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October 2019 Issue 95

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Please contact Liz@confor.org.uk

CONFOR CONTACTS



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



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



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



Anthony Geddes
National manager for Wales
T: 074 94079305
E: anthony@confor.org.uk



Andrew Heald MICFor
Technical director forestry and Northern Ireland representative
M: 07771 844653
E: andrew.heald@confor.org.uk



David Sulman
Deputy chief executive
T: 01786 449029
E: david.sulman@confor.org.uk



Dr Eleanor Harris
Policy Researcher
T: 0131 240 1417
E: eleanor@confor.org.uk



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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For advertising, contact Laura Munnings
01502 725866

laura.munnings@micropress.co.uk

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Ips typographus has devastated Central European forests and has just started to take hold in the UK. More on p6/7.

PICTURE: SHUTTERSTOCK



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A stronger future together

STUART GOODALL CHIEF EXECUTIVE, CONFOR

I recently presented to the Board of Forest Industries Ireland who were keen to learn from what they saw as our success. I was flattered that they believed that, but I also made clear we had continuing frustrations as well as achievements.

While there, I spoke with an acquaintance from forest management company, Veon who had recently visited central Europe. He'd seen, first-hand, the devastation being caused by the spruce bark beetle. His view is that the flood of cheap timber will continue for some time yet, unwelcome news for our UK mills.

The previous week I met with the new UK forestry minister Zac Goldsmith, who impressed me with his desire to get stuck in and drive more tree planting and management in England. I took the obvious opportunity to refer to the announcement of an extra £5m for planting in Scotland this year - something that was under question until I reassured the Scottish Government that the nursery material was there.

Globally, the impetus towards greater tree planting and using more wood (not least to replace plastics) is strengthening, but the global economy is slowing, in part because of the escalating trade war between the US and China. It appears that

China believe a democracy will be forced to blink first, whereas Trump reckons it will be China as the trade imbalance is so great.

I could go on commenting on local and global events and trends, but the point I want to make is that increasingly our sector is subject to external factors. We need to influence what we can and provide ourselves with the best information on what we can't.

This is where Confor comes in. While we can't influence Trump, we can share analysis and information, and we can influence politicians closer to home.

I'm frequently reminded that we all have a shared future, based on strong markets, secure, long-term supply and a functioning supply chain. Working together we create the strength of voice needed to capture attention as well as to secure greater resource to address the various challenges that arise across the supply chain.

For many members this is the time of year when you receive your renewal invoice. Please continue to give us your support and we will continue to work hard on your behalf.

And, if the opportunity arises, do encourage someone else to join - you can give them this magazine (when you've read it of course!) and ask them to get in touch. Details of the Confor team are on the previous page.

Here's to a stronger future - together!
www.confor.org.uk



Strategy to secure forestry's future

Andrew Heald revisits Confor's Plant Health action plan and considers the *Ips typographus* outbreak in Europe

Much has been written in recent years about the rapid increase in pests and diseases impacting UK forests and woodlands. We have seen how *Phytophthora ramorum* and *Xylella* have rapidly travelled across the UK and will change our productive forest, our hedgerows, and native woodlands forever.

A changing climate puts all our trees under stress, particularly after the very hot weather last year. Those unusual conditions saw an inevitable spread of Oak processionary moth (OPM) into the nurseries of Belgium and Germany in late 2018. Unsurprisingly, this summer we have witnessed over 80 confirmed cases of OPM in the UK.

The outbreak of *Ips typographus* in Kent appears to be under control but was a real wake up call for many of us who have always thought "it could never happen here".

The spread of *Xylella* from south-

ern Europe into Spain and though Italy and up to France, means that a ban on the import of Olive trees now looks inevitable.

The option of banning imports" is always appealing but it is often at odds with our relatively free trading history and, with relatively few plant health inspectors and with easy (ish) road connection with Europe, not always straightforward.

A key part of the UK Government's strategy in tackling biosecurity is the wider use of Plant Passports on all relevant material including harvested timber. It was plant passports that enabled the deliveries of oak trees to be followed and sites inspected.

How do we balance the real and urgent need for biosecurity with the desire for light-touch regulation and free trade?

Confor has worked hard to make the Plant Passporting requirements as workable and practical as possible, but the people who will be required to implement them need to see and understand that they are adding value. Is this a price we are willing to pay for greater biosecurity? *Read more on p14 and p16.*



Ips typographus - a Swiss perspective

The current European outbreak of *Ips* is having a devastating effect on forests across central Europe. The impact is also being felt in the UK with a decline in the price of sawn timber due to the large volumes of harvesting timber reaching the market. Harvested timber in Austria is currently cheaper than in Russia, and there are concerns regarding the availability of timber in five to ten years time due to the scale of the impact.



Here, **Dr Beat Wermelinger** describes the situation in Switzerland and reflects on lessons learned.

Ips typographus is currently the most challenging pest in Swiss forests.

Following the storms Vivian (1990) and Lothar (1999), two million and eight million cubic metres, respectively, of Norway spruce timber was infested and killed. To put this in context: the usual annual harvest in Switzerland is five million cubic metres! Between 2008 and 2014, the infestations remained at a normal, low level, but since then they have

gradually increased, in particular after the hot and dry years of 2017 and 2018. The infestations in 2018 were higher than in the peak year after Vivian but clearly lower than after Lothar.

Due to climate change, few forest owners will now plant spruce, especially not at lower elevations. Instead, they rely on natural regeneration, leading to higher proportions of broadleaves. Occasionally, specific tree species such as oak, cherry or walnut are planted. As an alternative to spruce, silver fir is promoted.

To control *Ips* and other bark beetles, usually sanitation felling is used, ie removing infested trees from the forest

UK PLANT HEALTH STRATEGY

The UK's Plant Health Strategy launched in May 2018 included:

- Launching the 'Don't Risk It' campaign (summer 2019) to raise awareness of the risks of bringing back plant materials from holiday destinations
- Consulting with industry on contingency plans for key threats to our trees and plants to ensure a swift and effective response should new pests and diseases enter the UK
- Strengthening protection against *Xylella* - maintaining continuous scrutiny

of the risk situation and taking measures to maintain the strongest possible controls

- Building knowledge and awareness of threats to trees to ensure accurate and up to date information
- Working in partnership with the sector to drive up biosecurity standards through assurance and safe sourcing
- Exploring strengthening of public procurement strategies to specify safe sourcing

- Reviewing passenger baggage allowance for regulated plant material to assess whether it should be discontinued

Sir Harry Studholme, chair of the Forestry Commission said: "Publishing this strategy is a critical milestone in our ongoing work to safeguard England's trees. It provides clear direction on how we can work collaboratively across sectors, to combat tree pests and diseases, to protect our beloved forests and woodlands for not only our current generation but for the future."

Where do we want to be in five years?

2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023

Governments and regulators should...

IMMEDIATELY

Increase monitoring and reporting to include the majority of imported firewood and wood packaging material.
or
Ban imported firewood.

IN THE NEXT YEAR

Report area of woodland under management in annual Forest Statistics.

IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS

Promote UK-grown firewood.

Provide adequate grants and support for woodland management and streamline the process of approving felling permissions.

In five years, financial and regulatory incentives must make it easier and cheaper to supply firewood by managing UK woodlands, than to import it.

Landowners, management companies and nurseries should...

IN THE NEXT YEAR

Explore opportunities to bring unmanaged woodlands into management and help government create suitable support.

IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS

Take up and promote opportunities provided by government.

Earlier in 2018, Confor launched our own Biosecurity and Brexit paper

before the beetles have emerged. In remote areas, infested trees are often left standing. The same is true in the lowlands for forest reserves or for stands where the owners or authorities decided to refrain from measures for various reasons. The use of pheromone traps for monitoring has decreased.

Timber prices have declined in general, and the current situation with sanitation fellings has additional negative consequences on the timber market.

It has become obvious that *Ips* outbreaks in spruce-dominated forests after severe disturbance cannot be prevented. But a consistent, large-scale and timely sanitation felling of infested trees was shown to be effective. The most important lesson, however, is that

people have become aware that in lower elevations spruce will not be a promising tree species in the future and instead promote broadleaves. Spruce is drought-intolerant, susceptible to windthrow and bark beetles, which disturbances will probably increase with climate change.

What could have been done better? Given the composition and age of the affected stands outbreak were almost inevitable. A more intensive control was not feasible due to limited capacities. The control might have been organized more efficiently by better prioritization. And often sanitation cutting occurred too late when *Ips* had already left the stems.
Dr Beat Wermelinger is an entomologist and senior scientist at the Swiss Federal Institute WSL

RELATED ARTICLES

Related articles in this issue:



All you need to know about Plant Passporting (p14/16)

Member profile Prees Heath Nursery (p20/21)

More bark please (p65)

Confor meets new UK Forestry Minister Zac Goldsmith

Confor's CEO **Stuart Goodall** met with Zac Goldsmith on 11 September

Although it was in keeping with the 'unusual' political times we live in, I was still concerned to read, the evening before we met, that new forestry minister Zac Goldsmith (just a few weeks into the post) had been promoted. Thankfully, I was reassured that he still retained his responsibility for forestry and the meeting went ahead.

My overall impression was of a Minister who took forestry seriously and was determined to build on our good work with his predecessor, David Rutley... and quickly.

This was music to my ears, and we moved swiftly on to discuss how to drive-up planting in England and the opportunities provided by the



Chris McAndrew / UK Parliament (Attribution 3.0 Unported (CC BY 3.0))

Borderlands Growth Deal, especially in Northumberland where Confor has secured strong support from the local MPs and the County Council.

The Minister understands the

need to produce more wood in the UK in order to reduce our global environmental footprint and to help lock up carbon. He also accepted my challenge to take a strong personal lead in driving forward the action needed to see a fundamental change in English forestry.

I left pleased and impressed, but also very aware that Brexit and election events could intervene. By the time you read this, Confor will have already gone back to the Minister for ideas and actions he can commit the government to in the coming weeks.

I have thrown away the crystal ball and cancelled my monthly tarot card readings - no one knows what will happen next, but I can see the momentum in favour of forestry increasing and every engagement with a Minister and their officials is an opportunity to speed things up and maintain direction.

#TheFutureIsForestry essay and video prize 2019

Theme

How can farmers and landowners be motivated to plant more trees to deliver a wide range of benefits, especially mitigating climate change?

Prizes

£500, £250 and £100 for the top three essays and the top three videos. Prizes presented at the Houses of Parliament, 26 November 2019.

Who can enter?

Anyone aged 30 or under (on 26 November) and forestry students of any age. Videos should be 1-2 minutes long and essays up to 1500 words (plus visual materials and accompanying text)

How to enter

Send entries to eleanor@confor.org.uk - with your name, date of birth, phone number, email and name of academic institution or employer. Upload videos to YouTube with hashtag [#TheFutureIsForestry2019](https://twitter.com/TheFutureIsForestry) and email the link to Eleanor.

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Confor industry dinner reinvents itself for 2020

Three new awards – for future leaders, innovators and communicators – are planned for Confor’s bigger and better annual forestry dinner, taking place in Edinburgh on 25 February 2020.

The annual dinner has traditionally been a celebration of the sector, where the Dedicated Service to Forestry Award is presented to an individual who has made a significant lifetime contribution to the sector.

The 2020 dinner hopes to present three additional awards, including one for a **Future Leader** - an individual with outstanding skills, who is already making a positive difference to the sector and has initiative, passion and the potential to play a significant leadership role in future. Forestry and Land Scotland has kindly agreed to sponsor this award and Confor is seeking two additional sponsors for two more new awards.

The first is the **Changing Attitudes award**, for positive promotion of the forestry and wood processing sector. This award will be presented to an individual or business promoting the sector in a positive and impactful way - through personal engagement, campaigning or communication, social media or other ways. Their work will have led to greater public awareness and understanding of the sector.

The final new award planned is for **Innovation and Research** - to be presented to the business or individual delivering successful innovation and/or research which has clearly demonstrated greater productivity or efficiency in the industry.

Stuart Goodall, CEO of Confor, said: “We had a larger and more diverse attendance at the 2019 dinner and see the potential to develop the event into a bigger, broader



celebration of the forestry and wood success story. The event is held in Edinburgh but it celebrates excellence across the UK. We aim to have a bigger attendance and more awards in 2020 to recognise the innovators, the future leaders and the communicators who are making a real difference, while still honouring a dedicated industry servant. We look forward to the forestry and wood sector turning out in force to support the 2020 dinner.”

CONFOR DINNER 2020

The dinner is held on Tuesday, 25 February 2020 at The Sheraton Edinburgh.

Anyone interested in sponsoring an award should email or call Jamie Farquhar - jamie@confor.org.uk or 07817 374906

The dinner is expected to sell out and early booking is recommended. Online booking is available on our website, find the event here: www.confor.org.uk/resources/events/ Or get in touch with Ann Stewart on 0131 240 1410 or ann@confor.org.uk

Memorial woodland for Martin Bishop

A memorial woodland to Martin Bishop, former Confor manager for Wales, has been established at Goetre Forest, near to Abergavenny, where Martin lived before his tragic death in a flying accident in 2018. Special thanks go to Chris Jones at Natural Resources Wales who has steered this from within NRW.

The woodland will feature dozens of different trees and is beside popular local walks and a canal cen-

tre – a fitting tribute to someone who loved the local area and loved to be in among the trees.

Confor CEO Stuart Goodall visited the woodland in September and also met with Martin’s widow Angela, who many will know from her role in the Royal Welsh Show and as the person who often answered the phone when Martin was working late doing his best to help members in Wales.

A formal dedication of the woodland is expected next year.



Confor welcomes new chair

A new Confor Chair, John Kissock, was appointed at this year's AGM. John is well known to many in the sector, but for those who don't know him FTN has prepared a series of questions for John designed to shed light on his past and to get his initial thoughts on the future direction of Confor.

John studied forestry at Aberdeen University, gaining a First Class Honours degree in 1974, and then joined James Jones and Sons Ltd as a management trainee. He was appointed a director in 1985 and then progressed to managing director in 1997.

John took early 'retirement' in 2007 after 33 years, and then did consultancy work for two years with JJSL during the building of the Lockerbie 3 sawmill.

John was a key player in the revitalisation and restructuring of the Forestry Industry Council of Great Britain (FICGB), which became the Forestry Industry Council and has been a Director of TRADA (Timber Research and Development Association) and maintained strong links with BRE (Building Research Establishment). He was Chairman of Wood for Good, The UK Timber Grading Committee and the

Advisory Group for the Centre for Timber Engineering at Napier University. More recently, John held the posts of Non-Executive Chairman of Russwood Ltd (based in Newtonmore) and similarly at Wood-Mizer Holdings, travelling regularly to the US headquarters of the Company.

John was awarded the OBE in 2005 for services to forestry, and in 2013 he received Confor's award for distinguished lifetime service to forestry.

As is normal with Confor Chairs, John has been appointed for a year with the option to extend another year.

You have agreed to take on the role of Confor Chair, turning down a number of other recent offers. What motivated you to make this decision?

When I stood down from my roles at both Russwood and Wood-Mizer I had no intention of taking on a fresh challenge. I thoroughly enjoyed my experience at both companies, contributing to the improvement of their corporate governance and providing support and mentoring opportunities, particularly for their senior management.

However, when Stuart Goodall approached me initially to discuss the role of an independent Chair and to provide help through provision of a scoping document, my interest in the activities and growth of Confor was rekindled. Subsequent to our initial deliberations, and as a result of further discussion with the Confor Board, Stuart approached me to ask if I would consider taking on the role. My initial reaction was to decline the offer but after some further consideration and discussion with my wife I agreed to having my name proposed, but conditional on there being strong support from industry members for my appointment.

I believe Confor has an important role to play on behalf of its members in ensuring the forest industry is fully recognised for its contribution to the economy of the UK and promoting policies which will provide a sustainable future for the sector.

How would you summarise your involvement and experience across the forestry and timber sector?

As covered in the introduction, my education in forestry started in 1970. I



QA
with **John Kissock**

have been active in the sector ever since. I have witnessed rapid forest expansion, followed by contraction, and now certainly within Scotland, further expansion. I have witnessed huge changes in the way the industry operates whether it be timber harvesting, transport, processing or the development of timber markets. Working within the industry it is sometimes difficult to appreciate just how far the sector has come and what it has delivered economically for rural communities.

Looking forward, we have further 'good news' stories about the contribution the sector can make to climate change mitigation, whether it be through additional tree planting, more widespread woodland management or encouraging the use of timber in construction with the advantage of 'locking up' more carbon within the fabric of buildings.

What are the key challenges faced by Confor and how can you help us to deliver them?

Being relatively new to the position it would be inappropriate for me to prejudge these. Confor is a member organisation and through consultation with them the important challenges will be identified. My job is to work with the executive team to address these issues on behalf of the members.

What do you anticipate your key areas of work to be?

I see this in two parts. Initially, I want to meet with the Board and as many members as possible to listen to their priorities. It is important that I understand the membership priorities before reaching my own conclusions.

Secondly, I want to understand the structure and operation of the organisation. We need to work together to ensure the long-term sustainability of the organisation whether that be structure, finance or succession planning for the executive team. In my experience, organisations, whatever they deliver, rely heavily on people. One of my priorities will be to work with the senior team to review our strengths and weaknesses and identify what needs to be done to address these.



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All you need to know about plant passporting

by **Ian Murgatroyd**, EU Exit Plant Health Regulations Lead, and **Dr John Morgan**, head of plant health, Forestry Commission England

Introduction of plant passporting for certain wood movements in UK

The introduction of plant passports for timber movements will align the UK with the European Union's new Plant Health Regulation (PHR), applying on 14 December 2019. Plant passports improve biosecurity by providing traceability and assurance that plant material being transported is free from regulated pests.

Plant passports are currently required for the movement of some species for planting in the nursery trade. Under the new PHR, the scope will be enhanced to cover an increased range of plants for planting, as well as plant health forestry regulated material.

Plant health forestry regulated material includes all conifers, *Castanea* species (including sweet chestnut) with bark, and *Platanus* species (eg plane) with or without bark. When PHR applies in December, this material will need to be accompanied by a plant passport if it is to be moved within the UK.

For these species, a plant passport will be required at each stage of the supply chain - where whole or chipped roundwood (including brush) is moved from the harvesting site and/or site of aggregation, to the processor. A plant passport will also be required for the movement of isolated bark from a wood processor to a bark processor, for Christmas trees over three metres tall, and for cut conifer foliage taken from trees over three metres tall. Isolated bark means bark which has been removed (by de-barking or other types of processing) or has become detached from a living, felled or fallen tree.

Plant passporting for spruce timber movements with bark is currently being piloted in the *Ips typographus* demarcated area in the southeast of England.

The Forestry Commission (FC) is directly responsible for managing plant health forestry regulated material in England, as well as having delegated responsibility for managing this material for the devolved administrations of Scotland and Wales.

As part of the UK Plant Health Service, the FC is facilitating the introduction of plant passports for forestry regulated material. This includes coordination of a Timber Plant Passporting Working Group comprised of UK government officials and representatives from the forestry sector (including Confor). The FC is also developing an online learning package to support professional operators in issuing plant passports, which will be available later in the year.

For GB, the Forestry Commission will be responsible for completing annual inspections of businesses issuing

plant passports to ensure these comply with the Plant Health Regulation. Inspection frequency may be reduced to once every two years, where a Pest Risk Management Plan approved by the competent authority has been in place for two years. The FC are investigating inspection models, including using contract inspectors to reduce the burden on industry.

