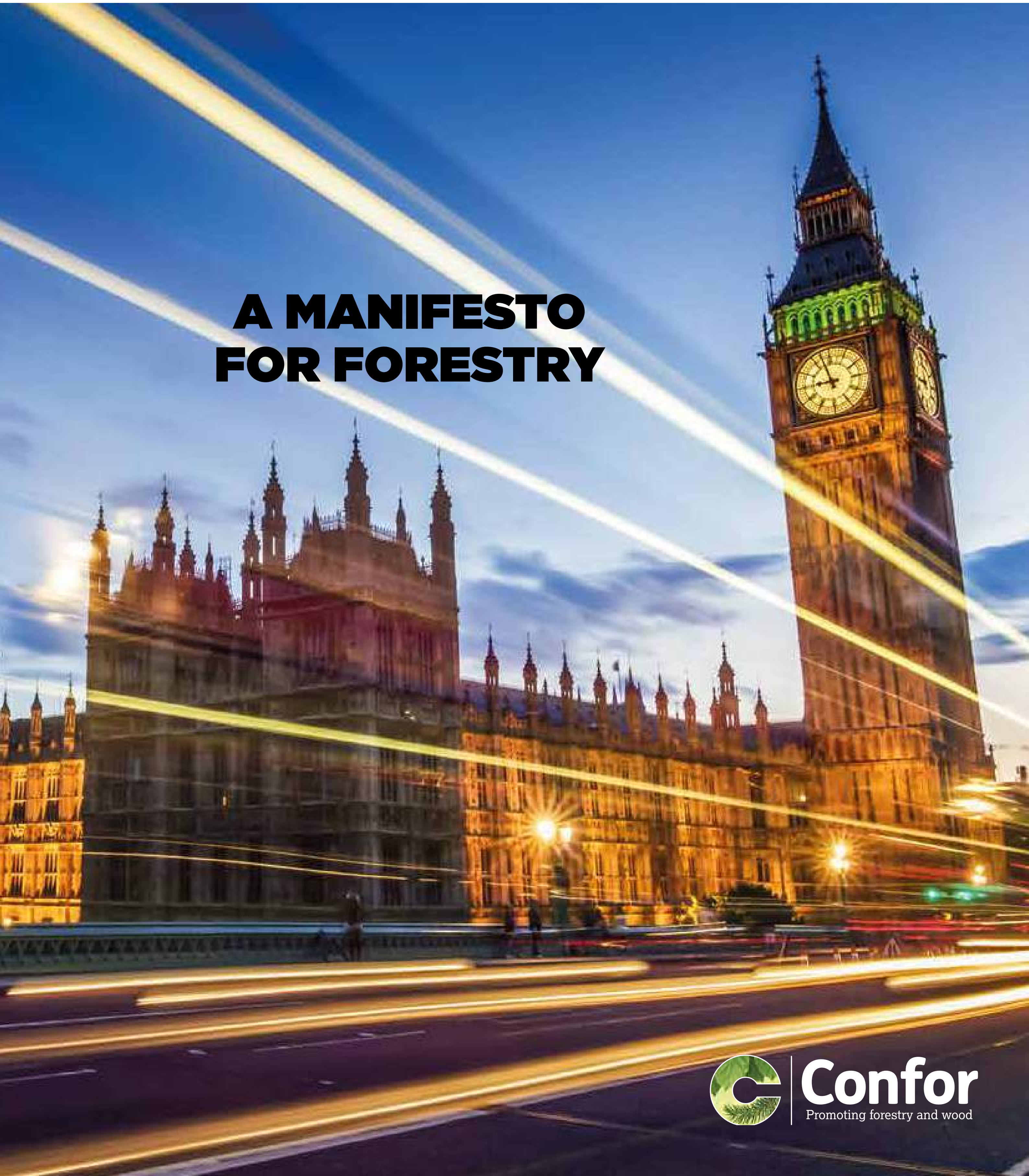
FORESTRY & TIMBER NEWS

June 2017 Issue 81



A MANIFESTO FOR FORESTRY

Confor
Promoting forestry and wood


KEEP BACK 500 FEET
DANGER

Confor
Promoting forestry and wood

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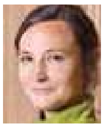

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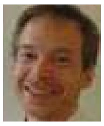

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FEATURES

NEW IN JUNE!
You can now find additional resources for this FTN issue on our website – all in one place. Watch out for the mouse icon. all resources for FTN June are directly accessible from our homepage.
www.confor.org.uk

Maintaining the momentum

STUART GOODALL CHIEF EXECUTIVE, CONFOR

Theresa May's snap election has come at an unfortunate time for Confor in England, interrupting what was an increasingly effective campaign to press the UK Government to act on tree planting.

