



Confor South

Promoting forestry and wood
Hyrwyddo coedwigaeth a choed

An update for Confor members in Wales and southern England

03 December 2019

Week beginning	Confor Activity	
	England	Wales
4 Nov		Wood Knowledge Wales Timber Reserve
	Meeting with Forestry England	Bangor University Student Talk
	North Wood Processing Group	Forestry for Wales Working Group
		ICF Wales Regional Conference
		National Forest Business Case
	Hylobius Industry Research Programme	
Expert Group on Timber Trade and Statistics		
11 Nov	Meeting Sue Hayman & David Drew MPs	Rural Payment Wales Stakeholder meeting
		Meeting with Clare Pillman, NRW
	Confor team meeting	
18 Nov	BEIS biomass innovation workshop	Greenhouse Gas workshop
	Wood for Good	NRW Meet the Board event
25 Nov	Confor woodland show debrief	South East Area Statement Meeting
	Borderlands Conference	
	National Tree Improvement Strategy Steering Group	
	Forest Market Review Launch	
	Speaking at Natural Capital Investment Conference	
	Confor Board	
2 Dec	Forestry Skills Forum, Birmingham	Bangor University Future Forestry Talk
	UK Squirrel Accord Executive Committee	NRW Skills meeting
9 Dec	FC centenary tree planting, Eggesford	Forest Industry Safety Accord
	Cornwall Woodmeet	
	Devon & Cornwall Committee	Welsh Land Management Forum
	Meeting with NFU, Northumberland	
16 Dec	Confor team meeting	
		Forest and Woodland Creation – WKW/NRW
23 Dec	MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR	
30 Dec		
6 Jan		
13 Jan		Brecon Beacons mega catchment steering gp
		Mid Wales Area Statement Workshop
20 Jan	Forestry Climate Change Working Group	Senedd Stakeholder event
	Tree Health Policy Group	
	National School of Forestry lecture	
	Confor team meeting	
27 Jan		Woodland Workshop Marches
		Research Commissioning Group
		Processor pre-liaison meeting

UK news

Confor election manifesto

Confor has set out its aims for the next Government in a simple, three-point plan to plant more trees, manage our woods better and use more home-grown wood.

Chief Executive Stuart Goodall said the parties' manifestos showed forestry and wood had moved up the political agenda significantly, but that there was a lot of work to do to make commitments happen.

Mr Goodall welcomed some big commitments by the main parties to new planting. The Conservatives say they will 'triple UK tree-planting rates to 30,000 hectares every year'.

The Lib Dems have pledged to "plant 60 million trees every year, increasing UK forest cover by 1 million hectares by 2045.

Labour promises "an ambitious programme of tree planting, with both forestry and native woodland species".

Plaid Cymru's manifesto closely mirrors Confor's planting proposals for Wales.

However, Mr Goodall added, the manifesto is not just about new planting. He said: 'It also calls for our existing woodlands to be better-managed, to unlock their potential to deliver a wide range of benefits.

'Managing our existing woods better can deliver speedier benefits in terms of mitigating climate change effectively through faster growth and wood products, but also delivering wider benefits in terms of biodiversity, rural employment, recreation and much more.

'Finally, using more home-grown wood will displace energy-intensive (and therefore carbon-intensive), materials in construction and around our homes.'

The manifesto also stresses that modern, mixed-species forestry can deliver on a whole range of economic, environmental and social agendas.



The manifesto can be found [on the Confor website](#). It can be found [on the Confor website](#). Members are encouraged to share it with their election candidates and local campaigners.

Biodiversity and forestry

Eleanor Harris

Many thanks to those of you who have sent case studies to contribute to Confor's forthcoming report on wildlife in our forests. I would still be delighted to receive examples and photographs to the end of the year. Are Wood anemones thriving in your thinning? Woodpeckers drumming your deadwood? Is your business co-existing peacefully with bats, or certification supporting spindle?

Please get in touch with me at eleanor@confor.org.uk or 0131 240 1410 if you have examples or photographs. More information on what I'm looking for are [on the Confor website](#).

A new hope for grey squirrel management

Kay Haw, Director, UK Squirrel Accord

The UK Squirrel Accord (UKSA) partnership is fundraising for research into an oral contraceptive to tackle the

negative impacts the invasive non-native grey squirrel causes to native red squirrels and broadleaf trees. As thousands of trees are planted during National Tree Week 2019, we celebrate our success towards developing a new method to help protect those trees from grey squirrel bark stripping damage.