UK Chief Plant Health Officer, Nicola Spence said: "I am delighted to see the introduction of timber plant passporting, it's important that our biosecurity measures meet the highest of standards and we need to do all we can to ensure any plant material being transported to the UK is free from regulated pests. I'm really pleased that the Forestry Commission is working with Confor and the wider forestry sector to help achieve this, and I fully support the work they are doing".

Benefits of plant passporting

The adoption of timber plant passporting will demonstrate that the forest industry is committed to the highest standards of biosecurity. Furthermore, the use of plant passports by the forestry sector will improve

Continued on p16

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LAYOUT OF A PLANT PASSPORT

Examples of plant passports (figures 1 and 2) for the movement of conifer wood, wood products, isolated bark and controlled Christmas trees/cut foliage and brush within GB, and use the ZP (Protected Zone) pest codes for the conifer bark beetles of *Ips amitinus* a8, *Ips duplicatus* a10, and *Ips typographus* a12.

In the examples, the elements of the plant passport are annotated by red numerals with an explanation below;

- 1** The EU flag which may be printed in colour, or in black and white, either with white stars on a black background or vice versa.
- 2** The words 'Plant Passport — PZ' in English.
- 3** Scientific name(s) of protected zone quarantine pest(s) or, alternatively, the codes specifically attributed to those pests.
- 4** The botanical name(s) of the plant(s) species or taxon(s) concerned. For all conifers the Order Pinales can be used and for sweet chestnut *Castanea* must be used and for plane, *Platanus* must be used.
- 5** The two-letter code for the Member State in which the professional operator issuing the plant passport is registered. The code for the UK (including Northern Ireland) is GB. The alphabetical, numerical or alphanumeric national registration number of the professional operator concerned.
- 6** The traceability code (delivery advice note numbers can be used) of the plant, plant product or the other object concerned.



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Species: SS	Product: green logs	specification: 4.8 x 16	
Collection date: 10/06/2019	Delivery Date: 10/06/2019	Delivery Time: 3:40 pm	
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 1 Plant Passport-PZ 2 ZP- a8, a10, a12 3 A: Pinales 4 B: GBFC000 5 C: 123456 6 D: GB 7		 8 Plant passport 8	
Original to be returned to the above address			
<small>Deliveries are made on the terms outlined in the Woodlands Management Ltd CONDITIONS OF TIMBER SALE</small>			

 1 Plant Passport — PZ 2 ZP- a8, a10, a12 3	
A Pinales 4	
B GB – FC000 5	
C free text to include traceability code of wood, wood product or bark 6	
D GB 7	
 8 Plant passport 8	

Figure 1 **Plant Passport incorporated into a delivery advice note for moving Plant Health forestry regulated material within GB**

Figure 2 **Plant Passport not incorporated into a delivery advice note for moving Plant Health forestry regulated material within GB**

- 7** The two-letter code of the Member State of origin, ie GB is used for UK.
- 8** As an example but not necessary at present, a QR code is shown which can support the trial of electronic passports which are not permitted at present. QR codes can also be used to supplement the traceability code.

Continued from p14

awareness of biosecurity threats posed by quarantine pests such as the larger European eight-toothed spruce bark beetle (*Ips typographus*), an outbreak of which is currently undergoing eradication in southern England.

Introducing plant passports for movement of forestry regulated material will enable the UK to retain Protected Zone status for conifer bark beetles and other known and emerging pests. This will help to both ensure that the UK protects its commercial and conservation interests in forests and woodlands and continues to export material to other EU protected zones.

Implementation

How the Plant Health and Official Controls Regulations will be put in place will be dependent on the UK's future relationship with the EU. Further details regarding these regulations will be made available in due course.

In establishing the regulations, it was recognised that registered operators would need time to adapt existing systems to meet the new requirements. As such, the Plant Health Regulation was introduced in December 2017, and registered operators were given two years to implement all necessary changes to ensure they meet the requirements.

The format of plant passports was identified as a key area of concern (see panel p14/15). The development of EU tertiary legislation setting out the details of the new format was made a priority and the new format is now available.

Negotiations are ongoing to develop detailed legislation for other aspects of the plant passport requirements, and the Forestry Commission will continue to liaise with the working group to ensure the sector is prepared.

INFO

Contact plant.health@forestrycommission.gov.uk for more information about plant passporting for timber movements.

Brexit and EU Timber Regulations

While the destination of the Brexit rollercoaster remains unclear, there are a number of issues impacting UK forestry businesses which require a little consideration. One of them is the European Union Timber Regulations or EUTR for short. The Regulations came into force on 3 March 2013 and aim to reduce illegal logging by ensuring that no illegal timber or timber products can be sold in the EU.

EUTR prohibits operators in Europe from placing illegally harvested timber and products derived from illegal timber on the EU market. 'Legal' timber is defined as timber produced in compliance with the laws of the country where it is harvested.

The regulation applies to timber and a wide range of timber products, including pulp and paper. It sets out a number of requirements for operators in Europe that place timber or timber products on the EU market for the first time.

EU operators - those who place timber products on the EU market for the first time - are required to exercise 'due diligence'.

Traders - those who buy or sell timber and timber products already on the market - are required to keep

information about their suppliers and customers to make timber easily traceable.

If the UK leaves the EU without a deal (or potentially even with a deal) then the UK could become a third country. Companies in the UK who are currently Traders could need to become Operators. This could impact companies who export timber from the west coast of Scotland to Ireland, or who move forest products across the UK border on the island of Ireland.

About 80% of UK timber is harvested from forests that have FSC and PEFC certification, so a combination of Chain of Custody and Felling Licences should go a long way towards satisfying the EUTR requirements for due diligence.

In addition, UK businesses who import timber products from the European Union, who are not currently required to undertake due diligence, but need to do so to comply with EUTR.

The Office for Product Safety & Standards which is responsible for EUTR compliance in the UK is delivering a series of workshops to help companies prepare in case of this eventuality. For more information contact andrew@confor.org.uk



60

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Confor members harness the power of #climatestrike on social media

The #climatestrike week starting on 20 September was an opportunity not to be missed to communicate how the forestry and wood sector is part of the solution to tackle the #ClimateEmergency.

On the first Climate Strike day, on 20 September 2019, adults and workplaces were encouraged to join schoolchildren in a global day of action. Confor encouraged members to participate in a social media campaign and use the day to show the public how the daily work of people in the forestry and wood sector is crucial in tackling the #ClimateEmergency.

On #climatestrike day, people of our sector put themselves in the limelight and explained on social media why their work matters. Please keep using the hashtag #TheFutureisForestry



Project looks at industry as custodian

A new art film and installation exploring the role of the timber industry as custodian of our forests has been produced as part of the Forestry Commission's centenary celebrations. *The Custody Code* by Amanda Loomes is a new art film which delves into the lives of the people who work in the UK timber industry: in so doing, it seeks to provide the wider public with a comprehensive understanding of the industry's nature, role and responsibilities.

The Custody Code derives its name from the PEFC's Chain of Custody, which guarantees that the timber purchased by a consumer comes from a sustainable source.

The film focuses on four forests - Alice Holt, Delamere, Kielder and Thetford - each of which was chosen because of the critical role that it plays within the timber industry.

Alice Holt is home to the Forestry Commission's seed laboratories, Delamere to a tree nursery, Kielder operates a year-round programme of harvesting and replanting operations, and Thetford is Britain's largest manmade forest, one which was specifically designed to be

regularly harvested.

The Custody Code will be shown on a series of solar-powered monitors housed within a specially designed wooden structure made from sustainably sourced local timber, which was installed in Alice Holt in the summer and will be installed in Kielder in the autumn.

In addition to the structure, a finger post will be installed in the centre of Newcastle, an hour's drive from Kielder. (The same post was installed at Portsmouth Harbour when *The Custody Code* was at Alice Holt.) With each of the fingers pointing towards one of the forests featured in *The Custody Code*, the post will catch the public's eye and guide them into the forest. In this way, they will trace the supply chain back from the finished product to the heart of the forest from which the timber was sourced. At the end of their journey they will find the wooden structure and the film which will allow them to travel beyond a simple recognition of the timber's source to an in-depth understanding of the way in which the timber industry works and its role as the custodian of our forests.



The Custody Code will be shown at Kielder, Northumberland from 18 September - 1 December 2019.

A new approach to stakeholder engagement

One of the challenges of forest planning is that many forest managers feel that the public consultation process is too open ended, and that it is difficult to satisfy a wide range of stakeholders with an even wider range of interests. At the same time, many stakeholders feel as though their voices are seldom heard, and that they have little influence in a complex and lengthy approval process.

A new project called FORLAND being developed by Dr Annie Yang at Edinburgh University is hoping to improve stakeholder consultation and develop a facilitated approach for forest and land use planning.

Dr Yang said that “The project aims to support and inform landscape planning with ambitions for woodland expansion and forest restoration. By collating biophysical and socio-economic data with the involvement of stakeholders at the landscape level, we aim to co-develop and test ways to facilitate the development of future land use plans.”

Confor’s technical director Andrew Heald has been providing input into FORLAND and participated in one of the first trials at a stakeholder workshop in New Galloway in September. Andrew had suggested holding the first FORLAND workshop in Southwest Scotland as the area is seen as a key area for new planting. Dumfries and Galloway is also often suggested as a new “National Park” and is home to the UNESCO Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere Reserve.

The purpose of the workshop was to share FORLAND with a wider group of stakeholders and finetune the methodology that supports it. Further workshops will be in in Sunart near Fort William focussed on a community woodland and results will be compared with findings from a parallel process in Brazil.

Phase 1 of the project will be completed by summer 2020 and FORLAND will hopefully be available for wider use. The workshop identified some key challenges that will be familiar to any forest manager that has run a public engagement process.

www.forland.io

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT KEY CHALLENGES

Perception that forestry hasn’t changed since the 1970s

Concern about climate change but not fully considered the CO₂ stored in forest products

Interest in UKWAS & UKFS and genuine surprise that most forests have annual audits

Converting two-dimensional multi-coloured maps into three-dimensional landscape



The project aims to support and inform landscape planning with ambitions for woodland expansion and forest restoration

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Navigating the peaks and troughs



This September, Prees Heath Forest Nurseries in Shropshire celebrated 40 years in business. **Stef Kaiser** meets founder David Gwilliam who has witnessed the forestry sector's peaks and troughs over four decades.

The Prees Heath nurseries were set up on a shoestring. In 1979, David was working for the Economic Forestry Group (EFG) which later was to become Maelor Nursery. An interesting six-acre plot of land came up for rent or sale, which inspired him to start his own tree nursery. He put together a business plan and discussed the matter with his bank manager. Things fell in place when the bank offered a loan of £9000, and the landowner not only agreed to sell but also to step in as a business partner with another £9000 to match and back the bank loan.

"At the time, forestry was foremost on the schedule of taxation rules and there was a lot of investment forestry", David remembers. "Land was available in Wales and I was lucky to supply to Fountains Forestry, one of the key players in the region. In those days, it was virtually 100% conifer, mainly sitka."

In his second year, David started to expand into broadleaves and hedging plants, which were popular with farmers. Conifer forestry plants remained 75% of the business. The nursery already had a wide customer base, with a lot of regular uptake coming from local authorities. The Highways Agency, for instance, would secure a good amount of trees in September each year and the business would often enter the main sale season with 30-40% of stock sold already. It was a time of predictability and the only trees that had to be discarded were the misshaped ones.

David had started the nursery as a solo business but soon got a trainee from the then quite successful YTS scheme. By 1984, he was in a position to take on a foreman and employ more regular staff. Through the 80ies,

business expanded to 75 acres and a production of about 10 million trees.

A key milestone in forestry's history of the last 40 years was March 1988 - the abolition of Schedule D. "Forestry was dead overnight. All forest nurseries had huge bonfires. I was fortunate, because most of the stock I had to destroy was in two-years seedlings, not as transplants. We saw a massive downturn in demand and had to reduce production. By 1991/92 it was obvious that mainstream forestry was not going to be anything like it had been."

Prees Heath reacted by expanding the businesses into container grown and cell grown - many would claim that they were pioneers in taking this approach.

From the 90s onwards, it was clear that the previously stable conifer market was a thing of the past. Well into the noughties, the nursery sector experienced a period of no direction, stumbling from one disastrous grant system to another.

"We were only told to grow more broadleaves and of course we rose to that challenge. But we still never saw anything like the sales figures of the early times. And we lost about a third of our turnover within a 3-4 year period in the mid-90ies", David recalls.

The business downsized and this time, diversified into the more predictable landscaping market, growing feather trees, half standard trees, and container-produced shrubs.

The more recent discussions around species diversification for climate change adaptation, although stimulating, have once more made it difficult for the nursery sector to predict demand. "It means more crystal ball gazing to guess what the actual demand for alternative species might be years down the line.

"The only two species that we decided to expand on are the Coastal redwood, which we introduced a few years ago, and Serbian spruce, although the demand for the latter has been inconsistent. As for any other 'alternative' species, we would happily grow them by contract but I am not prepared to put my money down speculatively to have them on stock."

On a positive note, last year the nursery sector seems to have turned a corner, with demand far outstripping



If we can get England and Wales to understand the necessity of productive woodlands ... then I think there is a good future for everybody in the industry



supply. "There have been discussions around planting trees for over two decades, and now Scotland has suddenly got their act together. But the stock to meet this sudden spike in demand is just not available in the Scotland even with supplies from English nurseries."

David explains that furthermore, we have usually relied on continental markets to supply domestic shortfall; now the continent is running low on stock, plus there is currently an increased demand for British-grown stock for reasons of biosecurity. In summary, scarcity of British nursery stock to meet the increased planting needs will be an issue.

David believes that the UK should not have been able to import anything with disease in the first place. "The inspections in the exporting countries should have been vigorous enough to detect a lot of the pests and diseases that have entered our country via plant imports. Also, we ourselves should have responded more quickly by banning the imports of species in which diseases had been detected in countries we import from.

"As members of Confor and the Nursery Producers Group, even before the bans were brought in, we'd made the conscious decision between us that we would not import species that were highly susceptible or suspected of carrying disease, such as ash or sweet chestnut."

David believes that a total ban of all species is neither

necessary nor achievable for the next few years.

"I think the nurseries who are still in business today would be happy to expand their production and cater for an expected increased domestic demand. But historically, we have always used European supplies when we ran out of stock. If the specifiers are prepared to forego their planting until UK stock is available then yes, we could get away without importing stock. Considering a nursery's reaction time, we need to get clarity from buyers on what species to invest in and grow, without us bearing all the risk.

"I came into the business back in the early 70ies and it was all expansion. Planting was going well, started my own nursery on a very positive note. It's sad that I'm coming to the end of my working life and we've now been through over 20 years of very reduced demand and uncertainty of what we've been growing. However, it's nice to see that hopefully, as I go out of this business, the demand is going back, some level of certainty will come back. I've now got staff who are going to take on the business and I think a much brighter future lies ahead of them. And certainly, if we can get England and Wales to understand the necessity of productive woodlands as well as the amenity and biodiversity aspects of forestry, then I think there is a good future for everybody in the industry."



Ltr: Simon Hart (currently Business Development Manager of EGGER Forestry who will transfer to RTS), Norman O'Neill (Managing Director, RTS), Harry Wilson (Director, RTS), John Paterson (Director, EGGER Forestry), Alan Robbins (Chairman, RTS) and Ross Kennedy (Director, RTS).

EGGER Forestry sells Forest Management arm to RTS Ltd

On 10 September, wood-based panel manufacturer EGGER UK, which has more than 800 employees, announced the sale of its forest management arm to Scotland-based RTS Ltd.

The EGGER Forest Management team will move across on 1 October to RTS Ltd, which, with an annual turnover of £12m, employs 40 people and is headquartered in Crieff, Perthshire. Whilst EGGER UK remains fully committed to its harvesting operation with its £34m turnover, this sale marks the withdrawal of the company from direct forest management operations.

John Paterson, Director of EGGER Forestry, said: "We have taken a strategic decision to sell this specialist part of the EGGER business and focus on our harvesting operation which is a key supplier of roundwood to our production sites at Hexham and Auchinleck.

"We are delighted that RTS Ltd has agreed to buy the forestry management business which includes the management of over 8000 hectares of privately-owned woodlands. RTS is a firm which has a similar ethos and philosophy regarding forest management, providing the same bespoke professional services to which our clients have been accustomed. These highly-valued and skilled employees will move over to work for RTS Ltd and will continue to provide an uninterrupted, quality management service to their existing clients."

Norman O'Neill, Managing Director of RTS Ltd, said: "This is an important strategic purchase for RTS and allows us to further extend our forest management ser-

vice. We already have a strong presence across Scotland, with well-advanced plans for a further office in Inverness.

"This purchase gives us a stronger foothold in south Scotland and the north of England, from which we will seek further expansion of the business. We are especially pleased to welcome this highly experienced team of professional managers to RTS Ltd. They will continue to provide the same high standard of management service to forest-owning clients."

Simon Hart, Business Development Manager of EGGER Forestry, set up the Forest Management arm when he joined EGGER six years ago, and moves across to RTS Ltd as part of the deal. He said: "I'm looking forward to joining RTS Ltd at this very exciting time for the forestry industry across the UK."

George McRobbie steps down as managing director of BSW

After seven years of service, George McRobbie has announced his intention to step down as managing director of Tilhill Forestry. George will therefore be leaving the business on his 65th Birthday which falls on 7 October.

However, George is not announcing his retirement. He will continue as a director within the BSW Group but will, in future, be based at group headquarters in Earlston instead of Tilhill's head office in Stirling. George will continue as a director of BSW Timber Ltd and as a non-executive director of Maelor Forest Nurseries Holdings Ltd. He will also continue his representation of BSW on the Board of the Confederation of Forest Industries (Confor).



Green-tech wins Employer Excellence award

New Confor member Green-tech has been announced as a winner in the 2019 BALI National Landscape awards 'Employer Excellence - turnover over £2.5m' category. Green-tech was described as "demonstrating exemplary standards of professional excellence." They will find out if they are the overall Principle Award Winner at the Awards Ceremony in London on Friday 6 December.

Green-tech Ltd is a family business celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2019. Founded in North Yorkshire in 1994 and now employing over 80 people Green-tech is a leading UK supplier to the landscaping, forestry and horticultural industries. Green-tech has joined Confor at the Confor Woodland Show 2019.

www.green-tech.co.uk



Euroforest moves head office

Euroforest have moved their head office from Mead House, Bentley, Farnham, Surrey GU10 5HY to **Karlstad House, 3 Merchants Drive, Parkhouse, Carlisle CA3 0JW**. Please ensure that you direct all future correspondence to this new address.



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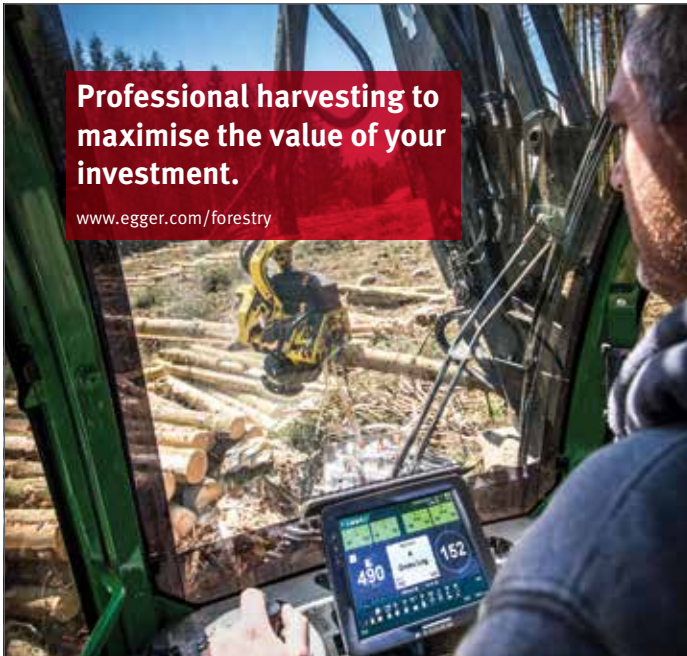
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Welfare provision: is TARDIS the solution?

by **Anthony Geddes**

It's a glorious day at Forest Expo and 4000 tons of timber are being felled by machines from John Deere, Komatsu, Ponsse and Tigercat. It's an impressive sight and hundreds of people are leaning on safety rails discussing the merit of buying a green or yellow machine. The biggest chatter appears to be surrounding a large blue box, not a TARDIS but John Deere's latest welfare unit painted up in Iggesund's colours.