After the Westminster EFRA Committee inquiry and various national media, we were picking up real concern at a ministerial level about the failure to meet planting targets, with pressure being placed on agencies to act.

An industry meeting had been arranged with Secretary of State, Andrea Leadsom, we had a conference organised for 07 June with forestry minister Dr Coffey, and there was the real possibility of a debate on the floor of the House of Commons.

With the election, much of the momentum has been lost. However, we are doing what we can to rebuild that momentum, and we will continue to do so both through and after the election period. This includes further media coverage, including on Radio 4's Costing the Earth and supporting the Conservative-leaning think-tank Bright Blue with their campaign for more tree planting....though, if Jeremy Corbyn surprises his many critics, and confounds the polls, we will have to explore new avenues!

One positive development, in England, has been the raising of the EIA threshold outside of sensitive areas to 50 hectares. Unfortunately, this move was opposed strongly by RSPB who appear stuck in the mantra of the 'right tree in the right place', whereby planting applications are at best 'the right tree in the wrong place' and more often simply 'the wrong tree in the wrong place'.

In Scotland, the RSPB pressed a Green MSP to attempt a last-minute scuppering of legislation to effect a modest increase of the threshold there from 5 to 20 hectares. Confor helped to organise successful resistance, and the move was defeated, but it was very disappointing to hear the arguments made, not least the lack of understanding of UKFS and its application.

It is a pity that, even with the modern, world-leading standards that forestry operates against and all the environmental, economic and social benefits that come from expanding our forestry resource, that the sector still faces an uphill battle at times.

Our ability to overcome this opposition shows that our efforts to promote the sector are bearing fruit, and we will keep building awareness and understanding at every opportunity.

In doing so, I usually employ a simple message - "take the time to speak to us and judge us on what we do, not what you think we do".

Confor unveils its manifesto for forestry

If politicians grasp the full potential of the forestry and timber sector, it can deliver multiple benefits across a range of policy areas. **David Lee** reports

A significant increase in tree planting and a better understanding of forestry across all levels of government are at the heart of Confor's manifesto for the general election.

Chief Executive Stuart Goodall said Confor's five-point plan for forestry, outlined in its manifesto, *Planting The Future*, was "a positive, straightforward and achievable vision for the next parliament".

He added: "We have highlighted planting more trees as it is vital for the future of the sector and for meeting Government targets on tackling climate change. The record of planting in England in the last two years has been very disappointing, but the new government starts with a clean slate.

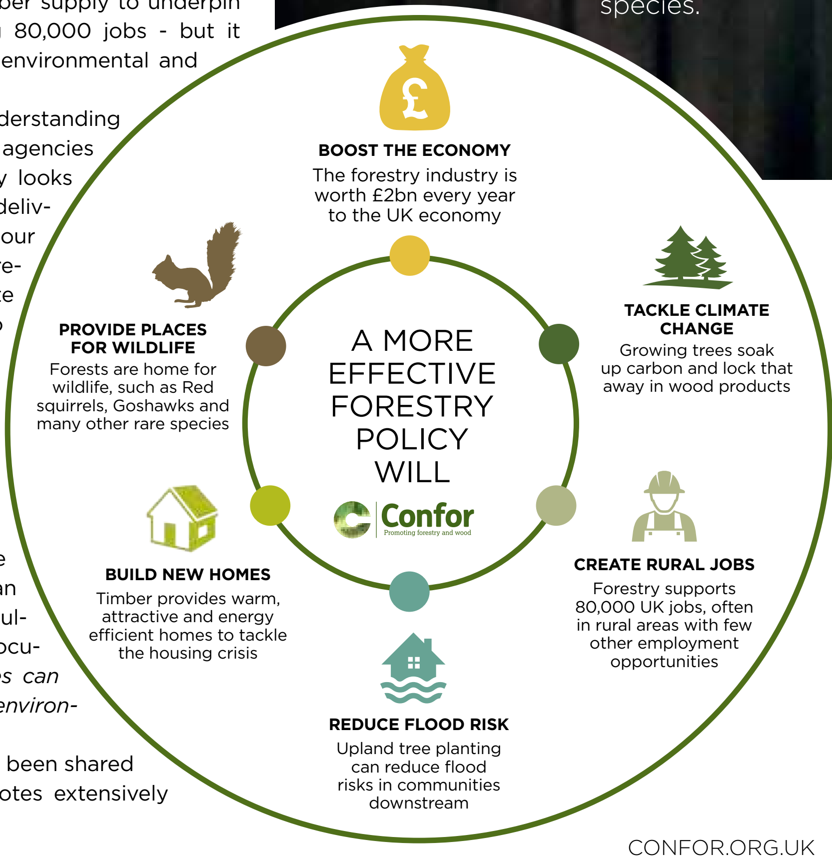
"We are supporting the We Are Bright Blue[1] campaign to try to push up tree planting rates and to ensure that a workable grants system encourages additional planting after Brexit."

