shortly be meeting and getting to grips with initial safety topics.

www.ukfisa.com



Discussions around the new driver safety booklet at Truckfest



Safety boot with style

Steve Dresser, health and safety consultant and auditor specialising in forestry and member of the Forestry Industry Safety Accord recently trialled HAIX's Protector Forest boot. He tells *Forestry and Timber News* how he got on...

I have worked in the forestry industry for 43 years, serving 25 years as a contractor and 18 in my current position in management and health and safety advising. I visit different sites on a daily basis. Workplace hazards are extensive, with the potential for falling objects, potential punctures, and slips trips and falls. Safety boots are vital.

HAIX's Protector Forest worked for me as I could go about my everyday duties in comfort, safe in the knowledge that my feet were protected. Within minutes of stepping into the design was obvious, with the 2-zone lacing system ensuring the bottom lace was tight, without constricting my feet once inside. My feet were snug, but in the right way.

The waterproof protection offered by the boot was essential, as I am outside for most of the working day and exposed to the elements.

My feet were dry and comfortable, and could breathe easily.

The boots also effortlessly challenged the rough and rocky terrain I encountered, and the anti-slip sole gave me much needed security when walking on steep ground and over brash.

Overall I am delighted with my first experience of HAIX footwear. In my line of work I am constantly meeting different people and found that they were all extremely impressed with the look of the boot. With the Protector Forest, HAIX has slickly combined functionality, safety and style. I am hugely impressed and would recommend all in our industry buy into this brand of exceptional footwear.

To buy the Protector Forest please visit www.haix.co.uk or www.workware.co.uk to find your local dealer.

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National Forest celebrates 100th Woodland Management Plan

Woodland management plans are a vital part of The National Forest Company (NFC). Approval of the 100th plan by the Forestry Commission marks a major milestone in the Forest & Woodland Management Programme, which started in

September 2013, and sees over 5000 hectares of woodland with an approved management plan and undergoing active management: approximately 50% of the total woodland within The National Forest.

Through the NFC's Forest & Woodland Management Programme, landowners can obtain advice on planning the future management of their woodland, including taking out first thinnings to create space for the remaining trees to thrive, and advice on how best to prevent and minimise the impact of any pests and diseases that may affect the woodland.

Tilhill becomes part of BSW Timber Group



BSW Timber Limited has on 01 September 2015, acquired Stirling-based Tilhill Forestry Limited from UPM. Tilhill Forestry will operate as a subsidiary of BSW Timber Limited with its own operational board. George McRobbie will remain as Managing Director with Peter Whitfield and Andy Hudson continuing in their current Directorship roles. The Board will be further strengthened by the addition of Gavin Adkins, Harry Stevens and Richard Scott from BSW.

The company will continue to focus on building its core strengths of high quality forest management whilst delivering a secure and stable supply of home-grown timber to the market.

www.tilhill.com

Safety achievement

Norbord Europe celebrated a double safety achievement last year with two mills recording more than one million hours without a lost time accident (LTA) - that's equivalent to one person working for 350 years without a LTA!

Norbord's plant in South Molton also achieved one million hours without a LTA. It is the mill's third safety record in the past 10 years; the first in 2007 and then in 2010.

www.norbord.co.uk



The 100th woodland management plan was produced by Angus Hancock, of Cameron Forest & Garden Ltd. for Michael Stanton. Mr Stanton planted two woodlands through the National Forest Company's Tender Scheme, the first (Stanton's Wood) in 2000 and the second (Windmill Wood) in 2001. In total, the woodlands cover 60 hectares and lie just north of Ticknall, Derbyshire.

As a result of the management plan first thinning work will be carried out by a local contractor over the coming winter. First thinnings involve the removal of 25-30% of the trees to give space for the remainder to continue to grow well. At the same time the best trees will be selected for pruning, where the side branches will be removed to encourage upward growth and to reduce the number of knots in the timber. The felled timber will be sold locally as firewood.

www.nationalforest.org/woodlands/



Clinton Devon foreman retires after 43 years

Clinton Devon Estates longest serving employee, Graham Heaman, has retired at the end of September. Working as Woods Foreman, Graham has managed the forests on the Heanton Estate in North Devon since 1968 when he was just 16 years old.

Graham played an important role monitoring the larch forest to prevent the spread of P ramorum. Graham said: "It is very sad having to fell young trees, and it meant a lot of extra work for us at the time. We had to look after the land a lot more carefully and do a lot of replanting, but we were lucky we weren't affected as badly as many other landowners."

Graham applied for the job at Clinton Devon Estates to follow in his father's footsteps, who had also worked for the Estate as Head Cattleman for a number of years.

Graham will turn 62 in October. In 2012 he received a Long Service Award from the Devon County Show, celebrating his then 39 year dedicated career in the rural agriculture sector.

Graham said: "I've really enjoyed my job on the Estates, John Wilding has been my boss for the last 18 years and he's the best boss I ever had, I couldn't wish to have worked with or for better people. Woodland management has changed significantly whilst I've been here. We used to do a lot of it by hand, but now we use a range of machinery. We can achieve more work in a day than we could have done in a couple of weeks back then."