The box in question is one manufacturer's response to an industry challenge that has lain dormant for 27 years. The legislative driver for this box comes by the name of Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992. Forestry is acknowledged as having a general exemption but not for the provision of sanitary conveniences (Reg 20), washing facilities (Reg 21) and drinking water (Reg 22).

In the few short few months since Alastair Sandels spoke to the Confor/FISA South West regional field day the challenge has been accepted. The HSE are inspecting 50 forestry sites this year and the warning given is the industry must deal with the poor safety culture. There is a risk that HSE may regulate, introducing CDM as per the construction industry and those promised inspections are starting to occur.

In plain and simple terms, the law requires the Forest Works Manager to ensure adequate welfare provision is provided on sight for the number of employees. To help the



FWM navigate this topic, the FISA Welfare Guide 806 will shortly be available from their website www.ukfisa.com

Is the blue box the solution to all instances? The simple answer is no, for some it will not be enough and for others it will be gold plating.

The table below provides an indication of what may be suitable for a range of situations. Where the preferred solutions are not feasible, clear justification will be required in the outline risk assessment.

The John Deere welfare unit

When choosing a welfare unit, it's important to consider the number of people on site and the duration of the work. Other challenges are space on site, risk of pollution, vandalism and theft only where these can't be overcome should alternative arrangements be sought.

There is an inevitable cost to provision of this welfare but it is not an avoidable cost, it is simply one that has been sidestepped to date. Provision of welfare facilities is the law and has been for 27 years. A strong element of common sense must be deployed when instigated a solution. The scale of the solution will need to be proportionate to number of workers and nature of the tasks. Safety, respect and dignity should be the mantra of those responsible for their employee welfare.

anthony@confor.org.uk

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Small Toilet Grab Cabin	Risk Assessed	✓	✗	✓
Solar Unit	Risk Assessed	✓	✗	✓
Chemical Toilet (hot water)	Risk Assessed	✓	✗	✓
Offsite facilities 10 minutes' drive	Risk Assessed	Risk Assessed	Risk Assessed	Risk Assessed
Tent + solar shower (Used with van)	Risk Assessed	Risk Assessed	✓	Risk Assessed
Flushable chemical portable toilet	Risk Assessed	Risk Assessed	Risk Assessed	Risk Assessed

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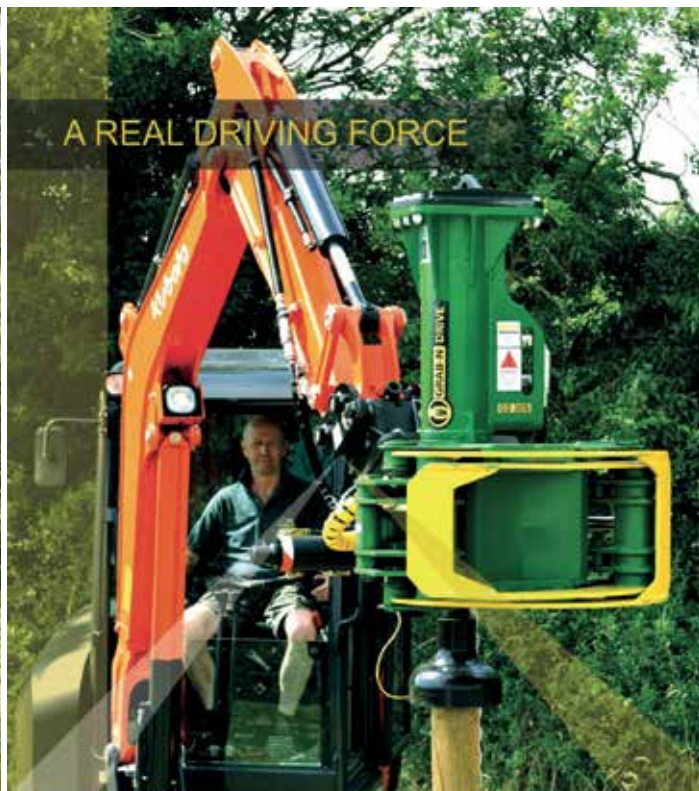


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High spirits and quality visitors at this year's Woodland Show

What a tremendous show the Confor Woodland Show 2019 has been.

A huge thank you to the show Committee, the sales team, the stewards, the Longleat forestry team and the dedicated team of volunteers who work so hard to put on a safe and successful show. This year the site was immaculate. The investment in on-site safety meant that set-up and breakdown ran smoothly and the addition of temporary tracking made for easy movement around the site.

The weather was reasonably kind to us and although visitor numbers were less than anticipated we were reminded that the Confor Woodland Show is primarily a trade show and trade over the two days was brisk.

The Confor seminar tent was a hive of activity with some excellent speakers contributing to lively debates that centred around Confor's #Think Global Plant Local campaign. Thanks goes to all the speakers, chairs and visitors who contributed, cajoled and challenged.

The Confor Woodland Show would not happen without the support of our exhibitors and sponsors so we are pleased to thank Aspen Fuel, Tilhill Forestry, Euroforest and Abbey Forestry.

Next year is APF 2020 so we hope to see you then.



The show in numbers

1550
visitors

100
exhibitors

24
demos

69
students

10
seminars

34
speakers

Discussing industry-wide approach to climate change



When discussing a huge topic like climate change, it's easy to feel small and insignificant - but an industry-wide approach to the challenge can make a huge difference.

After the Confor Woodland Show seminar programme put the emphasis on climate change, Andy Baker of Tilhill Forestry wrote: "The threat of climate change is, of course, enormous, and can often feel overwhelming. However, when you realise that you have an entire industry that is dedicated to the betterment of the environment, the mitigation of climate change and the enhancement of rural communities standing behind you, the task ahead seems less daunting. We may not always agree [on specifics], but we are all on the same team when it comes to the certainty that we need to plant more trees as part of the effort to fight against climate change!"

Eleanor Harris of Confor outlined the "ambitious but achievable" targets of 40,000 hectares of new woodland being planted annually across the UK by 2030, which Confor unveiled earlier this year. She stressed the weak performance in England and Wales, compared to Scotland, which planted more than 11,000 hectares in the last planting year, with most of the schemes under 100 hectares, including many small-scale woodland creation projects on farms. Additional funds have already been allocated by Scottish Government to drive up woodland creation in 2019/20.

Guy Shrubsole, of Friends of the Earth, outlined why his organisation aims to double UK tree cover. That scale of change could, he said, sequester 50 million tonnes of CO₂ per year - 10 per cent of the UK's current emissions.

This had to be part of a global response to the #climateemergency, he said - with afforestation needed across the world. He called for linked-up policy, as moves to reduce meat consumption - which in themselves could reduce emissions significantly - could help free up lower-grade pasture land for forestry. There was a need to "mitigate the cultural differences between farmers and foresters", Shrubsole argued, to deliver more agroforestry, while more community woodlands also had an important part to play.

"We need Government buy-in as the private sector can't do it all on their own." Shrubsole said.

Matt Taylor, of the Country Land and Business Association (CLA), said there were many regulatory, financial and bureaucratic barriers to get landowners to plant more trees.

"It's all about making afforestation viable for landowners, so how do we tip the scales in favour



Tilhill's Andy Baker and Alex MacKinnon attended the climate change seminars on behalf of Confor. Both show a keen interest in working towards tackling climate change and share their perspective of the seminars in blog posts published on the Tilhill blog webpage. See FTN resources for more details.

of planting?" he asked. A combination of more Defra funding and less bureaucracy was at the heart of the answer, he suggested. Defra needed to "facilitate the industry to be more efficient by providing a clear and consistent way of dealing with bureaucracy".

Paul Nolan, of the Mersey Forest and the Northern Forest, called for "a presumption for tree planting rather than against it" and said as well as climate change, forestry had a significant role to play in the well-being agenda. He said the UK needed more urban trees, which required local authorities to invest more - and said we needed to look at our green belts, many of which were currently more like green deserts. Nolan felt the climate was right for change, with investors increasingly looking for "good" investments to make improvements to the natural world.

Both Julian Ohlsen of Tilhill Forestry and John Weir of Forestry Commission said foresters had to stress their carbon credentials more forcefully. [Forestry Commission released its position paper Climate Change and Forestry at the show].

"We call ourselves foresters but we are in fact carbon managers," said Ohlsen. "With public and political help we can use carbon sequestration through tree planting as a solution." Weir said that forestry needed "our own Extinction Rebellion moment to showcase us as managers of carbon."

There were some challenging moments, with an audience question about whether the carbon benefits of tree planting were as great as we thought when land preparation and especially soil disturbance was taken into account. However, it was argued that deep ploughing was largely a thing of the past, and that the carbon benefit of the tree growth itself would outweigh temporary soil carbon release in almost all scenarios.

In the session on Changing Your Woodland Business for Climate Change, James Hepburne Scott of Forest Carbon Ltd said achieving the tree planting levels needed to make a difference required "sustained political leadership" and more ambitious planting targets.

He called for funding and support systems to be overhauled to make them much more effective and said a version of the MacKinnon report (the report by a former Chief Planner credited with making planting simpler and quicker in Scotland by removing bureaucratic barriers) was very much needed in England.

FTN WEB RESOURCES



Read Andy's and Alex' blog posts on the climate change seminars at the CWS2019
www.confor.org.uk/ftnweb

Climate change progress report published

The Forestry Climate Change Working Group (FCCWG) published a report at the Confor Woodland Show charting progress against commitments made in the 2018 Climate Change Action Plan.

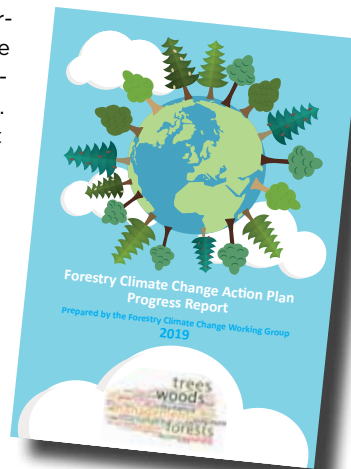
The Climate Change Accord, signed by 35 forestry organisations in 2015 called for a radical reappraisal of the species composition, structure and management of our woodlands to ensure they are resilient to rapid environmental change. The actions on forest policy, research and practice required to bring these aspirations to life were set out in an action plan published by the FCCWG last year.

Over the last year, several independent reports have been published which provide a convincing body of evidence that the speed of environment change is faster, and the potential impacts more severe than previously widely recognised.

We are facing a climate emergency. This strengthens the need and urgency for the action plan to be implemented.

The progress report states that "To date, progress has been limited with little or no opportunity to provide input to policy, government strategy development, the review of regulations or the Science and Innovation Strategy for Forestry in Great Britain". While individual organisations are implementing good initiatives, the FCCWG as a cross sector group has not made significant collective progress.

English Tree Strategy
At the Confor Woodland Show seminar where the progress report was launched, the Forestry Commission



announced its intention to review policies and regulations to identify barriers to woodland owners' ability to deliver adaptation and mitigation measures and to involve the forestry sector, including the FCCWG, in a wide-ranging consultation under the banner of the English Tree Strategy. This will be a unique opportunity to align policy and practice and accelerate the pace of change.

Members of the FCCWG are: CLA, Confor, Defra, Forestry Commission, Forest Research, ICF, Lockhart-Garratt, Natural England, RFS, Sylva Foundation, Woodland Heritage, Woodland Trust

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“I thoroughly enjoyed the show; I felt the whole of forestry was very well represented”

RAB Easton, attending the show for the first time, was delighted he made the trip south

Getting close to the venue I realised that the traffic management system had been very well organised with traffic flowing freely; one of my pet hates is arriving at an exhibition only to be held up for ages waiting to park.

I arrived at the show just at 9am, gate opening time, on a sunny opening day, and the car park was already starting to get quite busy with visitors.

There was a clever system for admission with a ticket booth situated before the entrance to the show, which meant pre-paid tickets and members did not have to queue and visitors purchasing tickets were processed quickly.

On entering, I was left wondering which direction to head off in first but luckily there was a signpost and map that showed the layout of the show.

One of the first stalls I visited was **Lamberhurst Engineering Ltd**; this is a well-established forestry business which has been supplying and servicing the range of Seppi mulching and ground care equipment for over twenty years.

A little further along was **RSL Engineering**, which manufactures a lot of the equipment it sells. RSL had an extensive range of forestry attachments at the show which included its own tree shears, timber grapples and landscaping rakes along with firewood processors and log splitters that it supplies and services. I was quite taken by the tree shears, which had been aptly named the Mother Cutter – the logo had been etched into the steel with a plasma cutter. RSL also manufactures its own forwarding trailers/loaders and



log skidder attachments. I thought its equipment looked strong and of very good quality - essential when working with timber.

There were people starting to gather around the two tractor and trailer-mounted **Mus-Max chippers** which were roll-taped off when one of them sprung into action. The Mus-

Max WT 10 XL Z, owned and operated by Wood Energy Wales, was mounted on a Fendt 1050 500 hp tractor and was being fed by a Penz 9LP double extending loader. It was spectacular watching this mighty beast eating large quantities of round wood and processing it into
continued on p33

Top: Traction Assist T Winch from Bio-Equipment;
Above left: Home Forestry's Alstor 840 Pro Combi Forwarder/Harvester
Above right: Horse logging

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CONFOR WOODLAND SHOW 2019 REVIEW

Continued from p31

top quality wood chips for the biomass industry. The wood chips were directed from the chipper straight into a Brantner container trailer.

I can't think of a better way to spend a day out than looking at and watching machinery working and chatting to people who are as enthusiastic about forestry as myself.

The field area had a fantastic selection of equipment and machinery to interest everyone working with trees. There was a huge selection of chippers, wood splitters, traction assist winches, work wear, harvesting heads, biomass heads, forwarder trailers, tractors, pickups and loaders, and every row of exhibitors I went down I found something new and exciting.

Walking down one aisle I saw the **Trackplot** stall; Trackplot is a very clever app-based system working in conjunction with the SPOT handheld tracker for keeping lone workers safe. This is lifesaving technology with so many uses in rural locations.

A little further up the aisle was the **Ratchet Shop** where there was a wonderfully simple, inexpensive and timesaving attachment on display. It was a plastic holder that you put one end of your ratchet strap into and then turn the handle and it winds up your ratchet strap into a tight roll.

Timber is not the cleanest cargo to strap and the forest can be a muddy and dirty place during wet periods so ratchet straps inevitably end up wet and dirty. This invention does all the dirty work for you and makes it much easier to throw the strap over your next load. It was being sold for £9, which I thought was exceptionally good value for money and would pay for itself in the first day of use.

Fuelwood had an excellent display of equipment and was demonstrating the Heizohack truck-mounted 14860 woodchipper. This is a highly efficient, versatile chipping unit mounted directly onto a Mercedes-Benz Actros Euro 6 truck. There were other trailer-mounted Heizohack chippers on display with a good variety of the Japa and Transaw firewood processors, kindling machines, Moheda loaders and a selection of the other wood processing equipment that Fuelwood supplies.

Amongst the machinery and equipment stalls were other exhibitors who were able to offer on the job training courses in forestry and



arboriculture and others offering **first aid training** courses including the +F, which is specifically for forestry workers/operators. There were **tree nursery** stalls able to offer advice on planting and plant care, charcoal manufacturers, pest control specialists, vandal proofing machine cabs and specialised companies which buy standing timber or will harvest and market timber for landowners.

The **Forestry Commission** had a large marquee with experienced employees on hand to offer advice on forest policies and regulations. They were happy to explain to the visitors the role they play in today's forestry. They had an interesting selection of artefacts and photographs from the bygone era of forestry, including a Forestry Commission Austin A35 van.

The **Confor** tent was near the entrance for the woodland area and was hosting many seminars and lively discussions on the current topics affecting our industry.

I then entered the woodland area; this was a beautiful area of mature, well-thinned spruce and hardwood trees.

It was clearly marked with a one-way system through the wooded area and the first display I saw was

Top: Mus-Max WT10 and 12 Woodchippers from B Price

Above left: Fuelwoods Heizohack Chipper Truck

Above right: Wesstech Woodcrackers Tree Shears

Jas P Wilson, which had a large display with its own Botex loaders and trailers being demonstrated, FAE mulchers and Posch firewood processors.

Just along from there were some interesting and unusual equipment supplied by **Reeds Ltd**, including some clever fencing attachments for fitting onto small excavators. One had a hydraulic auger fitted where the bucket is normally attached on the boom; this was perfect for drilling the holes for straining posts and gateposts as it is a much narrower hole than can be manually dug out. The posts are far more secure and less likely to move when straining long wire lengths against them or hanging heavy gates. Another clever attachment was the hydraulic post knocker; bolted onto the end of the boom with a plunger shaped bottom that fits over the fencing stake and works via a hammer action that will drive the stake into the ground securely. The excavator's boom can be adjusted during this to ensure the stake is kept level. A further useful attachment was the hydraulically adjustable wheeled grader which is pulled behind a tractor for forest road maintenance. Forest roads need to

Continued on p35

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CONFOR WOODLAND SHOW 2019 REVIEW

Continued from p33

be kept in good order to keep timber moving from harvesting sites, for fuel deliveries and to reduce damage and punctures to engineers and operators' vehicles.

Not far away there was the opportunity to try out your 'Robin Hood skills' at the **field archery** area, which looked to be popular with the visitors.

Next on my travels was the **Forestry Workers Zone**; this was a masterful idea. Industry experts were giving demonstrations on the correct way to perform chainsaw maintenance, hydraulic systems and how they work, and tuition on how to strip down a hydraulic cylinder along with career advice on finding work in forestry and arboriculture.

This is something I would like to see developed further; it is a wonderful opportunity for youngsters and people looking for a change in career to discover what the industry can offer them.

Paul Vidgen had the new Prinoth Raptor 500 Mulcher displayed along with Trevi tree shears, tractor mounted scarifier and other land clearing equipment. Paul has been supplying AHWI Prinoth equipment in the UK for over 20 years.

Further along was **Marshall Agricultural Engineering**; the company was demonstrating the Westtech tree shears and the DinaSaw automatic band saw sharpener, and the mighty little Iron Horse mini grapple skidder was showing off its capabilities. There were KRPA forwarding trailers with loaders, 3pt linkage skidder winches, grapples and firewood processors that you could have a good look around. There was equipment to suit every pocket from occasional users to everyday professional use.

Home Forestry was exhibiting a large diameter trailer-mounted Rabaud log splitter and tree shears attached to a tele-handler for working in the crowns of trees. The company's own designed Workbox was being displayed; this is both a bundled oil/tool store and workstation. Nathan Home was demonstrating the 8WD Alstor 8x8 840 Combi Pro; this can either be used as a low impact mini forwarder or can easily be converted into a stroke harvester. It can be legally towed on a trailer behind most 4WD vehicles.