Mr Goodall said the fifth point in the manifesto, fair treatment for forestry, was also crucial: "Explaining the true story of modern forestry remains a high priority for Confor. Mixed, modern forestry can provide rural jobs and a timber supply to underpin a £2bn industry supporting 80,000 jobs - but it can also deliver a range of environmental and social benefits.

"There is a low level of understanding across government and its agencies about what modern forestry looks like. If the new government delivers on our five-point plan, as our manifesto explains, it will create rural jobs, tackle climate change, provide timber to build new homes, protect places for wildlife and reduce the risks of flooding.

"These are not either/or options - an increase in new planting, with at least half of it productive species to create the wooden products we all use in our daily lives, can deliver all these benefits simultaneously. That's why our document is sub-titled *How trees can deliver for our economy, environment and society*."

The manifesto, which has been shared with all political parties, quotes extensively



2 TAKE THE FORESTRY COMMISSION BACK TO ITS ROOTS

The Forestry Commission should be given full responsibility for planting targets, as well as woodland creation and management applications and funding.

3 APPOINT A MINISTER TO STAND UP FOR FORESTRY

We need a minister with forestry in their title, to press the importance of a £2 billion sector in the industrial strategy and after Brexit, and to champion home-grown timber.

4 CUT RED TAPE

England should follow Scotland's example and appoint a planning expert to identify the bureaucratic barriers to new woodland creation.

5 ENSURE FAIR TREATMENT FOR FORESTRY

England should follow Scotland's example and appoint a planning expert to identify the bureaucratic barriers to new woodland creation.

from the report by the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (EFRA) committee, published in March. It said: "Forests and woodlands provide multiple environmental, social and economic benefits" and "The creation of new woodland is essential" but also notes: "England has one of the lowest levels of woodland cover [in Europe]."

Woodland cover in England is currently 10%, against a UK-wide average of 13% and an EU average of around 37%. The UK is the third largest net importer of timber in the world, after China and Japan.

Mr Goodall concluded: "Forestry has had a higher profile in recent years, thanks in large part to the efforts of Confor. We pressed for the EFRA inquiry and worked to secure the Westminster Hall debate, then took the forestry story into the mainstream media with Countryfile.

"However, we must translate this higher profile into action. Brexit offers opportunities to plant more trees in the right places and if we can take a number of straightforward actions to promote more managed forestry, our economy, our environment and our communities will benefit.

"We will continue to work constructively with the next government and campaign hard for our sector and its interests."

> There is a low level of understanding across government and its agencies about what modern forestry looks like.
>
> STUART GOODALL

REFERENCES & RESOURCES

://brightblue.org.uk

Additional resources at **confor.org.uk**
- Read the full manifesto
- Twitter cards with the manifesto points
- Infographic

@forestsandwood

Follow Confor on LinkedIn

Confor has identified the forestry content in the main parties' manifestos for the UK general election on June 8th and analysed what it might mean for the sector. After the election, Confor will work with the new Government and the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Forestry to ensure the core elements of its own manifesto are understood by all parties, and press for their implementation.

CONSERVATIVE

"In addition to the 11 million trees we are planting across our nation, we will ensure that 1 million more are planted in our towns and cities, and place new duties on councils to consult when they wish to cut down street trees.

"We will deliver on our commitment to improve natural flood management, such as improving the quality of water courses to protect against soil erosion and damage to vulnerable habitats and communities. We will continue to ensure that public forests and woodland are kept in trust for the nation, and provide stronger protections for our ancient woodland."

Confor says

While the commitment to honour the 2015 pledge to plant 11 million trees by 2020, and to add to it, is pleasing, there is lots of work to do to get there as the previous government was way off target. The pledges on the public forest and ancient woodland are crowd-pleasers and it is disappointing that support for natural flood management does not specifically mention the role trees can play in reducing water flows towards downstream communities.

The big issue is that the planting target is not linked to policy objectives, such as meeting climate change targets, building new homes, and reducing floods and the broader commitment to leave the environment in a better state than the new government inherited it.

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LABOUR

"We will work with farmers and foresters to plant a million trees of native species to promote biodiversity and better flood management. Unlike the Conservatives who attempted to privatise our forests, Labour will keep them in public hands."