Research into the immunocontraceptive is being carried out by the well-respected Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA). Researchers are working to turn a proven injectable formulation into an oral contraceptive that will be delivered to grey squirrels via food in a species-specific feeding hopper.

Highlights at the end of the second year of research:

Significant progress in understanding how contraceptives could be effectively deployed. Different densities of hoppers were tested to monitor food (without immunocontraceptive) uptake by grey squirrel populations in woods of 6-18 hectares. Results suggest that only four days is required in summer to ensure the majority of grey squirrels access and consume the food.

Volunteer-led trial in a larger wood (30 hectares). In collaboration with the British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC) and the Deer Initiative. Early analysis shows results are very similar to smaller woods. It also demonstrated the feasibility of volunteer groups successfully deploying hoppers in the field.

Physiological indicators of reproduction in grey squirrels were identified. These indicators will be able to show the effectiveness of the contraceptive vaccine.

Optimising the formulation, dose and frequency of dosing required to turn the injectable vaccine into an effective oral contraceptive. These trials are carried out in collaboration with international groups of researchers at the forefront of research and development in this area.

Based on camera traps, a method was developed to estimate the number of grey

squirrels in a woodland. This provides end-users with a tool to assess the effort required to significantly reduce or eradicate grey squirrels from a given area.

A mathematical model to quantify the effects of fertility control on grey squirrel numbers. Modelling suggests fertility control applied in conjunction with culling is most effective at eradicating or significantly reducing densities of grey squirrels to numbers low enough to mitigate most of the economic and environmental problems they cause.

The oral contraceptive research offers a real opportunity to halt grey squirrel population growth and reduce their numbers and negative impacts. UKSA still needs to raise £250,000 to complete the project. Anyone wishing to support the research can donate online via the UKSA website, where there is also further information on the work: www.squirrelaccord.uk/donate



© Gary Bruce Highland Photographer

Woods on film?

Angela Terry who runs the awareness raising campaign, [One Home](#), has asked for examples of woodlands that have, or will be, planted with species chosen specifically with the impacts of climate change in mind.

If you are involved in a project and interested in potentially featuring in the media to highlight this work please contact her on:

angela@climatealliance.org.uk

WALES NEWS

Anthony Geddes

Glastir & Woodland Creation,

The Confor press release covering a drop in woodland creation after the declaring of the climate change emergency has had positive traction with a number of news agencies. Welsh digital news outlets have run the article and there has been continuing redistribution through social media from other groups including the Woodland Trust.



Timber Lorry Overloading

A number of processing members have highlighted to me that they have received additional letters from NRW talking about vehicle loading. I am seeking clarity from NRW on their policy as there is a lack of detail about what they are defining as an overloaded vehicle and what constitutes grounds for breach of contract.

HSE/FISA & NRW

FISA guidance for Forest Welfare Units has now been published and in addition NRW have been advising contract holders that they required compliance with their internal documentation in early December. FISA 806 Welfare Guide available [from the website](#).

There is a FISA/NRW workshop being held on 11 December at the Royal Welsh Showground at 4pm.

Forest Industry Group

There has been an appointment within the Welsh Government forest policy team for a role as the Head of Forest Reform. Jon Travis began in mid-November and has been exploring the industry working group as a positive way for Welsh Government to engage. This together with the positive support from NRW staff means that a revised version of the Forest Industry Business Group could look to meet in the New Year.

Timber marketing

NRW have proposed a date of 18 February for the next Timber Liaison Day. It is proposed that as Confor and processing members meet on 30 January to put together a series of written questions and agenda for this meeting.

I am in contact with a number of members about this but once again I would urge anyone who is having problems to get in touch. This is a good opportunity for us to engage and challenge the problems and mistakes being made.

Forestry Training

I am continuing to develop a series of events for 2020 on knowledge transfer in the forestry sector. We have a number of good ideas and workshop requirements but as always if there is something that you feel requires addressing please get in contact.