Caledonia Forestry had also



made the long trip south and had a nice display of Palax firewood processors with a Kesla forwarding trailer and loader. The loader had a side-mounted hydraulic winch which was a great idea for getting wood that was hard to reach or awkward to get to into range of the loader to pick up.

There were some very talented **chainsaw carvers** on the woodland circuit who were drawing quite a crowd when I was there. I saw three of them and one was carving a squirrel, another a bear and the third one seemed to be carving a character from Lord of the Rings.

The **horse logging** was great to see; they were snigging out single logs and the horses appeared to be in their element in the forest. I am pleased there is so much interest in this as it would be a sad day for the industry if there were no more working horses.

The final stop before arriving back at the field was the **Riko** forestry display. This was spread over a big area with a large selection of forestry and

Top: McConnell's Ground Care Equipment

Above right: chainsaw carvings

Above left: Hydraulic post knocker from Reeds

firewood equipment. One item really caught my eye – the portable Timberly Sawmill. The larger 14 hp motor version was on offer at the show for £3050 +VAT and will cut up to 55cm slabs. You can keep adding sections to it so it will cut up to the length of the bed it runs on. I have to admit to being sorely tempted.

Back on the field I wanted to see the **UK loggers** competing for a place on the team to represent the UK at the World Logging Championship. The ones I saw were well matched in the different skills so it looked like it was going to be a tough battle until the selections were made.

I thoroughly enjoyed the show; I felt the whole of forestry was very well represented with lots of events, stalls, demonstrations and seminars to please everyone who has an interest in forestry and trees. I am looking forward to returning in two years' time.

Rab Easton is editor of Forest Machine Magazine

www.forestmachinemagazine.co.uk



Schools at show for first time

Three hundred children from two local primary schools enjoyed the Confor Woodland Show at Longleat. Staff from Forestry England provided the meet and greet for the school groups and set them off round the show with volunteer industry guides. Huge thanks go to the exhibitors who welcomed the groups to their stands and explained what they did.

The army of eight industry volunteers gave up their time to show the children round; some have been regulars at APF exhibitions, others were new to it this time round – it's not such a hardship though from their comments:

"I had a great time as always with the children who are very clued up these days with environmental matters."

"It was great fun and I enjoyed it as much as the kids. They definitely loved seeing the machinery working and chatting to people."

The two local schools, Mere School and Horningsham Primary School were brought to the show on shuttle buses organised by the show committee. From their comments after the show they too had a great day out:

"We had a fantastic day - we can't thank you and all those involved enough for giving us such a great opportunity. The children absolutely loved it and were buzzing when we got back to school!"

"We have had the most tremendous day with you today - thank you for allowing us to come at no cost. The staff and children are 'buzzing' with excitement and appreciated how well everything was organised and how friendly all your helpers were."

"I have had comments from both the teaching assistants and parents that having the knowledgeable volunteers to show them around makes all the difference."

School visits will be back at APF 2020!

Top loggers chosen for UK team

After two days of intense competition at the show, there is now a UK team for the World Logging Championships in Belgrade, Serbia 2020.

Six of the best loggers from the UK started out hoping to make the Top 3 by the end of Friday. Scores from three rounds of competition were added together to select the team. Congratulations to Mark Edwards, Richard Elliott, and Gethin Hughes in the professional class. Gethin Jones will be representing the UK in the Under 24 class.

UK Loggers would like to thank the sponsors, Husqvarna UK, Aspen, Tillhill Forestry, Euroforest, Clifford Jones Timber, Fisa and Confor for hosting the competition. Without all of you we would not be representing the UK in Serbia next year.

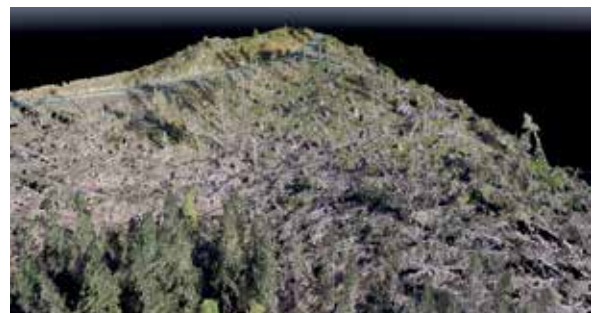


Pictured (l to r): Mark Edwards, Richard Elliott, Gethin Hughes and Gethin Jones

Using drones in forestry

At the show, Artio Geomatics and Barle Forestry held seminars and demos on UAVs in forestry. One of the more exciting applications of UAV mapping technology is the opportunity it presents for surveying the invariably treacherous windblow site. Using a UAV, Artio Geomatics can capture imagery of the site and render an accurate 3D model, from which a wealth of precise data can be generated. Such data includes stocking densities, DBHs, species mix, the degree (or percentage) of the slope, and precise timber heights, volumes & quality. This is all without having to step foot in the area, greatly reducing operational risk and cost.

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MEET THE VISITORS



Fahra and Gareth

Fahra works for Forestry England and Gareth for Forest Services. They are based in the Midlands and came to the show as visitors, to keep up-to-date on what's happening in the forestry sector.



A student's perspective

Young conservation student Martha, who has an interest in the forestry sector, happened to attend the AGM. Here are her own thoughts on how the forestry sector could future proof itself.

I am a conservation student and attended the CWS2019 because I am interested in learning more about the land use sector and how I can get actively involved in shaping it. I passed the Confor tent and spontaneously joined a meeting that had already started. I started to engage in the discussion that was going, not knowing that I was actively participating in the Confor AGM!

The Confor board were talking about how to spread awareness and get people involved with Confor. I thought it might be useful to share my views on this, from the outside perspective of an interested young student keen to get involved in land use and sustainability.

I could think of several ways to entice the younger generation to get involved with the sector:

- More social media presence to spread awareness and create communities
- More engagement with colleges and universities. This can be done by teaching students about what you do and by involving them in your projects.
- Have quarterly meetings with student members to see what they are doing and how you can support them or get them involved. This would give them a stronger sense of community with Confor.



Gareth and Phoebe with Rory

The family lives in Surrey and Gareth (31) runs a coppicing business. They come to see the latest machinery, and for a nice day out.



Marjorie and Ronald

From Fawley near Southampton, the couple have been coming to forestry and land use shows for decades. Ronald is the fourth generation of a forestry family and is now retired.



Andrew, Steven, Neil, Lewis, Nathan and Ed

They work together as forestry contractors and came to support one of their colleagues, who is competing for the UK loggers.



Robin (left) and Alan

Cattle farmers who have diversified into firewood production, Robin and Alan are based in Somerset and are interested in the latest machinery for firewood processing.

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Market correction running its course



TIMBER AUCTIONS
MARKET REPORT
Oliver Combe
Timber Auctions

The market correction is now running its course with prices levelling out and supplies now being redirected towards those markets showing signs of recovery in terms of demand.

Domestic market

The British market is closely linked to what is going on in Europe and Scandinavia and whilst our own political turmoil is doing its best to impact demand, natural turmoil is impacting on supply.

The very dry summer of 2018 together with associated wildfires and then the storm incidents of winter 2018/19 have led to a massive upsurge in salvage felling. In fact, despite the depressed timber markets most countries a reporting record high levels of felling as woodland owners seek to salvage damage stock as well as cash in crops whilst they have value and then look to restructure the species within their woodlands.

There is a considerable degree of uncertainty over whether the salvage logging operation can keep pace with the spread of beetle damage and as to how quickly the timber will degrade to the point where it is only fit for biofuel.

Central European countries such as Germany, Czech Republic, Austria, France and Slovakia together with Sweden have large volumes of distressed timber which is likely to keep downward pressure on both roundwood and sawn wood prices in the UK.

With the widescale problems with growing spruce in Europe appearing to be caused by drought stress and therefore possibly being a product of climate change. I cannot help believing that the case for growing commercial crops of spruce in the UK gets better and better. Can the UK, in time become the premium spruce resource of Europe? Yes we would have to be very focused on disease prevention and control strategies but we have the climate, soils, technical expertise and crucially a tree breeding programme to do it, but do we have the political will?

At the same time as supply of timber to the market has increased, Brexit uncertainty has significantly reduced customer demand for sawm timber causing the market to stagnate as end users wait to see whether we will be in or out of Europe on 31 October.

Many sawmills in the UK are now taking production capacity out as they seek to reduce their stocks and costs when they can buy imported sawn timber cheaper than they can produce timber from their own sawmills. The end user market is over-supplied at the same time as we have unprecedented political uncertainty making very difficult trading conditions for UK processors. Thankfully the pound remains relatively weak against the euro which has provided a degree of protection to UK producers.

Softwood, reducing demand v reducing supply
As prices have fallen this has reduced activity levels in the forest and seen contracting resource moved into thinning operations and hardwood jobs which have slowed production down. At the same time the slowdown in sawmilling activity

GLOBAL TRENDS

China continues to dominate the global timber market and the demand from China impacts on virtually all other wood fibre trading patterns.

Whilst the headline figures show a decrease in China's overall log imports for the first six months of 2019 of 2% in volume and 14% in value closer inspection shows that softwood imports rose 5% whilst hardwood imports fell by 16%.

Softwood imports totalled 21.06 million cubic metres, a 5% increase on the previous year whilst at the same time the average value of imported softwood saw logs was down 3% on the previous year to \$135 per m³. The second quarter of 2019 also saw China import a new record quarterly volume of 8 million m³ of sawn timber.

So, despite lower prices the Chinese market remains a huge draw for global suppliers

The hardwood saw log trade continued downward trend both in terms of volume and value with prices falling by 12% year on year.

Whilst Russia and Canada are the dominant players in the Chinese trade, the Nordic countries have steadily increased their market share and are now the third largest importer into China.

Germany has also begun to export



£ per tonne delivered to customers in Wales, central and south England (Sept 2019)

Product	Lower price	Upper price	Trend
Log 18	£65.00	£75.00	= ↓
Bar 14	£55.00	£60.00	= ↓
SRW	£50.00	£55.00	=
Fencing	£60.00	£65.00	=
H Wood firewood	£60.00	£70.00	=

£ per tonne delivered to customers in north England and Scotland (Sept 2019)

Product	Lower price	Upper price	Trend
Log 18	£65.00	£75.00	= ↓
Bar / pallet 14	£45.00	£60.00	= ↓
SRW	£40.00	£50.00	=
Fencing	£50.00	£60.00	=
H Wood firewood	£50.00	£70.00	=



both sawn and round softwood to China during the last year.

This overall trend of increasing softwood volumes at lower prices is mirrored by the global market trends.

The North American market has not recovered as fast as predicted during 2019, with housing starts lower than expected and major production curtailments ongoing in the Canadian sawmilling sector and in particular British Columbia where production has fallen by 16.5%.

Prices have now stabilised in North America and since August there have been modest price increases and lead times have crept out to 4 weeks on prime sizes as the supply and demand equations come back into balance.

There are now signs of recovery in the MENA region (Middle East North Africa), economic activity has begun to pick up and the forecast is for continued expansion in softwood lumber in this area and in particular Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

In summary whilst prices have declined steadily over the last year there are now signs that this has stabilised and as demand increases, we should start to see a slow improvement in softwood prices.



has seen a reduction in co-product supply which has now started to impact on availability for large scale industrial small roundwood users to the point where some

are now actively looking for material again. As we move into winter and the shooting season production from the forest will decline further and we may yet see an upturn in demand for small roundwood over the winter.

Sawlog prices remain under pressure and buyers are looking to reduce prices even further as their yards are full and demand is weak.

Conversely demand from smaller users of roundwood has remained relatively good, especially in England and prices have held up remarkably well, in Scotland roadside stocks are now reducing especially of spruce. In some areas there is still stock of mixed conifer fuelwood but as we move into winter demand for this type of material should improve.

The firewood market has also picked up over the last six weeks with some major users of firewood looking to increase their purchases of domestic firewood and reduce their dependence on imported material.

Hardwood, shortage of really good quality parcels

The hardwood selling season has barely begun in the UK but demand for oak appears to remain strong and prices for prime planking and beam material remain very, very strong..

Oak continues to replace many traditional tropical hardwood species and is steadily increasing its market share in Europe at the same time as manufacturers in China and Asia follow the European fashion for oak. Fashions, EUTR rules, traceability and sustainability requirements and increased requirement for durable timbers have all contributed to increased use of oak.

The European flooring market provides an interesting example of this, in 2008 oaks market share was 58%, in 2018 it was 80%. Tropical species are being steadily replaced by one temperate species, albeit one that is slow growing, under pressure from disease and pests and seeing its natural range potentially restricted by global warming. Demand for other temperate hardwood species such as beech, sycamore

and ash continue to decline despite the high prices for oak, which should be expected to drive manufacturers to look for cheaper hardwood alternatives.

Maybe sweet chestnut sawn timber will come back into fashion to take some of the pressure off European oak.

The UK market this autumn seems to have a lot of smaller diameter fencing type oak parcels which has suppressed prices for this type of material however, there appears to be a shortage of good quality planking and beam oak. Growers with parcels of oak of 15" mid quarter girth and larger with lengths of 20' and longer should seriously consider offering these to the market currently

In terms of other hardwood species there remains export demand for poplar, ash and better quality beech.

Availability of ash on the market has increased significantly due to ash dieback although the timber becomes noticeably lighter and more brittle as the disease takes hold so the sawlog yield falls off quite quickly. We are already seeing logs being rejected from parcels due to ash dieback so growers should act swiftly when stands show signs of infection.

In the south firewood supply has increased significantly on the back of diseased ash felling and prices have been under pressure, however in the north midlands and north of England there has not quite been the activity levels that were expected this summer and prices have remained stable and even firmed in some areas during September.

Outlook

The global market is now in the stabilising phase as volumes offered to the market reduce whilst demand is showing some signs of recovery and prices are showing very modest recoveries. Europe is lagging behind due to large volumes of "salvage" logging and continued political uncertainty and it may be a year before we see signs of a recovery in the UK market. Thankfully the greater diversity of current markets has protected standing timber prices and current market prices for growers remain attractive when compared to those of 10 and 15 years ago.

Roadside hardwood prices (£ hft) September 2019

	Oak planking	Oak beam	Oak fencing	Export ash & beech	White ash sawlogs	Export sycamore	Large Douglas fir & Larch
High price	£14.00	£11.00	£6.00	£3.25	£4.00	£5.00	£3.25
Mid price	£12.00	£10.00	£5.00	£2.75	£3.50	£4.00	£2.90
Low price	£10.00	£9.00	£4.00	£2.00	£3.25	£3.00	£2.50

These prices are for guidance purposes only and are based on historic market information

TIMBER AUCTIONS



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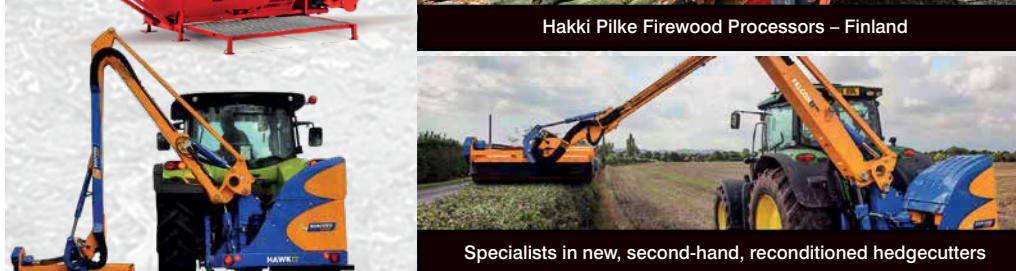
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Market brought back to earth with a jolt



TIMBER MARKET REPORT
by **Harry Stevens**,
timber buying
director Tilhill /BSW

Powerful headwinds have buffeted the UK's timber markets through spring and summer 2019. Originating in both our domestic climes and those of continental Europe, they have provided an unwelcome jolt to market participants after the buoyancy of 2018. Indeed, it was the very optimism induced by the strength of downstream demand last year which contributed to the market's recent challenges.

Confident of strong demand from the housing developers and the builders' merchants in the upcoming season, the UK's sawmills were operating at high capacity levels through late winter and early spring. Indeed, by mid-March, we were hearing reports of certain mills running short of storage space in their sawn stockyards. Meantime, the equally upbeat timber importers had also raised their purchase volumes through early-2019.

The level of stockpiling was compounded by Brexit-related concerns as 31 March and the UK's (intended) departure loomed, as concerns circulated about lengthy customs delays and as fears spread that essential building supplies would run short. By late March, vast volumes of timber were stacked in UK warehouses awaiting urgent deployment by the UK's joiners, builders and landscapers through the spring and summer.

Unfortunately, as the consequences of falling house prices (see chart 1) rippled through the UK's construction market, demand levels disappointed. In Q2 2019,

housing related RMI expenditure fell 5.4% YoY (see chart 2). Meantime, with demand hesitant and selling prices stagnant, many of the leading housebuilders, such as Taylor Wimpey, Persimmon and Crest Nicholson, saw sales decline and activity slow on their building sites.

Processors, having assumed a strong profile of demand, found themselves in a position where they had to readjust their volumes in supply chain with reductions in stock levels in mills at roadside and standing. This led to accumulating roadside stocks of sawlogs and small roundwood that were drying out and losing weight. In response, operating hours on the harvesters and forwarders had also reportedly fallen markedly. The inter-connected nature of the supply chain quickly materialised in other sectors too. The reduction in sawmills' cutting volumes meant less saw dust and fewer wood chips were available to the co-product users who, anxious to secure supplies, were therefore forced to pay higher prices for what was available.

Meantime, events in northern Europe were exacerbating the weakness in demand for home-grown timber and the lack of pricing power for the end-products. Widespread storm damage and an epidemic of bark beetles across German, Czechoslovakian, Austrian and Swedish forests had prompted large-scale felling activity.

In response, sawmills have dramatically increased their processing volumes, especially in Germany, bringing large volumes of sawn timber to already-sluggish continental markets, forcing wholesalers to reduce prices and seek additional offers in other markets. Inevitably, some of these discounted stocks surfaced in UK warehouses. Similarly, the panel board and

biomass sector have seen an abundance of small roundwood and coproducts dramatically reducing delivered roundwood prices.

Although sterling's recent weakness is likely to have softened the deflationary impact of large volumes of low cost, continental sawn wood supplies on the UK's market, their existence has certainly aggravated the challenges faced by the domestic timber supply chain as it seeks to discover a new balance between supply and demand.

As a result, capacity utilisation at UK sawmills remains contained, harvesting contractor rates are still subdued and log prices have pulled back. Moreover, Brexit remains unresolved, even if increasingly desperate measures on both sides of the argument suggest some climactic and decisive conclusion lies shortly ahead.

Optimism

Despite the weak backdrop and the prevailing scepticism, there is some scope for optimism. With competition intensifying in the mortgage market and rates continuing to fall, an important aspect of the housing market remains supportive. After all, cheaper mortgage costs should attract new buyers and support current prices.

The stimulus of sterling's weakness is also increasingly apparent. July's GDP rose 0.3% month-on-month, exceeding analysts forecasts for 0.1% growth and benefiting from rising export and service-related demand. Indeed, its impact is increasingly apparent in the OECD's index of leading economic indicators for the UK which, after 12 months of weakness, is now bottoming out.

The sector has spent the most of 2019 readjusting to these new factors and processors have to a large extent readjusted their supply chains. Their forward bought inventory is now in line with their anticipated requirements and roadside stocks are in a more balanced position, and consequently purchasing is now in line with anticipated demand.