Confor says

It is good that tree planting is linked to better flood management. Otherwise, this is very unambitious and shows a lack of understanding of the value of productive tree planting. Elsewhere, the manifesto talks about a "credible industrial strategy" which will be built on "objective, measurable missions designed to address the great challenges of our times." Those challenges include climate change, building homes and providing rural employment - all of which can be addressed by forestry.

It also promises to "champion sustainable farming, food and fishing". What about forestry? Clearly it is the forgotten f-word for Labour.

LIB DEMS

"Reverse the current sharp decline in the rate of woodland creation by aiming to plant a tree for every UK citizen over the next 10 years, and protect remaining ancient woodlands."

Confor says

A very positive commitment, which recognises the 'current sharp decline in the rate of woodland creation' and proposes an ambitious solution. A tree for every citizen in the UK over the next ten years would mean around 65 million trees, so 6.5 million every year, compared to Labour's 1 million in 5 years and the Conservatives' 2.2 million per year target. Again, it would be positive to link the target back to other policy objectives.

SCOTTISH NATIONAL PARTY

Publication of the SNP's manifesto was delayed by the awful event in Manchester. In its manifesto for the Holyrood election in May 2016 it said: "We will plant 10,000 hectares of trees every year until 2022 and work to hasten the pace of application and approval of planting. We will also complete the devolution of the Forestry Commission."

It says later: **"In particular, we will support the planting of woodland which can help prevent flooding and assist in water basin management."**

Confor says

The 10,000-hectare target could be hit this year and has been increased to 15,000 hectares per year by 2024-25 - and importantly, this enhanced target is linked directly to two key policy objectives, meeting climate change targets and using more home-grown timber. The reference to planting to help prevent flooding is another positive example of linked-up policy.

There has been action to "hasten the pace of application and approval of planting" through the work of Jim Mackinnon, whose report is being implemented in partnership with Confor.

PLAID CYMRU

Plaid have an 'Action Plan' rather than a manifesto. It doesn't contain any reference to forestry, with the closest relevant action being to **"fight to ensure that every penny of European funding, including farming payments, is replaced by the UK Government".**

Confor says

Confor says: the lack of reference to forestry or related activity is disappointing, even in a relatively brief Action Plan.

Preparations for Confor Woodland Show are heating up

This show is set to be the biggest, most exciting show yet with an extended field demonstration area offering exhibitors the space and flexibility they need. Alternating with Confor's APF Exhibition, the Confor Woodland Show provides an excellent platform for those working in the industry to meet existing and potential customers, buy and sell.

The show will be held on Thursday 07 and Friday 08 September at Longleat Estate, Wiltshire.

There are nearly 100 exhibitors already booked ranging from forest nurseries to timber harvesters. See the website for the full list of exhibitors. Bookings are still open – remember to take advantage of discounts available for Confor members.

Whether you are a forestry business or an interested individual there will be something for you in the packed programme of events, talks and topical seminars that Confor and the Forestry Commission are hosting throughout the two-days of the show.

The overall theme for Confor this year is, "Forestry beyond Brexit". What do you want for our industry post Brexit? Come and put your questions to our panel of professionals.

Throughout the two days there will be practical demonstrations including horse logging, chainsaw carving, archery, timber sports and much more.

A thank you to our sponsors to date, Tilhill Forestry, Anglo American Oil Company and Euroforest. There are still sponsorship opportunities so if you want to give your business exposure then take a look at the sponsorship packages available on the Confor woodland show website.

See you at Longleat!

TICKETS

Tickets (both free and non-member tickets) can be purchased at gate or online.

Confor member: free (on presentation of valid membership card)

Non-member advance (online): £9

Non-member student advance (online): £4.50 (student card required)

Non-member at gate: £10

Non-member student at gate: £5 (student card required)

Under 16s: free entry

Help us spread the word!

#Conforwoodlandshow

Find us on Facebook and keep up to date

Ask us for social media resources.

www.conforwoodlandshow.org.uk

FSC conditional approval for UKWAS 4

The standard, familiar to many forest managers as the UK Woodland Assurance Standard or UKWAS, has undergone a thorough revision process which began in 2013. A draft submitted to FSC International last year was not approved, and underwent further revision before being re-submitted in February this year. This revised draft was conditionally approved following a meeting in early April.

In terms of the contents of the standard, the main condition for approval is that general references to compliance with the law, such as health and safety or workers' rights legislation, must be replaced with readily auditable, outcome-oriented requirements.