Welsh Government & National Forest

On Saturday 30 November Welsh Government launched [Prosperity for all: A Climate conscious Wales](#). The launch of this signifies further that large elements of the Welsh Government policy on climate change, decarbonisation, flood mitigation, air and water quality improvements can be delivered through tree planting and the establishment of new forests. Confor will continue to drive the message that to deliver these benefits, we need a healthy timber and forestry industry, skilled up and resourced appropriately to meet the demands of this changing world. The

supply and planting will not be switched on overnight but sustained support and action can ensure that these Welsh Government targets can be met going forward.

ENGLAND NEWS

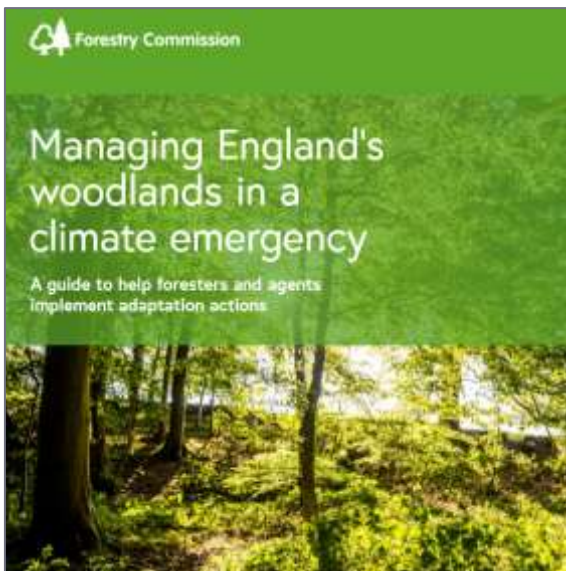
Caroline Ayre

Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS)

I, along with members, are co-designing the next England land management grant scheme ensuring that forestry is embedded within it. The process is currently on hold until after the General Election.

Managing England's woodlands in a climate emergency

Forestry Commission have published new climate change management guidance to provide practical advice to landowners on ways they can better manage their woodland to combat the effects of climate change. This is available [on-line here](#).



Woodland creation and management

I lead on Confor's campaign in England to increase levels of new productive woodland creation and management. I am currently considering priority actions for our campaign next year. Please get in touch if you have ideas.

Integrating forestry with farming

I am providing private sector input into the development of the Great Northumberland Forest, the Forest for Cornwall and other regional forest partnerships.

Safety, Technical and Compliance

I am the secretary for Confor's Safety, Technical and Compliance (England and Wales) group and am organising meetings for 2020.

Regional Committees

The Confor England committees' business includes:

- discussion of prices at the market, market conditions and production;
- an update on Confor's activity and an opportunity for members to help guide my priorities as Manager;
- an update from Forestry Commission on grants and regulations
- planning for each region's spring and autumn member events.

All committees are keen to recruit new members and are looking to appoint secretaries. Confor committees can count towards ICF CPD records. If you would like to join, have ideas for members events, or matters you would like to raise, contact myself or your local Chair:

South West (Devon & Cornwall)

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South East: Jamie Kirkman

jamie@balcombeestate.co.uk

East: Justin Mumford

Justin.Mumford@lgluk.com

North: Oliver Combe

oliver.combe@timberauctions.co.uk

Marches: Phil Argyle

phil@argylewoodland.co.uk

Not yet a member?

Confor is the voice of the forestry and timber sector, and our job is to make sure your voice is heard through our representation in political and technical forums. For more information, contact Anthony Geddes or Caroline Ayre.

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With best wishes from Confor
for a merry Christmas and peaceful and prosperous New Year



God rest you, merry foresters, let nothing you dismay.
We'll celebrate the message that more trees are on the way.
See Hazel, Oak and Douglas Fir, and darling buds of May,
*O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy,
O tidings of comfort and joy.*

Let timber flourish everywhere. Lock up that CO2!
For furniture and sheds, of course; but other uses too.
Skyscrapers, schools and shopping malls. Why not a wooden zoo?
O tidings etc

Walk in the woodlands, roaming free; there's life on every side.
No end of tangled undergrowth for timid beasts to hide.
And not to mention rotten logs with loads of bugs inside.
O tidings etc

Go gather blossom in the spring and summer fruit for free.
Then acorns, conkers, Robin Hood – no end of childhood glee.
So bring the Yule log, deck the hall, dance round the Christmas Tree.
O tidings etc

George Harris