Glennon Brothers push commercial sea-traffic



Troon-based sawmillers and timber frame manufacturers Glennon Brothers have led the way in bringing commercial sea-traffic back into Girvan Harbour for the first time in many years. The Red Princess landing craft made the first delivery of small roundwood for LandEnergy, a wood fuel pellet manufacturer based in Girvan. Through their Adam Wilson and Sons Ltd forestry team, Glennon Brothers have worked closely with LandEnergy since the company was established and are already a key supplier of raw material to the business.

The Red Princess landing craft is a recent addition to the Troon Tug Company's fleet and is already shipping 700 tonne loads of timber from coastal forests in Argyll to Troon harbour for timber processors in the region.

The landing craft can access forests from the shores of Argyll's sea lochs with minimal shore-based infrastructure. Funding from the Scottish Government's Strategic Timber Transport Scheme has supported the initial trials of the landing craft sites.

www.glennonbrothers.ie

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Please apply in writing or via email with CV to: Michael Bruce, Glen Tanar Estate, Brooks House, Glen Tanar, Aboyne AB34 5EU. Email: info@glentanmar.co.uk

Closing date for applications: 6th November 2015



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A lion among ATVs

Steve Conolly and the team from Cawdor Forestry put the Can-Am Outlander 650 6x6 through its paces

We jumped at the chance to test the Can-Am Outlander 650 6x6. ATVs are essential to Cawdor Forestry's planting work, laying out more than 2m trees and associated materials on large-scale restock and remote sites annually. Our current vehicles are getting long in the tooth and need to be replaced in the not too distant future although, I have to admit, I had not seriously considered something as upmarket as the Outlander 6x6 - it is forestry after all!

When collecting the Outlander 6x6, I was struck by its sheer bulk compared to a conventional quad. At 3.25m long, it was not going to fit in our quad trailer. We took it out to 500ha of recently completed native woodland planting to see how it would cope with the steep, wet, rough conditions and serious old hill drains to cross. To keep things real, we also took one of the old faithful quads out to give a good comparison. Would we really notice much of a difference other than the (not for long) clean, shiny plastics, alloy wheels and a bit of extra bulk?

Well, it really didn't take long for the massive differences to become apparent. Compared to the quad, the Outlander 6x6 floated across bumps, even at speed, on tracks, fields and crossing mounding. It was like riding on a magic carpet in comparison. I'm told that is all down to the trailing arm suspension on the rear of the 6x6. The massive suspension articulation kept

all wheels on the ground when crossing deep mounding and random rocks, which would allow us to get plants and materials closer to where they are needed and providing a much more comfortable ride.

A combination of the surefooted traction and long wheelbase meant that steep slopes were scaled without it missing a beat - more than can be said for the operator! There was no sign of the front wheels lifting on the Outlander while our trusty quad ended up going the long way round.

As our confidence rapidly increased, we went off to find even larger drains to cross. Taken carefully, the Outlander was like a nimble goat, the front went down into then climbed smoothly out of even the deepest ditch. The real benefit of this to us would be reducing the number of drain crossing points that we would have to construct, saving time and effort. The quad wasn't quite so surefooted and took an early bath in one of the wetter drains - no problem though as the Outlander was on hand with its powerful electric winch to save the day.

There is a BIG rear load area - about 1.2m x 1.2m - that would easily carry double the trees, shelters and tree stakes compared to the quad, without coming close to the 350kg maximum rear payload. It is also much more stable over rough ground, even when loaded.

There is an endless list of optional extras so I suspect you could easily get into the 'it's only £100 more' syndrome and find that the cost doubles. That said, some of the extras would be essential for Cawdor Forestry - the rear rack extension and sides to allow plant bags to be secured, under-body protection to reduce the risk of damage in rocky ground, and a rear-mounted

winch to allow self recovery from sticky situations.

Do I have any reservations? I would be concerned that such a flash bit of equipment maybe our planters would have too much fun with it or that it could be a magnet for thieves. However, the ATV is fitted with a D.E.S.S (Digitally Encoded Security System), Can-Am's anti-theft key system, which offers the user that extra bit of reassurance when they lock up the vehicle. The system utilises electronic key codes that are programmed into a coded microchip in the key and are required to match each specific ATV's engine control module (ECM) for it to start. However, long-term, I do wonder how all the electronic wizardry would stand up to a harsh working environment.

To sum it up then, the Can-Am Outlander 650 6x6 crosses ditches like a snake, has the carrying capacity of a pack horse, scales slopes and rocks like a mountain goat, but the best thing about it is the sound - not noisy, just a meaty turbine like rumble from the powerful Rotax 650V twin engine. Rather like the gentle roar of a lion.

Model: Can-Am Outlander 650 6x6 INT
Price: MSRP is now: £9915 + VAT = £11,899

Model: Can-Am Outlander 1000 XT 6x6
Price: MSRP is now: £12,499 + VAT = £14,999

Retailer: Bombardier Recreational Products.