FSC also stipulated that changes be made to the UK standard development group before the next revision of the standard, to ensure representation of economic, environmental and social interests is chamber-balanced in accordance with FSC requirements.

UKWAS Steering Group chair, Peter Wilson, says "The revision exercise has been a long haul but the completion of our work is in sight and the steering group will meet shortly to work on closing out the remaining concerns raised by FSC. The revision process has been thorough and radical and, once these conditions are met, we hope that users will find the updated version to be more logical in its approach and much easier to use than earlier versions. Praise is due to steering group members for their tenacity and the dedication they have brought to the task of revising and improving the UKWAS".

Andrew Heald of Confor, who is also a Director of UKWAS and a member of the Steering Group, said: "It is positive to have reached this point, but as ever with certification, the devil is in the detail. Hopefully these final hurdles can be overcome without much additional time and cost. It is essential that certification focus on forest management outcomes and not simply processes."

The UKWAS Steering Group will meet in Edinburgh on 06 June. **www.ukwas.org.uk**

CONFOR AROUND BRITAIN

GREEN GOLD
Stuart Goodall wrote in The Scotsman (21 April) about the multiple benefits of forestry to Scotland

FORESTRY SUMMIT
Scottish rural secretary Fergus Ewing held a Forestry Summit on 24 May in Perth

Confor featured in the **PRESS AND JOURNAL FORESTRY** supplement in April

COSTING THE EARTH on 23rd May featured tree planting at Jerah and Doddington, and Windymains sawmill

CONFOR BOARD met on 18 May

ROYAL HIGHLAND SHOW
22-25 June. Confor will be participating in a new Forestry tent at the Royal Highland Show

Confor submitted a response to the **CHEVIOTS FOREST DESIGN PLAN CONSULTATION**

TIMBER TRANSPORT FORUM
visit to Ardcastle floating pier site on 30 June. Contact Roland Stiven

IMPROVING WOODLAND PRODUCTIVITY THROUGH RESTOCKING:
A Confor members event visiting Zetland estate on 12 June. Contact Caroline Harrison

CBEEBIES WE DID THIS:
Confor member Oliver Combe's Christmas trees will feature on the Christmas show

ROYAL WELSH SHOW
24-27 July
Visit Confor's Forestry tent

Confor stand at the **NORTHERN IRELAND FORESTRY FAIR**
28-29 May

NURSERY PRODUCERS GROUP MEETING
26-27 June

THE COUNTRYFILE FORESTRY SPECIAL
(2 April) showcased Confor members in Northumberland, The Highlands and North Wales

Inquiry into **FORESTRY AND WOODLAND POLICY**
Confor submitted a response to this National Assembly for Wales consultation

CONFOR WOODLAND SHOW
7/8 September at Longleat Estate. Bring your membership cards for free entry

Stuart Goodall was interviewed on **FARMING TODAY** on 3 May, on the need for a better tree planting grant scheme in England

Confor is the lead signatory of **BRIGHT BLUE'S ELECTION CAMPAIGN** to get higher targets for tree planting, featured in the Telegraph

Speaking at this **WESTMINSTER CONFERENCE**, Confor's Andrew Heald emphasised the need for forestry to be at the heart of rural policymaking

Following his meeting with Confor, Scottish rural secretary Fergus Ewing secured a **GROUP ON FORESTRY TO CO-ORDINATE POLICY BETWEEN THE UK AND DEVOLVED ADMINISTRATIONS**

Confor welcomes updated Scottish forestry strategy

Confor has urged the Scottish Government to commit to expanding tree cover in the first major new forestry legislation in Scotland for 50 years. The Forestry and Land Management (Scotland) Bill, published in May, sets out a new policy and regulatory framework for forestry, and outlines the future role of Forestry Commission Scotland.

Stuart Goodall, chief executive of Confor, has urged ministers to focus on the big picture - securing the future of an industry worth £1 billion a year to Scotland, which employs more than 25,000 people and delivers many additional environmental and social benefits.

Mr Goodall welcomed the intention to create a forestry division more clearly set within the Scottish Government, which will place forestry at the heart of future rural policy and action on climate change – vital given the challenges and opportunities presented by Brexit. He said: “The Bill is a real opportunity to focus on the big picture - what forestry can deliver for the Scottish environment, economy and communities.

“Forestry is becoming the modern-day engine-room of the Scottish rural economy, and Scotland is the powerhouse of the UK forestry sector. Changes to the governance of forestry have been inevitable since the devolution settlement, especially as there has been change elsewhere in the UK. The aim in Scotland must be to put in place a legislative framework that suits forestry here.”