As the US lumber market showed earlier in the year, excessive despondency can leave markets highly susceptible to sharp and powerful rebounds. Despite the temporary pessimism, underlying confidence in the UK's housing and timber markets remains well-established. Market participants should therefore be wary of unduly pessimistic predictions ahead of the 2020 sales season.

www.bsw.co.uk www.tilhill.co.uk



Chart 1: Average UK House Price, 1992-2019 (£)

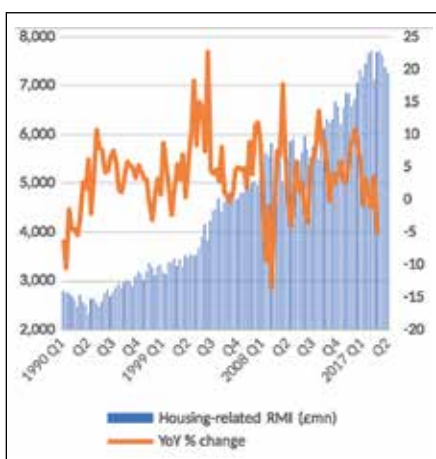


Chart 2: Housing-Related RMI Spending, 1990-2019



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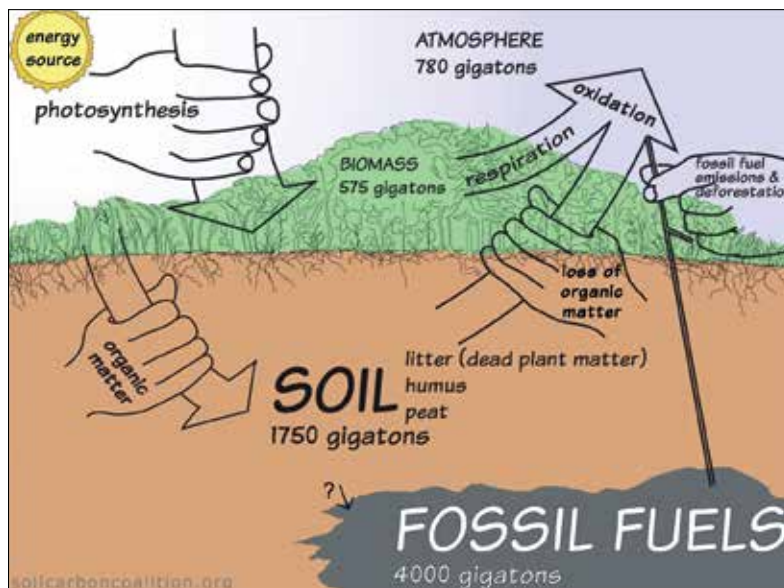
Building carbon levels in soils

Climate change has put a lot of responsibility in the lap of UK forestry and it's down to everyone of us to step up, says **Toby Allen of Say It With Wood**.

At Say It With Wood we can tell you roughly how much carbon our various machines and processes emit, and approximately how much we store by turning trees into products. Over the last few years, we have been exploring ways to sequester more carbon, and find a use for low grade material from unmanaged woods at the same time. Being surrounded by agricultural ground, the obvious choice is to regenerate depleted soils by building carbon levels stored as humus.

We have thought of two ways to do this; the first is by making charcoal for use as a horticultural soil improver (Biochar), the second by using the chip from small diameter broadleaved trees (Ramial Chip Wood).

Biochar has many benefits and it will last for thousands of years in the soil - a great opportunity for carbon storage on its own. Charcoal has a massive surface area, it can be 'charged' with nutrients and mycorrhiza before being added to soil. Because of the increased microbial life plants are more able to take up nutrients while the mycorrhiza build soil carbon as a bonus. A chance conversation with a customer at our yard led to us attending a course by soil carbon expert Ed Revill, who showed us simple gasification burners to generate heat and make biochar. A fact of burning wood is most heat is given off by burning gas, and most carbon is emitted from charcoal. Gasifying burners give off hardly any particulates, if the fire is either smothered or quenched when the gas has finished burning, charcoal is left. Which means we can have clean heat, AND store carbon at the same time,



PLUS adding extra mycorrhiza to the soil in turn builds more soil carbon.

Ramial Wood Chip has been trailed extensively in Canada as a way to regenerate depleted soil within a few years. The young lignin in small diameter wood is broken down easily and increases microbial life which in turn builds long term humus levels. This is a lot more stable than humus created from products such as straw, it is also a fantastic way to utilise the small diameter wood found in most unmanaged woodlands.

Improving depleted soils, while making heat for houses or electricity, sequestering carbon and bringing more woodland into management is a very exciting prospect. More productive soil means we have more space to plant trees. If anyone wants to get involved, wants to know more or has information to give, please get in touch with us and ask for Laura or Toby.

Sayitwithwood.co.uk T: 07958345833

Protector boosts benefits of wooden pallets

A venture from James Jones & Sons promises to improve the quality, length of life and environmental benefits of wooden pallets dramatically and reduce the whole-life cost of a pallet significantly.

UPALL is a joint-venture company led by James Jones & Sons. It manufactures and fits protectors at the point of entry on wooden pallets. This means the pallets last longer, need fewer repairs and stay in circulation for longer than conventional non-protected pallets.

Tests have been carried out on the protectors at Virginia Tech that show wooden pallets protected by UPALL have a lifespan three times greater, or even longer, than a conventional wooden pallet. This is because the pallet experiences

substantially less damage, reducing downtime, equipment maintenance and housekeeping, and improves safety - and also, because the pallet is in circulation for much longer, the wood used to make it is utilised for substantially longer.

Further testing took place at Edinburgh's Napier University in the first half of the year, where results have shown similarly positive benefits to users.

Gil Covey, chairman of UPALL Ltd, said: "The UPALL protected pallet is a truly innovative and groundbreaking development in wooden pallets, which is critical to so many supply chains. Rigorous independent testing and trials show that this proprietary product brings remarkable increases to the lifespan of a pallet and reduces its cost signifi-



cantly. Meanwhile, the considerable increase in service life gives significant environmental advantages over unprotected wooden pallets."

The protectors can be supplied in corporate colours, with printed logos and other designs. The enhanced appearance of the pallets makes them ideal for display directly at the point of sale in retailers.

www.upallpallets.com

Ploughing or mounding

Which is more environmentally friendly?



by **Iain Kyle**,
forestry
manager at
Davidson &
Robertson

Ploughing is still the preferred method of site preparation for many forest managers and landowners. The Forestry Commission favour mounding... but which is the most environmentally friendly?

Landowners and forest managers carefully consider the most suitable site preparation method on a site by site basis. The chosen method is dependent on the ground conditions and the long-term commercial and environmental objectives of the woodland. The ability to identify the type of land and its constraints, comes from years of practical experience of working in the industry and knowing the land, so seasoned foresters are well placed to decide the best way to prepare a site. On the other hand, how the Local Conservancy Officers interpret the UK Forestry Standards, can vary greatly.

Recently, there has been an

amendment to the site prep payments of the new woodland creation (NWC) grant scheme. If you intend to prepare the site by ploughing, you face a reduction in payment by 11% (targeted area) or 12.5% (standard area). This equates to £240/ha of the initial establishment grant. Maintenance payments rates are not affected, so remain the same.

The guidance refers to ploughing, regardless of the soil type. When asking, the Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) clarified that the reduction in the payment rate is to reflect that ploughing is cheaper to carry out than mounding. This may be the case on some sites, but with the development of equipment like the Envior-moulder, contractors are charging similar rates whether to mound or plough.

Site preparation techniques are a very topical talking point which incentivised me to undertake a Major Research Project (MRP) as part of

my M.Sc. in Forestry Management at Harper Adams University.

Comparison of tree growth on mounded vs ploughed sites

The project investigated the growth of Sitka spruce trees on newly planted commercial forestry sites using different ground preparation techniques. Having 30 years' experience of working as a Forest Contractor and now a Forest Manager, I was keen to research this topic further, testing my initial thoughts on the best site preparation methods.

Carrying out the research, I compared four sites across the south of Scotland to assess tree growth in the initial two to four years. The project revealed that trees grew 31% higher and there were 14% more trees per hectare on ploughed sites versus mounded sites.

A finding of particular interest was evidence of tree instability on mounded sites when carrying out the site inspections.

Mounding or ploughing?



Is ploughing really an evil to avoid?

Scottish Forestry state that ploughing releases more carbon into the atmosphere than any other site preparation. However, I challenge this argument. If trees are growing 31% quicker and there are 14% more trees per hectare, wouldn't this offset any additional carbon released?

Furthermore, farmers release carbon on a yearly basis when they plough their fields, whereas forestry sites are ploughed once in 40 years and the trees themselves absorb carbon. The argument doesn't add up.

Forestry Commission England (FCE) recently held an event on New Woodland Creation and the inevitable topic of site preparation came up in discussions. When discussing ploughing, I was told by an FCE representative, to "stop pushing the rock up the hill and go with the flow".

Similarly, on another occasion when meeting an FCS representative on-site to discussing site preparation, that if I was to plough this site "it would be unlikely to be approved this time next year but if I was to mound, it will be approved in three weeks". My client wanted to progress quickly, so we had to compromise on the second option.

The alternative replacement to ploughing is mounding using an Enviromounder. And yes, on inbye or improved grassland with relatively little vegetation and free draining soils, this method works well. However, as you travel further up the hill where vegetation is more dense, with rushes, bracken and Sedges grasses, the Enviromounder seems to struggle to create a suitable mound and instead creates a 'scref'.

As highlighted earlier, my own research project indicated a significant difference between ploughing and mounding (trees grew 31% higher and there were 14% more trees per hectare on ploughed sites opposed to mounded sites). This concurs with the results from trials carried out by Zehetmayr in 1960.

My overall conclusion is that there are still gaps in the research. One technique does not fit all, and ploughing should still be considered as a sensible environmentally sound site preparation option.

Power for the future with £14m biomass plant

Glennon Brothers, established in Longford in 1913, is a third-generation family business and one of the premier names in the UK and Irish timber processing industry. Employing 500 people directly, and another 250 people indirectly, Glennon Brothers has invested over €100m in the past two decades in its four plants in Fermoy, Longford, and Windymains and Troon in Scotland.

As part of their investment programme in machinery and environmental innovation, Glennon Brothers built a £14m biomass Combined Heat & Power (CHP) plant in their Troon facility in Scotland. Completed in 2018, the plant produces 2.5MW of electrical power, sufficient to supply the entire site, with surplus energy being exported to the UK national grid.

With gas capacity at a maximum, one of the key objectives was to replace gas with renewables such as wood chip, buttchip and bark to generate heat to dry timber, thereby conserving fossil fuels and reducing the carbon footprint. The use of renewables onsite has also reduced road haulage by 50%, again helping the reduction of CO₂ emission. The investment has furthermore created added value

as renewable heat is used to dry woodchip and sold as a value-added product, thereby increasing its monetary value. A new progressive kiln was also built and connected with the Combined Heat and Power facility, increasing the plant timber drying capacity to 110,000m³.

The low emission plant meets the highest emission directive limit and operates 24/7, using highly automated smart technology. The CHP plant has also been recognised by the Timber Trade Journal, shortlisting Glennon Brothers as one of three finalists, selected for the 2019 Timber Trade Journal Smart Manufacturing Award.

Pat Glennon, joint managing director of Glennon Brothers, said: "Our core belief is that from forest to front door, we endeavour to care more by investing in our people and state-of-the-art equipment, in order to improve product quality and enhance customer service. The CHP plant is a great example of pushing the boundaries of environmental innovation and technology, improving efficiencies, while making our industry more environmentally friendly."

www.glennonbrothers.ie



'Viable' substitute for oak

US start-up company Fibonacci claims to have developed the "most eco-friendly lumber product on the planet". With the objective to address deforestation and cater for an increased need for quality lumber the new HempWood material aims to provide a viable substitute for solid oak.

The company claims that, in addition to being 20% stronger than oak, HempWood grows 100 times faster. Instead of waiting several decades for a tree to fully mature, hemp can be harvested and regrown in just six months.

HempWood is made from hemp fibres and soy-based adhesives which are processed into

a hardwood alternative via a patented method using bio-mimicry.

The \$6m Fibonacci factory, which opened in Murra, Kentucky, in spring 2019, recently started production of the material and is currently seeking further investment and distributors. It controls more than 40,000 acres of hemp.

Although the company claims that the raw material will be grown "sustainably", concerns might be raised about fertiliser use and the requirements for extensive farm land to grow hemp and the associate opportunity cost.

<https://hempwood.com>



Cairngorms Forests

A rich heritage of native timber production



by **Will Boyd-Wallis**

The Cairngorms National Park contains some of the finest, most extensive and well-connected native woodlands in Scotland. There is a long heritage of forest management across the National Park and it continues to be the perfect test-bed for combining commercial forestry with good environmental management.

The alluvial soils of the Cairngorms are perfect for growing a wide range of species, not least Scots pine and birch which have been recorded growing above

1000m above sea level. This means we have enormous potential for creating more pine and birch woodlands across the National Park. The swathes of trees that already cloak the lower slopes of our mountains are an inspiring reminder of the potential for more forest across the whole of Scotland.

Over the last two decades, a number of estates in the Park have significantly reduced deer pressure resulting in some spectacular woodland regeneration without any need for fencing. This has saved some of our most celebrated pine-woods from serious decline and is to be applauded. Alongside this, many grouse-moor managers have removed deer, limited sheep grazing and controlled mountain hare, with woodland regeneration arising

in unexpected places on the edge of the moors.

Stocking levels of natural regeneration can be very high (>5000 trees/ha); in some locations, if thinned appropriately, this creates potential for the production of a unique, high-quality timber resource. A number of forest managers across the Park are making good use of regeneration and continuous cover in existing forests as a means of combining good environmental management with commercial timber production.

Earlier this year, the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) launched a new Forest Strategy for the National Park. A key objective of the strategy is to promote the creation of new woodlands whilst demonstrating the potential for integra-



new forest over the next five years and provides guidance on how and where this could be done. The emphasis of the strategy is on native species because as a National Park we always want to produce the best quality habitat for wildlife alongside other forest management objectives. Non-native species are by no means ruled out for carefully planned productive forestry but ideally, we believe we can demonstrate the untapped commercial potential for more native timber use.

The reasons for more woodland creation in the Park are many, but the Scottish Government's declaration of a climate emergency has increased our resolve to ensure the land is put to best use for future generations. We cannot go on forever importing so much timber when we have the potential to produce so much more of our own. We cannot go on increasing the height of our flood defences when our hillsides could support a much more diverse and water absorbent wooded landscape. The need for sustainable, locally sourced resources, including timber, has never been greater than now and is only going to increase in the future.

With this urgency in mind there are now added incentives for woodland creation in the National Park. Scottish Forestry Grant Scheme applications within the target areas (shown in the Forest Strategy) may receive an additional 12.5% payment. On top of that... CNPA, with the help of Scottish Forestry, Woodland Trust Scotland and Scottish Natural Heritage have launched a 'Woodland Challenge Fund' to help with the costs of putting together grant applications. These incentives are predominantly aimed at increasing native forests which we believe, if managed well, will become increasingly marketable in the future.

Will Boyd-Wallis is head of land management for the Cairngorms National Park Authority.

tion of different land uses across the Park. The strategy seeks in its 100-year vision to see a 'forest culture' develop throughout the Park's communities. We want to see more people employed in forestry and benefiting from all the environmental, social and economic opportunities that more healthy and extensive forests provide.

The Forest Strategy stresses the need to produce 5000 hectares of

GET INVOLVED

The Woodland Challenge Fund is currently being run as a pilot. We are very keen to hear from any landowners in the National Park considering woodland creation who may appreciate the help (up to £3000) this fund can provide. For more information please contact our woodland advisor David Hetherington: davidhetherington@cairngorms.co.uk 01479 8705516.

Sustainability built in to the business plan

by **Nicholson Nurseries**

Unlike most civil infrastructure or commercial building projects, landscaping companies have the inherent potential to offset environmental costs of raw material manufacture and use with the beneficial aspect of well-considered habitat creation and management. Not only this, but with such a huge bias towards private contracts, it is also at our disposal to steer clients and projects in a more environmentally sustainable direction, without having the constraints of stringent public budgets and political agendas.

Responding to our passion for the environment, we have appointed a sustainability manager and set up an environmental committee which meets each quarter to discuss business-wide improvements, and we regularly evaluate our policies to ensure they comply to industry standards and regulations. We contacted 14 local commercial companies, as well as the Environmental Agency, BALI and APL to establish what others were doing to combat their effects on the environment. With only one response received from those contacted, we saw an opportunity to set our own benchmark for environmental sustainability.

Since then, we have been working towards launching our own, bespoke scheme which we have named the Ecology Rating Award (or E.R.A. for short). It is used to evaluate each of our projects against a carefully developed grading system, covering a range of elements affecting environmental impact including material management, planting considerations, wildlife, conservation and water management.

We have been trialling the new scheme for the past year and have already seen huge leaps in progress. We have updated it to include a more rigorous approach to hard surfaces (utilising the BREEAM Green Guide for material specification), amalgamating the different aspects of all departments into one concise checklist, and added a new award level, the Platinum Award. We are proud to already have nine new projects reaching this exceptionally high standard.

The environmental impact of our projects is a driving factor in our decision-making process. We hope that by leading the way in creating and trialling new ideas, others will see how easy it can be to follow suit. It is fundamental to the Nicholsons' philosophy that commercial gain never outweighs that which is truly important: the health of the natural world around us.

www.nicholsonsgb.com



Estate works on project to reduce flood risk

The Englefield Estate in Berkshire is working in partnership with the Pang Valley Flood Forum (PVFF) on a pilot project which aims to assess the benefits of using more natural methods to try to reduce flood risk.

A team from the estate, under the direction of the PVFF, has been constructing so-called leaky dams on the River Bourne – a tributary of the River Pang. The dams are designed to “slow the flow” of floodwater, which in turn reduces the risk of overbanking, and the likelihood of flooding further downstream.

The work, funded by Defra, has been undertaken by a team led by the Englefield Estate’s forestry manager Richard Edwards, on estate land south of Pangbourne.

Richard said: “The River Bourne is usually quite peaceful, wandering through the countryside until it reaches the River Pang. But it is in a narrow, deep channel, so in extreme weather the waters can flow very powerfully, potentially contributing to extensive flooding downstream.

“We know that people in Pangbourne were hit badly by flooding some years ago, so when we were approached by the Pang Valley Flood Forum, we were keen to help out.

“The Englefield Estate has been caring for the environment for gen-

erations, and we wanted to make sure the work was done in an environmentally friendly way.

“Their grant was awarded to help to increase the research knowledge of using Natural Flood Management (NFM) techniques rather than hard, concrete structures and this really appealed to us. We built leaky dams using locally felled trees which are placed in the river in such a way that the natural base flow of the river isn’t really affected.

“But in times of rising water levels and potential flooding, the dams will hold back the flow and slow it down so it is less destructive downstream.”

Richard added: “While work was getting under way it was interesting to see that the Environment Agency nationally was saying that climate change is increasing the threat of floods, and that we can’t win a war against water with ever-higher flood defences. Instead, we should be looking at a range of solutions, one of which is Natural Flood Management – which is exactly what we have been doing here.