For your local BRP dealership visit uk.brp.com/off-road/dealer-locator.html

Contact: Paul Wood, Can-Am commercial representative paul.wood@brp.com

OBITUARY

David Jenkins: an appreciation

David Jenkins who was a key figure in the Welsh woodland, timber and farming sector, died on 11 August 2015. He was the director of the public sector partnership and charity Coed Cymru for 27 years and will be remembered primarily for his role in championing native woodland and bringing innovative ideas into public policy and mainstream practice. He facilitated and initiated significant advances across both the agricultural and the timber technology industries, a testament to the passion, skill, knowledge and integrity he brought to his work, and his ability to inspire and share his enthusiasm with others.

David was born in Llwynypia in the Rhondda in 1952 and studied Applied Zoology at Reading. After graduating in 1974 he worked in the water industry and this would prove valuable later in his career, when he brought together a pioneering research programme into the role of trees in soil and water with the Pontbren Group in Powys.

By 1988 he had moved back to Wales with his family to take up the directorship of the recently formed Coed Cymru. Over the next three decades he built up a resource of staff across Wales and an ever-growing network across the farming community, academia, private business and public and local authorities. Coed Cymru campaigned successfully to reverse the decline of broadleaved woodland and put into practice a mechanism of advice and support to Welsh landowners that continues today. David helped to bring ideas such as continuous cover forestry into Welsh policy and was the source of numerous innovations to increase the economic value of Welsh timber, borne out of his inexhaustible knowledge of timber, mechanical processes, industrial and natural history.

His vision remained remark-

ably consistent and a considerable amount of what is good in current natural resource management policy and practice in Wales owes something to David. He knew his country better than most and championed its culture and language. He believed strongly in Wales, that it should follow its own policies, nurture its own thriving industries and have the confidence to hold itself up on the international stage.



David embraced the ethos of public service, working for a greater good over and above personal return or recognition. Shortly before his death he expressed a wish for no tributes or memorials. But his work will continue, enacted through the many people he inspired and the policies he helped to form. The landscape of Wales changed for the better during his lifetime and that is a legacy few of us could hope to achieve.

The Earl of Devon

The much appreciated Confor member, the 18th Earl of Devon of Powderham Castle, passed away on 18 August 2015 at the age of 73. On 21 August, The Telegraph honoured him with a comprehensive piece about his life:

www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/11816746/The-Earl-of-Devon-obituary.html



WOODLAND OWNER

Professor Julian Evans OBE on a wood which bears witness to a lifetime of care



Resilience of a wood

We talk much today about resilience. Threats from diseases and pests, from climate change and even, perhaps, from declining silvicultural standards are with us. I mention the last because of our profession's struggle to recruit students to forestry courses and because of a visit I made to a lovely wood in late July.

The wood was about 70 acres and near the Kent-East Sussex border. I had a chance to look around it for several hours. It was a lovely summer's day with sunny intervals and warm temperatures; the only blot was the late running of trains from Waterloo which messed up the rendezvous timings with associated knock-on effects.

The first feature which impressed me was the number of wide tracks and rides resulting in good access to all parts and many butterflies enjoying the sun and light. Some of the spur tracks were becoming overgrown, but clearly there was a history of past maintenance and attention to the wood's internal access.

The second feature which impressed only emerged after walking the main tracks and diving off every so often into the adjacent stands. There was astonishing variety, not so much in species though this was so, but in stages of stand development. There was young line-thinned Scots pine and two far older stands displaying the tree's attractive orange bark to great effect. There were many areas, cants really, of sweet chestnut coppice which had once been well worked and in rotation – today some 10 years old, some around 18 years and some quite a bit older and past their 'sell-by' date for coppicing. There were, too, some small stands of hornbeam, some well grown ash near the entrance and some oak:hazel coppice with standards. All this was found in a wood of just 70 acres.

As I walked around this delightful woodland the commandment, 'Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's...' came to mind thinking how nice it would be to own and manage it!

What I have described all reveals a long history of management in years past and decline in more recent times. Present neglect is too strong a word since it will be easy to bring it back into a thriving asset again, the patches of dieback in the chestnut excepted, and there was recent coppicing of narrow strips next to the track in a couple of places, perhaps cut for a quick load of firewood. However, the important point is that the interventions and operations of the past – the good standard of silviculture practised – have given the wood great resilience and a condition which is a far cry from the neglect so many woods have suffered for decades.

As I mused on these thoughts, making my way back to the entrance the explanation for this extraordinary wood's state of affairs became clear. An elderly lady, standing outside her equally elderly caravan, was feeding some cats. She proffered some eggs and as we chatted she told me how she had married her sweetheart, a woodman, and they had lived all their lives here in the caravan. Her husband had died about 10 years ago thus bringing to an end the regular care and maintenance that had created such a gem. His fine silviculture was still imprinted in the stands he once managed and his gift to us is a resilient wood still able to cope with changing times.

We can argue that one woodman per 70 acres or even per 100 acres is not economic today, but none can argue he did an excellent job in which he clearly took pride. His is a fine epitaph.



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