Mr Goodall welcomed the emphasis on retaining the expertise of forestry professionals in the papers accompanying the Bill and the intention to place forestry at the heart of future rural policy and action on climate change: “Forestry needs to be in there at the heart of decision-making; forestry at arms’ length is forestry forgotten.”

Long-term approach

Mr Goodall was pleased at the commitment to a long-term approach to policy and support, and the development of a new forestry strategy for Scotland.

However, the new Bill, unlike the 1967 Bill that it replaces, does not place a duty on the Scottish Government to expand forestry in Scotland. “We were pleased when the Scottish Government committed, in January, to increasing tree planting targets to tackle climate change and increase the use of home-grown timber – and we look forward to seeing it follow through on that commitment,” said Mr Godall. “It is very important to link planting targets with policy objectives and we will press the Scottish Government to continue with this approach.”

It is expected that a call for evidence on the contents of the Bill be made over the summer. Ahead of that, Confor will provide an analysis of the Bill to members and then circulate its proposed response.

Confor is also working hard to secure cross-party support for forestry to help with the production of a new strategy and to ensure its continued application beyond electoral cycles.

Mr Goodall concluded: “It’s clear this Bill is a complex piece of legislation that will require wider support in the Scottish Parliament and co-operation with the UK Government. Confor will examine carefully the detail of what is proposed, then publish our comments on the draft legislation. We need to ensure this bill gives Scottish Ministers the right powers to support our industry to grow further, and to deliver on its commitment to increased tree planting.

“There are positive signs that tree planting is starting to increase again in Scotland, which we need to guarantee jobs and investment in the long term. This new Bill recognises that forestry is a very long-term business and Confor will continue to work with all parties to develop the emerging consensus around securing the future success of the forestry industry.”

> “Forestry is becoming the modern-day engine-room of the Scottish rural economy
>
> STUART GOODALL

THE FORESTRY AND LAND MANAGEMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL:

- **aims to ensure forestry is fully accountable to Ministers and Parliament, and that governance arrangements are simpler and more transparent;**
- **places a duty on Scottish Ministers to “promote sustainable forest management”;**
- **requires Ministers to prepare a new forestry strategy;**
- **allows the National Forestry Estate to undertake non-tree related activity and provide services to third parties;**
- **includes community management and compulsory purchase of land;**
- **provides for continued cross-border co-operation on research and statistics.**

Preservative effect of copper

I was very interested, as ever, to read Prof. Julian Evans' article *More questions than answers* (FTN, April 2017, p65) .

My particular interest was his question about the 'preservative' effects of copper leaching from brass screws. I may be able to help you with this question as I am a retired chemist who volunteers in the conservation laboratory of the York Archaeological Trust. One of our specialities is the conservation of waterlogged wood and we do indeed find that wood preservation is sometimes better in the vicinity of copper alloy fittings. We have always attributed this observation to the poisonous properties of copper ions produced by the copper alloy, although I would struggle to find a reference to any research evidence – it is more of a conservation 'given'.

A more macabre example of the same phenomenon is that we sometimes find traces of textile adhering to the back of copper alloy grave goods in burials, when there are no other textile traces preserved. This textile is the remains of cloth the deceased was wearing, or wrapped in, before burial, preserved by the same mechanism.

Chemically, I would expect that lead fittings might produce the same effect, like the effects on rooftop algae I have observed of the run-off from lead flashings around chimneys. Though asking around in the tearoom at the lab did not produce any known examples of lead leaching producing a similar effect to copper.

Anthony J.G. Crawshaw
Knaresborough

Did you know that ....

You can directly access all additional resources for this issue from the home page at

www.confor.org.uk

Why don't you tweet them or use them in your presentations?

Confor member donates trees for children's TV programme

Once more, Confor was able to offer the BBC guidance and production input for one of their programmes. In this case, the children's magazine The Let's Go Club (Cbeebies) was looking at three ways to reuse a Christmas tree – an episode to be broadcast around Christmas this year.

Confor was able to source three suitable Christmas trees with only a few days' notice, thanks to member Oliver Combe (York Christmas Trees, Wiggington) who kindly selected trees to suit the producers' needs and couriered them down to Manchester for a Friday shoot.

In a hands-on way, the children were explained the value of natural resources and were shown three ways to recycle some of the many Christmas trees that land on our streets every January.

They replanted a potted tree in their forest area and decorated it with snacks for the birds to enjoy. They used a dead tree with dry needles as mulch for potted plants in the school yard. Branches of a third tree were used as a feeding and hiding place for fish living in their school pond.

Confor was very pleased to be able to support an initiative that uses commercial trees to showcase basic concepts of sustainability and the value of natural capital.