“We hope that our work will be seen as a pioneering way of effectively reducing flood risk, protecting people, homes and infrastructure in a sustainable way using natural materials close to hand.”

www.inglefieldestate.co.uk/the-estate/forestry

L-R: Ricky Eaton and Jason Clark (B & R Eaton), Englefield Estate Forestry Manager Richard Edwards, Kay Lacey (PVFF), and Clive Loveridge (PVFF)



CONFOR WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

Davidson & Robertson, Cumbria
Focus on Forestry First Ltd, Powys

Forestry and Land Scotland, Midlothian

Greentec Uk, Yorkshire

Greentech Ltd, North Yorkshire

GTM Rural Enterprises Ltd, Cambridgeshire

KWR Plant Hire Ltd, Lincolnshire

Lime Circle, Nottinghamshire

Michael Ramage Forestry Ltd, Roxburghshire

Natural Resources Wales, Shropshire

NMC2, Wiltshire

Richard White & Co Ltd, Denbighshire

Simon Webb Forestry Services, Herefordshire

Steel Viper, Aberdeenshire

Aimee Tonks, Wiltshire

Alistair Walton, Cumbria

Catherine Pearson, Cumbria

David Delve, Somerset

David Warland, West Yorkshire

Edward Baxter, Fife

Gavin Russell, Renfrewshire

George McClelland

Heidi Stevenson, Staffordshire

Jemma Bargery, Devon

Joel Gray, Devon

Lachlan MacEwan, Perthshire

Lewis Webb, Warwickshire

Mark Steele, Cumbria

Martin Schrooder, Lincolnshire

Mat Box, Devon

Matthew Cobb, Nottinghamshire

Phillip Powles, Gloucestershire

Robert Stevenson, Staffordshire

Rosie Dutson, Cumbria

Simon G Stuart, Renfrewshire

Steve Warwood, Shropshire

Susie Drew, Hampshire

Thomas Dutson, Cumbria

A fund for our future?



by **Stuart Goodall**,
Confor chief executive

If you've read recent leaders I've written for FTN, you'll know that Confor has been exploring the potential for an Industry Fund. It's something many of our counterparts in other countries have introduced, and in this issue we feature what New Zealand has put in place (see *next page*). It's proven popular there, with, earlier this year, businesses/owners voting 89% in favour of continuing with it for another six years at least.

Introducing a fund or levy is no small task, and especially when contemplating a voluntary arrangement, it's vital to ensure that there is widespread and strong support before deciding to set anything up. Accordingly, I've been working with the Confor Board to ensure we follow a robust process and, before any final decisions are made, I'll be looking for their endorsement and a clear indication of that strong, widespread support from industry – at the moment my plan is that we would organise a vote, similar to that in New Zealand.

Before we get to that point, however, there are six key steps that have to be taken.

- 1 As a first step, Confor has undertaken research to define a potential mechanism for collecting and administering funds. This important work will underpin
- 2 the second step which is an initial discussion with members. The aim here is to get first feedback on the suggested mechanism and to learn what it is that people would like to know, and what questions they would like answered about a Fund before they would feel comfortable supporting it.

- 3 Based on the feedback we receive we will move to a third step of preparing a prospectus. This will set out in more detail how a fund would work, what activities it could support and the benefits that support should deliver for members and the wider industry. It will also seek to answer the questions that have been raised.

- 4 The plan is that the prospectus, to be approved by the Confor Board, will be the formal document that Confor uses for the fourth step of consulting in depth with members and wider industry. The prospectus will also be used to secure support and commitment to provide additional match funding from politicians and officials across the UK – a key element I believe of any successful Fund.

- 5 If feedback from the sector is positive, then the fifth step will be to prepare the formal business plan of an organisation to manage a UK fund. This will be put to the Confor Board for approval, and if that is secured, then

- 6 the final sixth step will be to hold a vote, on the basis of the business plan, where members and businesses across the industry can have their say.

At that time, Confor will also liaise with the businesses that would be expected to collect the funds to ensure that they, collectively, are prepared to undertake that role.

In the coming months, both colleagues and I will be speaking at various scheduled Confor events across the UK – committee and group meetings, etc.

I would encourage you to come along to these if you can and to give us your input and feedback so that any future Prospectus is as comprehensive as possible. Even if you can't make those meetings, the Prospectus will be made available for you to see clearly what is being proposed and for you to have your say.

I believe a Fund, if established properly, could make a major difference to helping our industry succeed in the future. However, it will only succeed if the benefits are clear and industry supports it. I look forward to that discussion and to getting your feedback.

stuartg@confor.org.uk



I believe a Fund ... could make a major difference to helping our industry succeed in the future

Investing in New Zealand's future

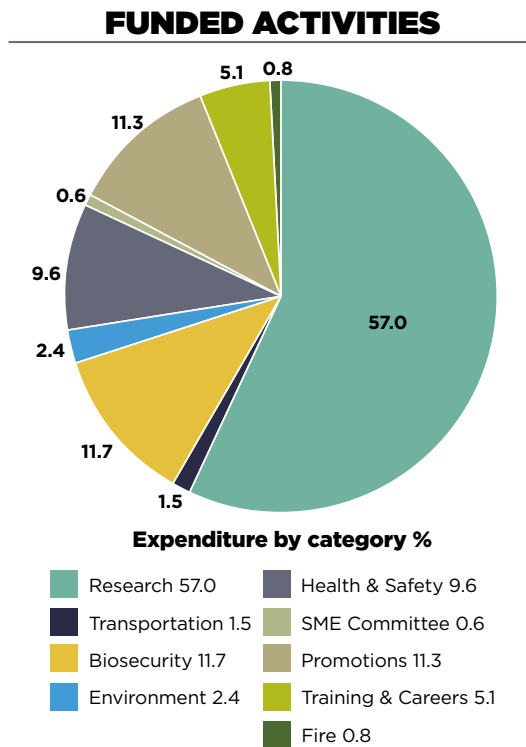
In 2013, New Zealand established a statutory levy to collect money from harvested timber with the purpose of “advancing the forestry industry both domestically and internationally”. In 2019, a referendum was held to measure industry support for the six-year old levy system – 89% voted in favour, representing 99% of the forest area.

The New Zealand levy is officially known as the *Harvested Wood Material Levy* and applies to all wood material harvested for commercial purposes. All forest owners who are harvesting for commercial gain will be liable to pay the levy.

There is only one flat levy of 27 cents per tonne applied regardless of species or owner.

Under the Commodity Levy Order the forest owner is solely responsible for paying the levy. Where the forest owner no longer owns the log or other product when it reaches the data collection agent, the owner of the product may pass the levy cost back down the purchasing chain to the forest owner.

The levy is collected from forest growers. It may be collected directly or indirectly. The two key collec-



tion points are either at a processing facility or at the wharf. Domestic processing facilities and marshalling companies act as data collection agents to provide information that forms the basis of invoicing. Data are supplied to Levy System Ltd on a monthly basis.

Governance

The Forest Growers Levy Trust is the ultimate governance body. The seven board members are drawn from a cross-section of the forest-growing industry, comprising four representatives of those owning forests over 1000ha and two for smaller forests. This composition reflects where the levy contribution comes from. These positions are voted on by levy payers within the respective categories, eg over 1000ha owners vote for their representatives only. There is also an independent chair. The board meets quarterly and has



the power to approve the annual work programme, the levy rate and any other key decisions.

FACTSHEET

Name: Forest Growers Levy Trust

Corporate structure: Incorporated Society (Inc)

Levy

- Collected from forest growers.
- 27 cents per tonne for the first year with the ability to strike a maximum levy rate over the six-year levy term of 30 cents per tonne.
- Levied: Logs, posts, poles, forest waste, binwood, hog fuel and woodchips produced in New Zealand sourced from a plantation forest.
- Not levied: Bark sold separately, Christmas trees or domestic firewood. Production from natural native forests.

BENEFITS FOR THE SECTOR

1. **Create funding** to facilitate a broad range of industry activities, particularly in research
2. **Co-funding.** The Levy raises approximately \$1 of external partnership funding for every industry \$ raised.
3. **Stability.** Its existence provides security of future funding which in turn facilitates more strategic long-term planning, particularly important for research.
4. **Credibility.** The government, in particular, is now more committed to a sector group that it recognises will fund its fair share.
5. **Industry commitment and morale.** Establishment of the Levy has strengthened co-operation and confidence in the future of the industry.



QA

with **David Rhodes**
Chief Executive of
New Zealand's Forest
Owners Association

What was the main driver for establishing the levy system?

The key driver for our levy was a change in the level of government support for all industries. A decline in the ratio level meant that the industry needed more funding, otherwise programmes would need to be downsized. Another factor was that it unified the growers and provided economies of scale and greater influence.

Has it been contentious?

100% buy-in from the outset is difficult to achieve. Concerns raised have included the balance of where the funding has been applied, the extent to which some people are benefitting but not paying because the levy is only collected every 30 years at harvest and whether wood processors should claim some of the levy.

Every six years, a referendum is held to determine whether there is majority support. To be successful, the referendum must have the support of 50% of voters by number and also 50% by volume. Thereafter, the Minister must also be satisfied that an adequate process has been run and any issues addressed.

The forest industry's first referendum was in 2014. We have just completed a second referendum for the six-year period 2020-2025. The results were 89% by number in favour and 99% by area. This is an increase on the 2014 figure which was 86% for both.

New Zealand's levy is underpinned by an Act - why not a voluntary scheme?

This is a very important element. The Commodity Levies Act in NZ recognised that with multiple small producers there is a significant challenge in achiev-

ing common buy-in for common good. Most primary producer groups in New Zealand utilise the Commodity Levies Act and have done for many years. Forestry is a late arrival. Some of the large forest companies were wary about ceding control of funding to a Levy body but with six years of experience now behind us the latest vote shows that there is now confidence in the system.

Prior to 2014, the Forest Owners Association operated a voluntary levy that was fully supported by the larger forest owners and undertook considerable pan-industry good, but it did not raise the level of funding that the current system does.

How is the use of funds determined?

Under our Commodity Levies Act the referendum material must prescribe what it is the levy will be directed toward and roughly in what proportion so that people can vote accordingly and give feedback. We have a series of broad categories that cover most activities and research has always been over 50% of what the levy has been spent on.

Priorities can change and the proportions in the various categories have varied year-on-year, but these adjustments have been at the margin. It would be difficult to eliminate spending completely on any of the referendum-agreed categories.

There is a series of checks in the system including project managers, subject matter committees (which all projects must go through) a secretariat that has general oversight and of course, the levy board which is a Trust established on behalf of the growers.

How do you communicate with contributors across the sector?

Since 2014, changes have been made in the representation of growers at Committee levels, the funding approval processes, and in the way we communicate with growers. This is a healthy evolution and further efficiencies and improvements are planned.

The Levy Trust operates in parallel with the two key voluntary forest grower associations in the country - the FOA (Forest Owners Association) which is the large corporates, and the FFA (Farm Forestry Association) which are typically smaller woodlot owners. These associations provide communication channels that provide reach to a lot of owners. However, there are thousands who are not members and whose prime business may be other than forestry. Communicating with them continues to be a challenge but we have developed a comprehensive database to try to address this. The website has also evolved and improved and is another key mechanism. Finally, when undertaking a referendum a significant effort is put into roadshows, webinars etc.

www.fglt.org.nz

People power

Harvesting an area of productive woodland on the Isle of Eigg is presenting both a challenge and an opportunity for this community-owned island. **Roland Stiven** reports

Eigg sits 10 miles off Scotland's West Coast - five by three miles across, it has a fascinating history, superb wildlife and a vibrant community. One of Scotland's first community buyouts and the first island buyout, Eigg has been owned and managed by the Isle of Eigg Heritage Trust since 1997.

Twenty-two years on, led by the community itself, Eigg has built solid foundations, undergone significant change and worked tirelessly to adapt and develop to meet the changing needs of a growing population which is currently sitting around 110.

Part of the Trust's role involves managing 247ha of forest land; a mixture of commercial plantation, mature policy woodland, native woodland and intervening open ground. The 70ha conifer plantation was created in the early 1980s by the then owner of the island, Keith Schellenberg, amidst a chaotic period of 'lairdship'. It has not been thinned or actively managed and is starting to blow over. A Scottish For-

estry approved Forest Plan includes a phased programme of harvesting to make sustainable use of the forest integrating it with other aspects of the island economy and diversifying and restructuring the woodland through restocking.

With no national grid connection, the island has been a pioneer in developing its own renewable electricity grid supplied by a mix of small-scale hydro, wind and photovoltaic panels. When it comes to heat energy, 85% of the community have solid fuel stoves which they rely on for heating their homes. With support from the Climate Challenge Fund, the Trust has developed a woodfuel enterprise to provide a reliable and quality supply of locally produced firewood to displace much of the coal and heating oil that otherwise has to be imported. Woodfuel sales have doubled over the past two years reaching domestic and business customers as well as supplying Eigg Primary School. The woodfuel enterprise has created two permanent jobs and the modest income from sales contributes to the activi-



ties of the Trust and is reinvested in the woodlands.

The Isle of Eigg Heritage Trust is also working on projects to expand their community and visitor centre An Laimhrig, and looking to build four new affordable homes for rent. Log stoves/boilers will be installed into each development, linking in with the woodfuel supply. Local timber will be incorporated into construction where practical.

The practical challenges of harvesting a spruce plantation in the middle of an island are considerable. The island has one 5km single-tracked road with few passing places. Normally only residents can bring cars onto the island; the 11,000 visitors per year come with bicycles or on foot. Pier access is from the south while Cleadale, the largest settlement, is situated to the north. The forest access is half-way between, just past the primary school.

The Highland Council, as Roads Authority for the island, in partnership with the Isle of Eigg Heritage Trust, has secured funding from Scottish Forestry's Strategic Timber



The practical challenges of harvesting a spruce plantation in the middle of an island are considerable



Transport Scheme to co-finance the much-needed road improvement works, widening corners, adding passing places and strengthening some stretches.

Road improvement on an island brings its own challenges; equipment and materials need brought in by boat and seasonal constraints and adverse weather conditions all contribute to higher costs than a mainland project. In awarding

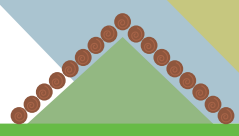
grant funding, Scottish Forestry has agreed to allow the detail of the works to be decided after an initial tranche of timber has come out. This will ensure that the money is spent to greatest advantage and directed to where needed on the weakest sections of the road.

Vice Convener of The Highland Council, Councillor Allan Henderson, welcomed the partnership of the island community Trust, Scot-

tish Forestry and the Council working together in this manner. "We care deeply about our remote island communities and this project shows how we can all get together to work for a good outcome: improving the fragile public road, encouraging sustainable forestry and promoting green energy; all at the same time"

The cost of bringing a harvester to the island requires a minimum harvest beyond the immediate woodfuel needs of the community. This first phase will harvest around 3300 tonnes, exporting 75% to the mainland with the remainder providing the community with 3-5 years of firewood supply and local building materials. In total there is around 20,000 tonnes to be harvested from this rotation over two decades.

The Isle of Eigg Heritage Trust has brought together an experienced and bespoke team. The Community Woodlands Association has provided advice and support helping to secure the formal permissions required from Highland Council (as Roads and Pier Authorities). Ian
Continued on p57



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Continued from p55

Shaw (Glencoe Timber Ltd) waited patiently until the project was ready, bringing his harvester and forwarder to Eigg on the local freight vessel, the Spanish John II. The two machines were driven across Galmisdale Bay at low tide to reach the forest and were quickly put to work. Knoydart Forest Trust is transporting the timber down the road with their bespoke tractor-trailer. Their experience of harvesting remote community forests means they understand the sensitivities of fragile infrastructure and community working. This is their first 'overseas project,' and offers an exciting opportunity to put money into another local community economy.

The Troon Tug Co has provided a sea transport solution where no one else could. The Red Princess, a 750 tonne landing craft, is able to interface with the Council slipway in just the same way as the local ferry service allowing a smooth, swift and safe loading process.

Glennon Brothers were the final, but perhaps most significant part of the chain, purchasing the timber for processing at their sawmill in Troon. Without export and sale, the harvest could not have been financed. The first loads have already been taken to the mill.

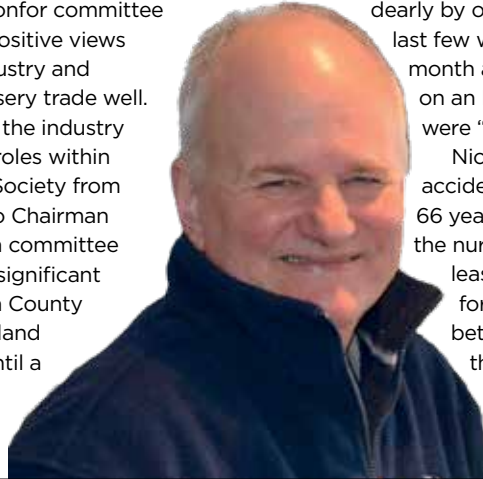
As for restocking, the community has established its own tree nursery. Seed collected on-island and registered with Scottish Forestry is being grown in a polytunnel and outside beds. The expectation is that the community will be able to restock and restructure the woodlands with home-grown trees helping to protect the island's biosecurity. Restructuring provides opportunities for improved access, new spaces for play and exercise and will help to build on Eigg's community outdoor spaces – encouraging and promoting overall wellbeing. The restocking aims to establish cycles of smaller scale felling and restocking to sustain the woodfuel enterprise in the long-term.

This challenging timber harvesting project is modest in commercial terms, but it highlights just what can be achieved by a small community co-ordinating the efforts of a highly experienced team, where each organisation involved is willing to support a venture doing things a little differently.

OBITUARY Nick Davey

Many members throughout southern England had been supplied with planting stock by Perrie Hale Forest Nursery which was owned and managed by Nick and Judy Davey. Originally started by Judy's father in 1957, Nick and Judy took over in the mid 1970's and now being managed by Ollie and Faye Davey.

Nick was "one of the good guys" and was always positive and supportive of the forest industry. As a SW Confor committee member, Nick had positive views about the forest industry and represented the nursery trade well. He also represented the industry with many regional roles within The Royal Forestry Society from Secretary through to Chairman and was a long-term committee member. He played significant roles with the Devon County Show as DCS Woodland Section Chairman until a couple of years ago, and as a steward for years. He was a



constant woodland judge for the DCS annual woodland competition.

With the support of Judy and his family, Nick was a large influence throughout the Southwest with many people asking for and receiving salient woodland advice from planting through to silviculture. His zest for woodlands and trees is legendary and with his generous, friendly nature, Nick will be missed dearly by our community. Among Nicks last few words to me, just over a month ago, after we spent the day on an RFS Field Trip in Cornwall, were "Life is good".

Nick died as the result of an accident on 3 of July 2019, aged 66 years. His recent retirement from the nursery was the start of a new lease of life and he was looking forward to a new chapter living between Portugal and Devon that has been sadly denied.

Our best wishes go to Judy and family.

Bryan Elliott

LETTER We need funding across the whole sector

Dear Editor, I read the reference to the need for training across the forestry industry in *Forestry and Timber News* for August (p6-8) with interest. You asked for thoughts on what needs to be done.

Can I suggest that the fundamental need is for funding across the whole sector? Training today is expensive and the smaller employers cannot afford to take on and train young people just to see them move on to other employment when they have the necessary skills.

What is needed is a training levy across the whole industry whereby every forestry employer contributes to a fund and those large enough to train new entrants and forestry colleges doing so, are funded, of at least part funded through it.

This of course is going back to the Industrial Training Act of 1964 through which forestry training was funded in this way but very short shortsightedly, forestry was taken



out of scope when agriculture refused to pay up. Such a scheme exists in many industries. Why not in forestry? *Esmond Harris FIC For*

GET INVOLVED

What are your views on an industry contribution scheme to fund key activities that will futureproof our industry, such as training provision to secure our future workforce? Share your views with stuartg@confor.org.uk



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QA
&

Ben Gunneberg CEO of PEFC

Twenty years ago, small-forest owners came together to create an international forest certification system that had their needs at heart. On 30 June 1999, PEFC was born. Today, PEFC continues to care for forests globally and locally. Ben Gunneberg, PEFC International CEO, shares with us his vision of forest certification, past, present and future.

