

SITUATION

ENGLAND

The UK Government was missing its very modest target of 11 million trees in the 2015-2020 Parliamentary term by a country mile. Confor calculated that at current planting rates, the target wouldn't be hit until summer 2027.

New applications for large schemes were unknown since the 1980s in England, and initially the agencies, including Forestry Commission, appeared unprepared and negative

ACTION

CONFOR LOBBIES AT WESTMINSTER



In 2016, Confor lobbies at Westminster for funding to increase productive planting in England

- Secured commitment from Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne to a £1m fund for forestry
- Confor proposed in 2016 that it be used to de-risk new applications for large, productive planting schemes
- Oct 2016 Request to Ministers for additional funding for woodland creation
- Facilitated and organised high-profile media coverage of the planting challenge faced by the forestry sector

OUTCOME



NEW FUNDING FOR WOODLAND CREATION APPROVED!

- Woodland Creation Planning Grant (when - check)
- Creation of £19m Woodland Carbon Fund.

MEDIA PUTS FORESTRY IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Countryfile and the Guardian among other media outlets, take the lack of tree planting seriously for the first time.



OUTLOOK

NEW PLANTING AT LAST!

A 170ha productive planting scheme has been approved on Confor member Lowther Estate and we are hopeful that an even bigger scheme will soon be approved at Doddington in Northumberland.



SECTOR'S PROFILE RAISED

Ministers are talking about the importance of delivering productive planting for the industry, and using more wood in timber building. There is a real appetite to deliver much more productive planting across England.

SCOTLAND

Although Confor lobbying ensured that the usual complete collapse in planting that accompanies a new scheme was avoided, and the right balance of productive and native planting was being achieved, the levels were still well below the 10,000 hectare annual target. Get this text checked



SECTOR IDENTIFIES KEY SOLUTION TO REMOVE BARRIERS TO PLANTING

When Fergus Ewing was appointed as Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs & Connectivity in May 2016, Confor challenged members to identify one thing that would provide for a step-change in planting. The answer was to take the experience of local planners into the Forestry Commission.



CHANGES IN FC SCOTLAND

Mr Ewing accepts suggestions and appoints ex-chief planner for Scotland Jim Mackinnon.

Confor channelled the expertise of its membership into a review and its recommendations have seen real changes in Forestry Commission Scotland with the planting forecast now to rise to over 7000ha this season.



FUTURE PLANTING SURPASSES TARGET

Projected figures for 2018/19 - perhaps as much as 12,000ha, exceed the Scottish Government's 10,000ha annual target -with the prospect of rising further to meet the Scottish Government's raised planting target of 15,000ha per annum by 2025.

WALES

A long-term drop-off in planting has seen Wales lose 40 million trees in 15 years, threatening the future of an industry supporting 10,000 jobs.



CONFOR LOBBY ON NEED FOR INCREASED PLANTING

Confor lobbied a wide range of politicians, NRW and other stakeholders on the need to increase new planting and speed up restocking on the WGWE - and marshalled large rural employers to warn of the damaging job implications of a lack of future timber supply.



BRANCHING OUT REPORT

Confor input into the WG consultation on forestry policy resulted in the *Branching Out* report summarising the issues and calling on WG to act now. Published in July 2017 by the Senedd's Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee, it highlights all the issues Confor had raised - including the benefits of tree planting to the economy, environment and communities.



FORECASTS FOR 2018 REMAIN TOO LOW

New planting forecasts for 2018 remain too low and much more needs to be done - and Confor continues to press for the *Branching Out* report to be implemented in full. NRW forecasts and increase in restocking on the WGFWE from 2018 onwards to reduced the backlog.