We will follow up on this topic of Christmas trees more in depth in an upcoming FTN issue this year.

Confor making the news – see p17.

Foresters Golf Society

Russel Matthews of Land & Landscape Management took the individual honours at the Foresters' Golf Society meeting held at Wareham Golf Club, Dorset on 7 April 2017. On a beautiful day for golf, Russel had a winning score of 37 Stableford points. In second place was Richard Preston, formerly of the Forestry Commission and the current captain at Wareham Golf Club, closely followed by David Duncan in third place. The team event was won by Russel Matthews, David Duncan and John Lockhart.

The Foresters' Golf Society is open to anyone with a forestry interest – from owners to accountants. The next event is scheduled to be at Whiteleaf Golf Club in Buckinghamshire on 5 October 2017. Anyone interested in playing who would like to be notified of the date should contact John Clegg by emailing jec@johnclegg.co.uk or call 01844 291384.

Kezia Dugdale MSP, leader of the Scottish Labour Party, visited Alba Trees on 20 May. Photo: Dave Johnston

Floating pier site opens in Argyll

ST Floating Piers has completed the installation of a mainland-based floating pier system and related infrastructure at a site on the National Forest Estate at Ardcastle, Argyll. The £300k pier project located on Loch Fyne was supported with a £120k of Scottish Strategic Timber Transport Scheme funding.

With harvesting volumes increasing and the nearby Ardrishaig Pier already extremely busy, the facility will boost the ability for shipping greater quantities of timber to wood processors. The site offers 12m of deep, sheltered and easily navigated water, combined with a shoreside storage area with capacity for up to 6000t of roundwood/ forest products.

www.jstservices.co.uk

Initial cargo being loaded at Ardcastle, 3m chipwood bound for Inverness – this one shipment removing 20,000 truck miles from Scottish roads.

Photo credit NWS/JST

Youngsters learn value of rural skills

Pupils from Aboyne Academy descended in to Glen Tanar's ancient pine forests on Deeside on 17 May to take part in a schools forestry day to learn about the rural environment and observe how forestry practices are carried out. Held at Glen Tanar Estate, just outside Aboyne, S3 pupils took part in the full day workshop which encompassed the full journey of trees from seed to sawmill with demonstrations on how trees are planted, harvested, processed and the eventual end products.

The students also got the opportunity to watch trees being felled by chainsaw and watch a mobile sawmill in action to see how trees are turned into useable material.

The schools forestry initiative is run in conjunction with Ballogie Estate and Dinnet Estate and held over three days in May and the entire S3 year of around 120 pupils took part. The project has recently won Scottish Land and Estate's Regional "Helping it Happen" Award.

Michael Bruce, Glen Tanar Estate, said: "This programme gives a whole secondary school pupil year group first-hand experience of what real forestry involves."

www.glentanar.org.uk

Forest on historic airship base gains FSC certification

UK Forest Certification Group has announced the addition of Lenabo Forest in Aberdeenshire to FSC Certification.

Lenabo Forest is a 360ha predominantly Sitka Spruce plantation established in 1920 by the Forestry Commission. Now in its second rotation the plantation has a recently approved Long Term Forest Plan which marks the start of major restructuring.

Lenabo, now in private ownership, is managed by Brook Forestry. Company director Jolyon Amos has been involved with management of the forest for many years. A former sceptic of forest certification, since establishing a working relationship with UKFCG, Jolyon is less reserved: "Where in the past certification felt an adversarial bureaucratic burden, with the support of UKFCG, we have found certification can be an opportunity to demonstrate our good working practices and build upon a quality service".

Lenabo Forest cloaks the area formerly used as a Royal Naval Air Service airship station known as RNAS Longside.

The land at Lenabo was a large piece of bog land and when it was decided to commission it to be used as the most northerly British air base station, the land

had to be cleared before any building could start. The site was closed in 1920 and the land planted by the Forestry Commission. When the first rotation of trees were felled in the 1960s and 1970s it was discovered that some of the buildings still remained. The chimneys and entrance pillars were demolished in 1966 as the structures were thought to be unsafe.