The original aim of certification was to tackle deforestation primarily in developing countries. However, in general, the uptake of certification has been highest in Europe and North America. Do you think we need to adjust this balance and how?

The original aim of forest certification was to address increasing consumer demand for sustainably produced wood products. It was established to reward best management practices and provide a mechanism

for forest owners to demonstrate their sustainable forest management, allowing consumers to make a positive choice for products coming from such forests.

The forestry sector had to create clear blue water between good forestry and bad landuse practices which resulted in forests being converted to other uses such as palm oil and beef production. That said, certification was a constructive, positive and welcome alternative to the crude tools, such as blanket bans on certain types of wood, prevalent in the 1980s.

The fact that the uptake was initially highest in North America and Europe is because this was where the more sensitive markets were, many of the forests were already sustainably managed and many of the challenges of sustainable forest management had been resolved. This is also where we managed, as a movement, to get

acceptance for multi-stakeholder processes resulting in the PEFC endorsed UKWAS scheme.

The balance is gradually equalising, with increasing numbers of national forest certification systems developed in Asia, Africa and South America. In Asia Pacific alone, there are over 40 million hectares of certified forests, many of which are more productive than the European forests we are more familiar with.

Certification is heavily focussed on the forest management process; do you think we need to focus more on the outputs of forest management? How can we do that?

To get the desired outputs of sustainable forest management, you need to ensure certain best practice processes are in place. The real challenge nowadays is to ensure

continued on page 61

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continued from page 59

a joined-up approach to the sustainable management of whole landscapes.

We already recognised this philosophy by enabling small family forest owners, with an average of two hectares, to be included in jurisdictional and landscape-level forest certification. We now need to join this up with other land uses. With the development of certification for trees outside forests, we enabled potentially over 500 million people responsible for trees - but not forests - to get involved. The first standards are being developed in India and Italy, ensuring these farmers and smallholders can join the sustainable tree management movement.

Thinking about forest owners/managers and wider stakeholders - how can we improve the value of forest management certification?

Forest certification is like an iceberg - most people only see part above the water (market access etc). The real value of forest certification is the power it has to convene stakeholders from all walks of life. Enabling them to work together, build trust and confidence and tackle collective challenges from the grassroots upwards.

The value of certification can further be improved by the whole forest value chain taking pride in its crucial work in tackling some of society's greatest challenges. This is not a 'false pride' I'm advocating, rather one based on independent third-party verification of best practices, not only in the forests but along the chain of custody all the way to the consumer.

Chain of Custody certification seems to confuse lots of people, do you think that we can make it simpler and maintain credibility and improve transparency in the supply chains?

This is why we have been revising our Chain of Custody standard with the advice and guidance of practitioners and experts throughout the value chain. The trick is to get the optimal balance between simplicity and robustness, without sacrificing credibility. Technology has evolved to offer new pathways to simplify the certification processes, such as remote sensing. Logo generator tools make compliance with the requirements easier, whilst at the same time reducing the risk of trademark misuse.

In the UK, certification has been widely adopted by larger forest owners and management companies but seems to be unattractive to smaller forest owners. In much of Europe, PEFC works closely with Forest Owners Associations; do you think that



The forestry sector had to create clear blue water between good forestry and bad landuse practices



there are opportunities to do that here in the UK?

Yes, having worked for the Timber Growers Association, this is an issue that continues to bother me. There are new approaches to regional certification that could make it possible for many more forest owners to become part of group certification. I could envisage all owners on the existing Forestry Agency databases being eligible to join a group, under certain circumstances. It would require overcoming some obstacles, but I believe, with the willingness by all parties, there are processes that could be adapted and used in the UK. I'm not saying it's easy and there may be opposition, but yes, I believe it can be done.

How can we improve auditing (Forest management & Chain of Custody) to make the process more efficient, more meaningful, and even more cost-effective?

An important aspect of our strategy is exploring technology innovations that have the potential to simplify certification and management processes. There are already plenty of tools and approaches available that certification users can creatively adapt to make auditing more efficient, meaningful and cost-effective, such as satellite data and geospatial information. Improving the information flows and avoiding data entry duplication will also make processes more efficient. One example is using mobile apps to support on-site audits.

Nearly all the woodlands certified in the UK, are certified to both FSC and PEFC. How can we increase the value of this 'dual certification'?

By encouraging all retailers and procurement processes to be inclusive and recognise the value that both PEFC and FSC bring to society. Currently, 40% of FSC-certified forest is also certified to PEFC. This is the result of some retailers perpetuating the myth that one system is better than another and insisting on supplies from just one. In reality, both certification systems have consistently and independently been proven to be robust and credible. The choice of the best way for delivering credible certification must be left to owners and managers, and not be dictated by those furthest away from the forest. This would allow money invested in dual certification to be diverted into the certification of more forests.

Where do you see certification and PEFC in 2039 - What innovations do you hope will have taken place?

By 2039, certification will be the norm. Society will value the full environmental, economic and social contributions that forests and forest-based products bring to a sustainable world. The real value of forest certification, including the consensus-based dialogue approach to tackling bottom-up challenges of society, will have been adopted widely, with many positive outcomes:

- The Sustainable Developments Goals have been delivered by the forestry sector and the sector has been recognised for its contributions in this respect.
- Landscape approaches and integrated multipurpose land management are the norm. The jurisdictional approach to certification of several soft commodities including forests and agricultural products, as well as other benefits such as carbon credits and water quality, means a more coordinated approach to landscape management.
- PEFC, as a sustainable development organisation with local and global multi-sectorial and multi-stakeholder convening power, is a supplier of information and partner of choice in tackling society's challenges. PEFC and other likeminded organisations are increasingly sought out for the bespoke testing of innovative solutions and cost effective implementation of mutually beneficial solutions.
- Forestry-based products from sustainably managed forests are considered by society as the undisputable climate friendly materials of choice, thanks to the efforts of a confident, responsible forestry sector value chain, that made use of all the benefits of certification to regain their place and respect as guardians of society's spiritual home - forests.

Famed for its steel production, Wales may not seem the likeliest place to build its homes from timber. But the land of the dragons is overhauling its housing policies and timber plays a pivotal role.



Putting timber and forestry at the heart of housing policy

Wales hasn't always been the king of steel. 200 years ago, locally-grown larch was the building material of choice. In 2018 the country harvested 1.6 million m³ of timber. The majority of the harvested logs could be graded for construction.

Recognising the climate crisis and the role of the built environment the country is keen to bring housing, timber manufacturing and forestry together into a value-creating ecosystem to provide the commercial environment necessary for investment in the supply chain.

Investing in timber

The Welsh way to tackle the housing crisis

Supporting local manufacturers and suppliers Welsh government is pushing for a change in policy that will increase forestation (approx 4000ha per year until 2050) to sequester carbon and increase timber for use in construction. The aim is to create high-performance and affordable new timber homes while supporting local manufacturers and suppliers.

Woodknowledge Wales along with Coed Cymru, Cardiff Metropolitan University and BM TRADA, established the [Home-Grown Homes](#) project "to create high-performance and affordable new homes from wood in a man-

ner that maximises the opportunity for local manufacturers and home-grown timber."

As part of the Home-Grown Homes partnership, Powys County Council has adopted a [Wood Encouragement Policy](#). The policy sets out that all new council housing projects will look to use wood as the preferred material for both construction and fit-out purposes. The first projects based on the policy are underway, including the [first affordable social housing development](#) for 30 years in Newtown. On completion, the three-storey building will contain 26 one-bedroom flats, constructed using Welsh-grown timber for part of the primary structure and also for windows and doors.

Modern methods of construction

The Welsh Government's £90m [Innovative Housing Programme \(IHP\)](#) recognises using timber combined with new and emerging forms of construction helps to deliver homes faster. Using home-grown timber also means Wales could exceed the objectives it laid out in its report '[Prosperity for All: A Low Carbon Wales](#)', released earlier this year, a topic also addressed in a Government-commissioned report by Woodknowledge Wales: '[Zero Carbon Homes](#)'.

As a result, one in three homes in Wales are now built from timber frame and more than 3250 panelised timber frame homes were manufactured in Wales in 2018. Welsh-manufactured timber frame for social housing grew from 445 units in 2016 to 752 in 2018, an increase of 69%. In addition to timber frame, cross-laminated timber (CLT) is now gaining momentum in homes across Wales.

Timber frame's popularity is due in part to its ability to meet Passivhaus levels of performance. And this approach to housing hasn't been missed by Wales' education sector. Burry Port Community Primary School in Carmarthenshire pays homage to the wonders that Welsh building materials can bring. Constructed from Welsh-grown larch, Douglas Fir and Sitka spruce, the school was the first Passivhaus school building in Wales. This has created a beautiful and sustainable environment for children to learn and play in.

Welsh timber: the perfect choice for high-end construction

The range of suitable softwood species in Wales places the country as one of the most favourable environments in Europe, according to foresters. This includes growing conifers such as Sitka spruce, Douglas fir and other minor species. Welsh grown Sitka spruce is already strength graded to C16 and with new grading technology, mixed strength grades of C16 and C24 would be possible in Wales. Douglas fir and larch grown in Wales can already be visually strength graded to C24. Essentially, Welsh timber has great potential for use in high-end construction.

Recognising the great build quality that can be achieved using Welsh timber, architects and builders are increasingly specifying it for interior and exterior joinery, wood fibre insulation and external timber cladding.

Becoming a high-value forest nation

Brokering a national dialogue on the forest economy as



Burry Port. Photo credit: Architype

one of the pillars a future low carbon society, Wales' annual WoodBUILD conference 2019 brought together enthused stakeholders including policy makers, members of the forestry industry, suppliers and manufacturers, joiners, academics, housing professionals and industry bodies to discuss the country's potential of 'Becoming a high-value forest nation'.

With such collaboration and goodwill, Wales is ideally placed to create the much-needed sustainable and efficient homes it needs for future generations as well as the forests that will provide the building material.

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All links in blue are available online. Case studies for Larch house, Burry Port and Ty Newidiadau www.confor.org.uk/ftnweb



Larch House. Photo credit: G. Pargeter

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More bark please...

David Sulman discusses the case for recovering more bark from UK harvesting operations.

When people think of forest products, many may not think of bark as a significant product in its own right. The processing of bark represents a major and integral part of the UK wood supply chain, with more than one million tonnes of bark processed in the UK every year.

It is perhaps all too easy to take this remarkable material for granted, but we should think again; bark products meet the needs of a wide range of markets, including mulches, growing media, play surfaces, soil improvers and equestrian surfaces, to name but a few. With the drive to reduce the use of peat in horticulture, there is growing awareness that bark offer a sustainable alternative. Independent certification and endorsement of some bark products is also available.

Bark not only provides a vital function for the growing tree, but also provides a very versatile product after felling and processing. Demand for bark in the UK is outstripping the domestic supply, with the consequence that there is a reliance on imports to meet demand.

What's wrong with that you may ask? One particularly timely response is that continued bark imports pose an increased risk of the entry of tree pests and diseases, despite plant health controls. Is all imported woody material appropriately controlled, let alone inspected? Is reliance on documentary evidence, (plant passports etc), a realistic or robust defence?

At a time when there is increasing focus and concern about tree pests and diseases, there is growing concern that bark imports could provide an unwelcome pathway for the introduction of harmful insects and dis-

eases into the UK.

Looking at becoming increasingly self-sufficient, many believe that there is real potential to increase bark supply from our current operations in the UK; so what could be done?

Maximising bark recovery from UK timber harvesting operations

We should start by considering what can be done during harvesting; for example, by encouraging harvester operators and contractors to adapt their practice to minimise bark loss during mechanised harvesting. Keeping more bark on the log, as well as reducing log damage, has other benefits, including limiting drying out and improving recovery in the sawmill.

Improved harvesting practice could include reducing the number of passes through the harvester head, more appropriate feed roller pressures, ensuring knives are well maintained, (preferably with a negative angle), and the use of less aggressive feed rollers, which although more expensive than 'standard' feed rollers, those with rubber elements can also help reduce wear and tear on the head, because of the shock absorbing effect. It is also acknowledged that seasonal effects can impact on bark loss during harvesting.

Graham Andrews, a director of TMA Bark, one of the UK's largest



“

I believe that there is a compelling case for maximising bark recovery from UK timber harvesting operations

bark processors, said “I fully support the initiative to recover more bark from UK harvesting operations. Demand for bark is increasing and encouragingly, customers are becoming better informed about bark quality matters. In addition, there are growth opportunities in the market, so now is the time to think seriously about what we can do”.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that bark loss during harvesting may be more severe in the southern half of the country.

There's also a commercial benefit, as better bark fetches better prices and if we can produce more bark in the UK, we can reduce our reliance on bark imports, so it could be a win-win. We need more UK-produced bark - now's the time to give this serious consideration

David Sulman of Confor said, “I believe that there is a compelling case for maximising bark recovery from UK timber harvesting operations and hope that increased volumes can be recovered. I would welcome readers' thoughts on this matter. There is undoubtedly an opportunity to make a difference, which has the potential to benefit us all”.

David Sulman is deputy chief executive of Confor.

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Direct seeding - a viable technique for the restoration of upland native woodland

by **Dr Ian Willoughby**

Direct seeding is an ancient silvicultural technique that has largely fallen out of fashion in the UK because it is often less reliable, and technically more challenging, than conventional planting. However, research has shown that it can be a viable option for the creation of new broadleaved woodlands on better quality farmland in the lowlands, where it has the potential to be cheaper, require fewer herbicides, and result in a more naturalistic appearance, with denser spaced trees of better form for timber production (Willoughby et al., 2004).

Recently, some woodland managers have also become interested in exploring the potential for using direct seeding instead of planting to establish species such as birch (*Betula pendula* Roth; *Betula pubescens* Ehrh.), rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia* L.) and alder (*Alnus glutinosa* (L.) Gaertn.) in upland forests, for example as a reduced cost option for converting parts of uneconomic conifer plantations back to native tree cover.

Often, pioneer species like birch will regenerate naturally after clear-felling, but where this fails to happen attempts to create a woodland cover on the cheap by ad hoc direct seeding - simply sprinkling an unknown



Top: Established native woodland cover of birch, rowan and alder, 7 years after cultivation and sowing. Above: An uncultivated, unsown plot on left with few if any seedlings, next to a cultivated sown plot on right, with the plot boundary running through the approximate centre of the picture.

quantity of seed onto a site and hoping for the best - are usually doomed to failure. This is because there are two basic requirements for successful regeneration from seed for any tree species - an adequate supply of viable seed dispersing onto a site, and suitable microsites that favour seed survival and seedling establishment.

For birch, where natural regeneration is successful, established trees will typically have produced a seed rain of 3 - 530 million filled seeds per hectare, and as seed can cost around £200 per million to buy from a merchant, trying to mimic nature's deluge by artificial sowing quickly starts to become unviable. For direct seeding to be successful at lower seeding rates, some site preparation and management is likely to be needed.

In 2008, Forest Research therefore set up a large replicated experiment in a clearfelled Sitka spruce forest at Slattadale, 30 km southwest of Ullapool in Scotland. The aim was to explore how different silvicultural techniques might help to improve the reliability of direct seeding for the conversion of parts of upland conifer plantations to native tree cover.

We found that after seven years, an equivalent of 9000-12,000 seedlings per hectare, depending on the

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Above: An area within the fenced enclosure, but outside the experimental plots, at Slattadale, September 2015. This part of the site had received no weed control, cultivation or sowing, and 13 years after the previous crop had been felled very few if any seedlings had established naturally.



Right: Establishing native woodland at Slattadale in September 2016, comprising 3-year-old Scots pine and oak, planted within a matrix of 5-year-old direct sown birch, rowan and alder, after a tracked excavator was used to drain, brash rake, scarify and mound the site as part of a single site preparation operation.

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initial sowing rate used, comprising a mixture of birch, rowan and alder, had established in the cultivated treatments. Cultivation was beneficial, but seed pre-treatment and sowing date had less impact on seedling numbers. Very few seedlings occurred naturally in the un-sown control plots.

Our work suggests direct seeding may be a viable technique for converting some less fertile, freely drained, upland restock sites to a woodland consisting of birch, alder and rowan, but only if an appropriate silvicultural regime is put in place. Sowing can be combined, on the same restock site, with enrichment planting of other native species with more expensive seed such as indigenous Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris* L.), oak (*Quercus petraea* Matt. (Liebl.); *Quercus robur* L.) and juniper (*Juniper communis* L.). This may also increase resilience to extreme climatic events in the first year after seeding, and in the first two cases, increase the potential for long-term timber revenue to offset future management costs.

Dr Ian Willoughby is programme manager and silviculturist, Forest Research

Important elements of a successful silvicultural regime are likely to include:

- 1 Site selection** – avoid fertile sites where weed growth is likely to be profuse, or sites subject to winter waterlogging that cannot be effectively drained, or other sites normally considered unsuitable for birch growth. Upland sites with a northerly aspect, and that have recently been clearfelled and are therefore free of competing vegetation, have the most potential for success.
- 2 Species and sowing rates** – use a mix of species, with a minimum of two million viable birch seed/ha, 110,000 viable rowan seed/ha, 40,000 viable alder seed/ha. Where oak, indigenous Scots pine or juniper are required as part of the stand do not seed them, but instead plant them on raised mounds immediately before sowing the intervening matrix with birch, rowan and alder.
- 3 Sowing date** – sow from the middle of October to the middle of January. Broadcast sow by hand across the entire site, onto prepared seedbeds, rather than into discrete spots.
- 4 Seed pre-treatment** – buy seed with a known viability from a reputable seed merchant, or if self-collecting, test seed for germination percentage before sowing. For birch and alder, dry, untreated seed is suitable, but for rowan, always use seed that has been suitably pre-treated by the seed merchant to break dormancy.
- 5 Cultivation** – create a well-drained mineral soil seedbed, free of weeds and brash, in the September before sowing. In the areas to be sown, which might be as little as 50% of the total restock site if the aim is to create only a native woodland habitat, scarify as extensively as possible across contiguous blocks, rather than in small or discrete spots. On wetter sites, create or re-impose a suitable drainage system first, then use an excavator to remove brash, screef the entire site, and, in addition, create raised mounds.
- 6 Protection** – control all browsing mammals or fence the sown area.
- 7 Weed control** – monitor the site for weeds and control if necessary.

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Link to full scientific paper Full details of this research are freely available in the scientific paper (Willoughby et al., 2019)

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Soil Association encourages integrated land use

Agroforestry is a concept is often dismissed by both foresters and farmers in the UK as “irrelevant in this country” and seen as nice solution for poverty alleviation in the Global South.

However, agroforestry not only for subsistence farmers - it is a broad approach to integrated land use that can is very much in line with the zeitgeist of blurring the imaginary boundaries between farming and forestry.

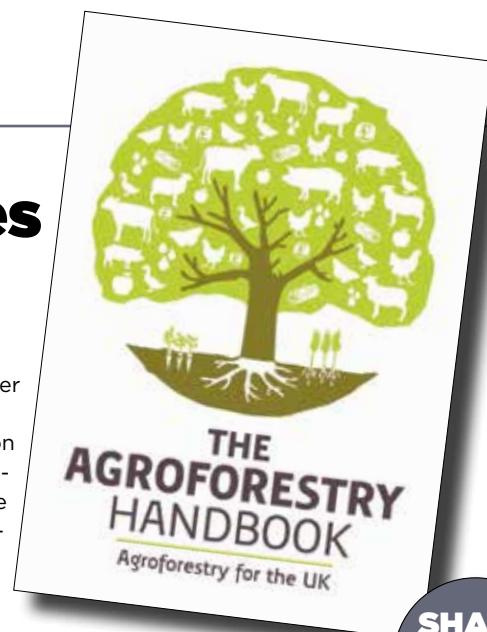
Agroforestry can be adapted to the circumstances and needs of the UK farming and forestry sector, and contribute to a more integrated land use strategy. In simple terms agroforestry means farming with trees. There are three main types of agroforestry, these are known as:

- Silvopastoral Agroforestry - the combination of trees and livestock
- Silvoarable Agroforestry - the combination of trees and crops
- The use of hedge-

rows, shelterbelts and riparian buffer strips.

This summer, the Soil Association launched 'The Agroforestry Handbook', written for farmers and land use advisors. The publication is nicely presented and structured as a reference guide including easy-to-read information on Types of agroforestry, practical advice on system design, the economic case for agroforestry and market opportunities. The handbook includes very useful infographics, photographs and case studies to will help readers assess the potential business benefits of agroforestry for their farm or woodland and to understand the possible benefits to the wider environment.

In FTN October, we will talk about experimental land use - including some first attempts to look at agroforestry - at Dartington Hall in Devon.



SHARE YOUR STORY

Have you experimented with agroforestry on your land? Do you think it can work in the UK? Contact the editor to tell your story. Stefanie.kaiser@confor.org.uk

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Top picks from Forestry Expo



by **Douglas Wheeler**

ForestryExpo was held over two days at Elvanfoot South Lanarkshire this August. The event showcased the latest machinery and equipment available in the industry today, split into two sections: a static trade showground and a live demo area where harvesting equipment could be seen in action from only a few meters distance. I have selected a few brands and pieces of equipment that caught my attention.

Oakleaf Forestry

Oakleaf forestry showed off a variety of machines including Vimek and Hypro but what caught most people's eyes were the two Sampo Rosenlew machines. Making its UK show debut, the FR28 forwarder and the HR46 harvester are breaking into the market as small, yet productive, early thinning machines. The FR28 is a 10-tonne capacity forwarder which directly competes with the larger manufacturers and has received high praise from the operators who have had the chance to drive it. It is powered by an Agco engine delivering 124kW and 700Nm of torque, it also comes with the option of either a 7.2, 8.5 and 10.2m Mesera crane

with internal hosing optimised for thinning. It weighs 13,000kg unloaded and is only 2.7m wide with 710 tyres which make it ideal for first thinning operations. I personally believe it to be the right machine for the job as UK forestry steers more towards silvicultural thinning.

Ponsse UK

Ponsse UK brought a wide variety of machines to the show, everything from small thinning machinery like the Fox and Gazelle to the larger clearfell machines like the Scorpion king and Elephant. However, what I found most interesting to see was the new machines to there already wide line-up, such as the Cobra har-

vester or Bison forwarder. The Cobra should be a good fit for contractors and landowners due to its versatility and size as a thinning and clearfell machine, with the option of the H5, H6 and H7 harvesting heads. With eight wheels boasting high-tractive force and low-ground pressure, it provides a good all-round base for UK forestry sites. The stability achieved by its eight wheels and the stabilising rams in the centre joint make it comfortable and productive to drive. The Bison comes into the market as a 16-ton forwarder which has been dubbed 'the fastest forwarder in the world' due to its new stepless gear ratio change which

Continued on p73

Above: Oakleaf demonstrated two Sampo Rosenlew machines - the FR28 forwarder and the HR46 harvester

Below: Ponsse brought a wide variety of machines





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CHOICE**

Continued from p71

no other forwarder in production is equipped with, Meaning the engine rpm stays constant with no need to stop to change ratio, therefore improving an already good fuel consumption of the Mercedes Engine.

Treetop Forestry

Treetop forestry are the UK dealers for Tigercat forest machinery and Logmax harvesting heads, they pulled out the stops at the Expo to show off a wide variety of tracked harvesters, a couple forwarders and - unusual to Scotland - a grapple skidder. What I believe to be the highlight of the show was SSE's live line harvester; with a Tigercat LH845D as the base, the machine was equipped with a feller buncher boom and Logmax 7000Xt fixed head enabling the machine to grab a tree and lift up the whole stem and manipulate it to do whatever the operator wants. SSE now operate three of these machines across Scotland and save millions in not having to shut the line down while harvesting alongside, without having to compromise on safety. Also it was great to see a grapple skidder in action, having not seen one before i was surprised by the power and size of load the 615E could pull and was definitely another highlight of the show.

Komatsu Forest UK

Komatsu made their UK debut of Komatsu 2020 with a static 931xc, 2020 is the next generation of forest harvesting machinery. From the outside, the harvester doesn't look much different, a few changes to the



SSE's live line harvester was Douglas Wheeler's show highlight of the show

step there is not much changed. But when you take a look inside the improvements become more apparent, The switch panel at the side has been replaced by a CANBUS switch panel and the large steering wheeler with a lot of operators found obstructive has been replaced by a mini wheel on the side console. Even more improvements have been made to the software, Maxiexplorer, Maxifleet and Maxivision have seen great improvements for the machines and operators to work at maximum productivity and minimise downtime.



Right: Expo marked the UK debut for Komatsu's 2020



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Load security

by **Roland Stiven**,
Timber Transport Forum

How best to safely secure a load of logs onto a timber lorry is a subject that requires repeated reiteration. As the amount of timber we harvest increases, more companies and drivers become involved in transporting timber. Lorry configurations and trailer construction are always being updated and the log sizes we transport can change over time. The consequences of a poorly secured load, where logs fall from lorries, could easily result in multiple fatalities.

The Department for Transport Code of Practice Safety of loads on vehicles from 2002 remains current but has been supplemented by online DVSA guidance on securing loads (2018). This in turn refers to the Timber Transport Forum's Road Haulage of Round Timber Code of Practice (4th Edition) which has three pages on securing logs with multiple bullet points covering various scenarios.

Ultimately, it is the driver of the lorry that is responsible for the safety of the load and both the Forum and the Forest Industry Safety Accord's Haulage Working

Group were keen that drivers have clear illustrations of typical minimum strapping requirements for common roundwood loads.

The new illustrations were launched at the Forestry Expo in August. Everyone in the supply chain can help promote safe strapping of timber lorries and call out those who are cutting corners with safety. Posters are being sent to processor weighbridges along with leaflets to hand out to all drivers.

Strapping timber lorries takes time and attention at the best of times but is made much more difficult and riskier where the driver has to fix straps on a narrow forest road, standing on the edge of a slippery muddy ditch in the cold and rain at twilight. It is for the forest manager to ensure that there are suitable areas for lorries to load and strap safely. Similarly, the processors have a responsibility to provide a safe area for unstrapping loads in the busy mill environment.

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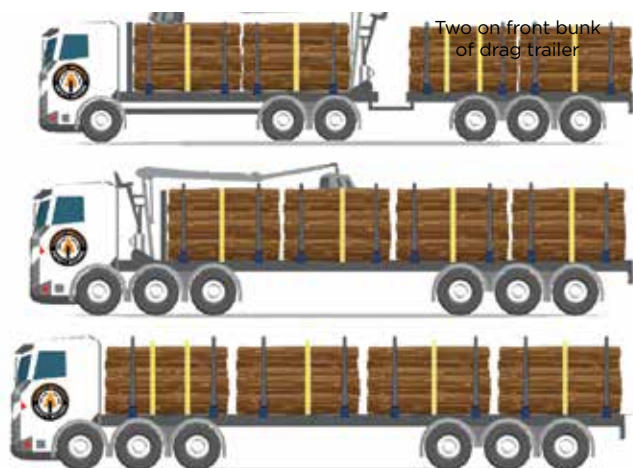
The Timber Transport Forum holds information on the forecast volumes of timber expected to come onto the public road at around 2500 sites across Scotland. North Yorkshire County Council holds similar data for their area.

The Scottish data is currently being refreshed and forest managers will be receiving requests for information from a group of consultants calling themselves the Scotland Timber Traffic Survey Syndicate. This is a major exercise and depends entirely on the voluntary contributions from forest managers so please do respond promptly.

The data is amalgamated and anonymised, but it is of great value to the sector. The timber transport groups use it to highlight where the road infrastructure is likely to constrain timber flows. It helps to engage and inform council roads authorities and to support bids to the Scottish Government's Strategic Timber Transport Scheme which, as of spring 2019, has contributed a total of £40m to road improvement projects worth double that amount.

More information on the Scotland Timber Traffic Survey can be found on the news section of the Forum website.
www.timbertransportforum.com

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Country style

Eamonn Wall drives Volvo's V60 Cross Country

Volvo estates have always been popular vehicles among country folk who always seem to be moving stuff about. The V70 Cross Country was one of the first 4WD estate cars on the market and always compared favourably and popularly with similar cars from Subaru and Audi.

A few years ago, the V70 was replaced with the larger V90 estate, and last year by the smaller V60 estate. Here we now test drive the V60 Cross Country, not to be confused with its larger SUV brothers, the XC60 or XC90. The V60 morphs into the Cross Country version with the aid of 4WD, extra ground clearance, plastic cladding around the wheel arches and different rear bumper. In fact, it has 210mm of ground clearance compared to the low 140mm of the standard model, which does seem on the low side when you see one for real.

Prices for the V60 Cross Country are £40,435 for the 2-litre 187bhp diesel and £39,935 for the 2-litre 250bhp petrol version tested here. Both versions are only available with eight-speed autobox, and as such make for an expensive vehicle, when a 2WD model can be had for £34,315. However, with sundry added extras, the retail price of this car is £46,510. The Bowers & Wilkins stereo adds

£2500, dark tinted windows £300, CD player £100, metallic paint £675 and rather annoyingly the full size spare wheel £150.

In our hands, the T5 petrol averaged 30mpg whilst you would get 40mpg in the diesel. The petrol engine is quiet and provides plenty of power accelerating from 0-62mph in a fast 6.4 seconds, with a claimed top speed of 140mph. The car weighs 1745kg, tows 1800kg for a braked trailer and has a 60-litre fuel tank.

To justify the price, the car does come well specified including heated leather seats, hill-start assist, cruise control with speed limiter, rear parking sensors, power-operated tailgate, LED headlights, sat nav and voice activated control system. Being a Volvo, it is awash with safety features, one being run-off road protection. This automatically tightens the front seat belts should the car inadvertently leave the road, while front seat frames with a collapsible section re-

duce vertical forces to help prevent spinal injuries.

Like all Volvos, it comes with a lovely interior and a dashboard dominated by a computer screen which controls nearly all the functions. It works well and is well designed. The speedometer and rev counter are also computer generated.

The car drives well, it is nippy, brakes are good, handles well around the bends and rides comfortably, and has a largeish boot. However, I did find it awkward to get into and out of, and it is easy to bang your head. The door opening area is too small and even some passengers noticed this issue. Though once installed in the comfy interior it is a nice car to drive and its good ground clearance makes forest and farm tracks easy to use. Yes, another nice car from Volvo.



Eamonn Wall FICFor is a forestry and arboricultural consultant and managing director of Eamonn Wall and Co Woodland Design and Management.

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Deer repellent Trico: two-year review

On a recent visit to a field trial, I passed a plantation of 40,000 conifers, all of which had been lost to deer who had identified a recently cut hole in the deer fencing. Proof, if needed, for the need of effective deer control. Currently, deer fencing aided by the rifle is the default system to avoid deer damage as while deterrent sprays have been available, past experience has not been particularly positive, largely due to the lack of rainfastness, leading to short persistence.

Therefore, to assess claims that Trico is effective for six months, a dozen foresters were contacted to discuss the performance of the product, with their comments summarised below.

Trico is based on emulsified sheep fat which deer will avoid as they find the smell and taste totally unappetising. Developed in Austria and widely used throughout Europe, Trico was introduced to the UK in 2017. It is sprayed by knapsack sprayer neat onto the tops of transplants at a rate of between 5 to 10ml per tree depending on the size of the tree, typically using an E80.02 nozzle at 1 bar pressure. It should be noted, though, that it does not deter rabbits, hares, voles and other biting or browsing creatures.

And the overall response in discussion with foresters is very positive, as it does appear to be lasting for around six months and is showing good activity against red, roe, fallow, sika and muntjac deer on a wide range of establishing trees including Sitka, Norway spruce, Douglas fir and a wide range of broadleaved species. But note that any treatment applied before flushing will mean that new growth will be unprotected.

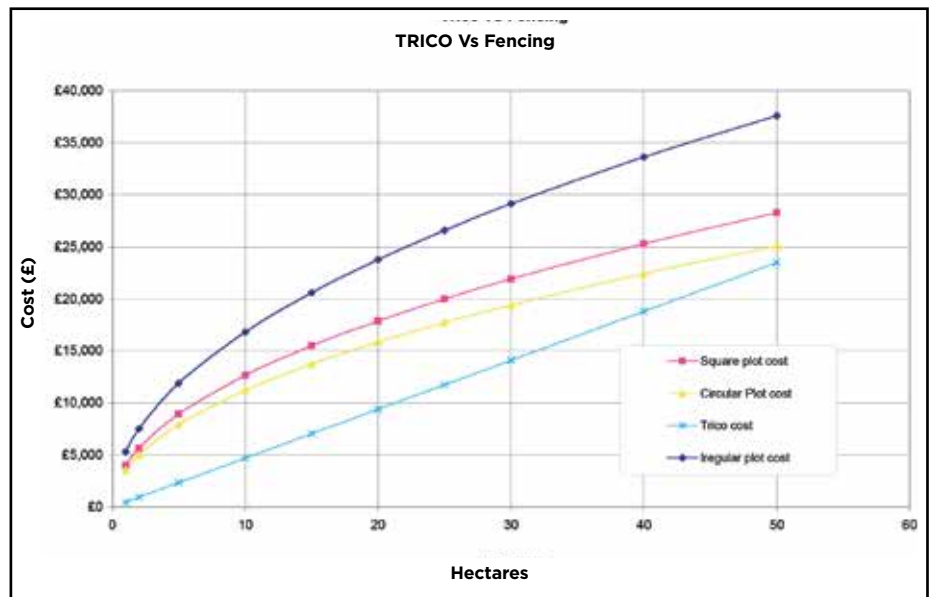


The overall response in discussion with foresters is very positive

As an alternative to treating all transplants, a barrier spray of three to four trees around the perimeter of the coup has also been found to be effective, although one report did record a small number of the barrier sprayed trees being nibbled. Any deer inside the barrier, will, of course, be trapped.

The survey included two of our larger estates, 4000ha of forestry in Scotland, and 1300ha in England, both of which are pre-treating cell grown plants prior to planting, either in trays or loose in bundles.

Treating the plants in trays was very



straightforward, with 1000ml product applied over trays of 150 trees using a small compression knapsack sprayer. The trays were then kept under cover for 48 hours to allow the material to dry on the foliage.

Treating bundles of cell grown or bare root transplants is not so simple, as the plants do need to be lined out side-by-side on polythene sheeting before spraying the foliage, ensuring that no material is sprayed on the roots as this will prevent moisture and nutrient uptake. A period of time to allow drying will then be necessary before re-bagging, a compromise between the foliage drying - but not the roots.

Dipping loosened bundles is less practicable as once dry, the transplants would be effectively glued together by their foliage.

On a micro scale, the treatment is also transforming a small 2ha woodland in Cumbria. Owner Tony Graham sprayed emerging natural regeneration of oak, beech, birch and wild cherry which previously would have been grazed out by roe deer, but are now thriving 1m plants.

The same grower has also sprayed the tops of 0.6m tubes placed over regen. and commented that the emerging foliage has also been avoided by the resident roe deer population.

Other respondents have found that treated emerged growth from tubes is also protected.

But how do the economics stack up against fencing?

There are a lot of variables here, with fencing possibly as low as £8/m on an easy access new lowland site, to up to £12/m on a difficult upland restock site. Much will also

depend on the size and shape of the fenced area, whether all trees are treated, or just a barrier, and the cost of Trico per transplant - 5p to 10p per transplant depending on the area of foliage treated.

The suppliers suggest that at a cost of £10/l and 10ml/tree, with all trees treated, (excluding application costs of around 5p/tree) then Trico treatment is less expensive than fencing on restock sites below 40 - 80 ha. The calculation would, of course be different on new plantings where a fencing grant may be gained.

As a contrast, a separate calculation by one large estate indicated that the cost of fencing a 25ha restock site (3000m) would be between £31,000 and £37,000. This compared to a single post planting 25ha application of Trico to 1650 trees/ha at £4000 and £6000 including application.

Trico is available direct from the UK licence holder Laronkarn, 01684 899306.



MEMBER SERVICES
Pesticides helpline

Pesticides helpline 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: branchline@xln.co.uk

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Playing one's part for the environment

These days, there are ongoing discussions about the environment - climate change, litter, new housing on green field sites, HS2, and so on. But it is right to ask if the owner of a small woodland can play a part in caring for or even preserving the wonderful landscape and countryside with which we are blessed. I think there are things at both a small scale and on the larger canvas that we can do.

In terms of small scale, we can all keep our properties tidy and litter free. We all know that litter attracts more litter, so a tidy entrance may even help deter fly-tipping. Only the other day I was stopped in the lane and asked what I was doing. The surprise on the enquirer's face when I said I was litter picking and that I did so every six or seven weeks, betrayed the loss of civic duty which today seems so much more common.

Another small-scale action is attention to boundaries, their maintenance, such as timely hedge cutting or renewal of fencing, and the consequent building of good relations with neighbours and the public at large. Near where we live, a large estate has neglected to replace long dilapidated gates and signs at some entrances and they look so unsightly. (They attend assiduously enough to the shooting activities with fresh signs warning you where you can and can't go.)

A third local or small-scale measure is to explain in suitable ways woodland operations being pursued. The usual angst is caused by tree felling when local people are unaware of it and, more worryingly for them (and you), don't know why and dream up all sorts of nasty possibilities. A display notice or some contact ahead of the event allays concerns and defuses confrontation or simply ill-informed speculation that so easily gets out of hand. Some owners even have 'open-days' and invite visitors to the wood to share what they themselves so love.

On the broader canvas, managing our woods in keeping with the landscape by the choice of trees we plant, the scale of operations carried out and offering the wood for occasional use by the local community all help. This last thought is hosting visits from schools, wildlife



Knowing how your wood was managed - and why - is, arguably, the single most important element in deciding and planning for its future

groups, local history societies and so on. And history itself is what underpins the place a wood has in the wider environment. I've mentioned before in these columns the value of knowing how your wood has come to be like it is and how this sits in the locality. While not wanting to perpetuate slavishly what was always done in the past, knowing how your wood was managed - and why - is, arguably, the single most important element in deciding and planning for its future.

We are all part of 'the environment'. A well-managed and cared-for woodland is our contribution to good countryside stewardship. Sharing it widely with others will bless many beyond our immediate circle. And, as we are increasingly coming to appreciate, enjoying the 'greenscape' does wonders for us all, physically and mentally and, I think, spiritually too.



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Picture found by John Paterson



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COMING UP IN DECEMBER – GET INVOLVED

In December, we will run two features – one on Professional Services and one on Wood Science and Treatment. Please get in touch by the end of October if you would like to submit an article or news item for either of the two.

Remember that FTN is your magazine – get in touch if you want to suggest editorial or give us feedback on articles we have published in the past.

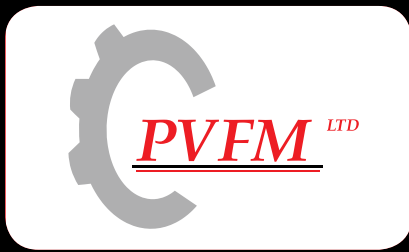
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A reminder that additional information and downloads on topics and articles throughout this issue is available online. FTN web resources is accessible from the Confor homepage or directly via

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