Planned felling in this part of the forest will be preceded by an archaeological survey to define areas which will be returned to open ground.

www.forestcertification.org.uk

Members help with charity's planting

Local people from around Earlston, Scotland, turned out in force to help plant 1300 trees to improve the facilities for the dogs at Borders Pet Rescue and create a space for the local community to use. The charity needed trees and tree shelters to allow the planting of some small woodland areas in the fields and make them more interesting for the dogs. Tilhill Forestry District Manager Eddie Addis stepped in and agreed to supply the tree shelters and asked parent company BSW to supply the tree stakes. Alba Trees offered to provide the trees at no cost.

www.tilhill.com www.albatrees.co.uk

GreenMech realigns dealer network

GreenMech has continued its dealer realignment with new dealers New Forest Farm Machinery and GA Groundcare. Existing dealer Burden Brothers Agri will extend its coverage area. All existing warranties relating to GreenMech chippers, sold by T H White, will be supported by these new dealers. Burden Brothers will now be servicing customers in Surrey, adding to its established areas of Kent and Sussex.

www.greenmech.co.uk

WELCOME TO NEW CONFOR MEMBERS

Abersenny Ltd, Abergavenny
Pontypool & Clytha Estate, Monmouthshire
Powell Training, Wiltshire

Confor chain of custody certification survey

Andrew Heald explains some of the key findings from the survey.

Confor has been working hard for the last two years to try to improve the certification process. In the April issue of FTN, I highlighted the challenge that some mills have in sourcing adequate supplies of certified material. To understand why there is a problem we launched an anonymous survey of sawmills and processors. We had 20 responses to the survey and about half of these were from mills larger than 200,000 tonnes per year; this represents a reasonable proportion of mills in the UK.

Key findings

While 78% of respondents said that "Meeting Customer Requirements" is the main benefit of certification, only 60% said their customers specified FSC and/or PEFC. And within that 60%, the comment made was that only a minority of customers actually specified FSC and/or PEFC.

The "Cost of auditing and record keeping" was the biggest challenge for 79% of respondents.

Only 41% that said there is a price differential when sourcing certified raw material.

Price premium

Forest owners and managers want to know if they invest in certification, whether they will see a return on their investment in terms of better timber prices. Similarly, if a sawmill prioritises certified suppliers, and also invests in a chain of custody system and an annual audit, will their finished products attract a premium in the market place?

The results of the survey show that 60% of respondents did not pay any extra for certified material, and that in terms of sales, 100% of respondents said that there was no price differential when they sold certified material.

However, it is worth exploring this further; for the forest owner market access and flexibility is often as important as absolute price. If the material is certified it can usually be sold into a wider range of markets, and moved from a harvesting site more quickly. There are significant advantages in moving material quickly:

- Reduces pressure on stacking areas
- Improves cash flow for all concerned in harvesting
- Avoids timber "drying out" and losing weight at roadside.

There are potential differences in behaviour, though, depending on size and levels of activity. A forest owner/manager regularly harvesting large volumes of timber will want to access the widest range of markets. However, a smaller producer who only harvests occasionally, may choose to play the market a little more and only harvest if and when there is strong demand for their material, regardless of whether it is certified.

The expectation in some key parts of the UK construction market is that all timber will be certified. This is primarily because evidence of sustainability is demanded when tendering for Government contracts. In these cases, certified timber is seen as the 'norm' and therefore does not attract a premium. The survey highlighted that whilst it is a number of 'key accounts' who specified certified material, many of the others do not.

Availability of material

I have written previously how the dominance of the certified Forestry Commission supplied timber in the supply chain has declined, it currently represents about 40% of harvested material and that percentage will decline further as supply from the private sector increases.

Two thirds of respondents said that they were generally able to source sufficient supplies of certified material, but 61% said that there was less certified material available now than five years ago and 53% said that they were sourcing less certified material compared to 2012.

Conscious of increasing pressure on certified supplies, over 80% said that if sourcing became more challenging they would be prepared to switch to a volume credit approach – meaning an instant reduction of 30% of certified output.

What next?

In April, Confor met with PEFC International CEO Ben Gunneberg and received reassurance that PEFC were working hard to make certification more straightforward. PEFC is very common in many parts of central Europe, with very large group schemes comprising tens of thousands of small forest owners.

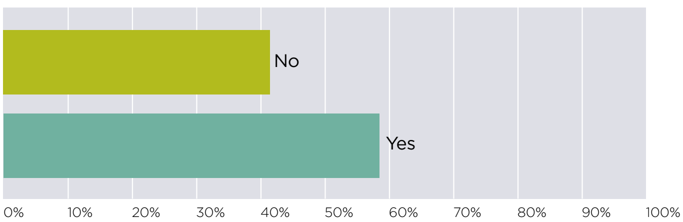
I have proposed a motion at the forthcoming FSC General Assembly calling for FSC to standardize the audit reporting system and make better use of the data in developing a risk based approach. Confor has also asked for a meeting with Kim Carstensen the Director General of FSC International, where we will be pushing for a real and rapid commitment to making certification simpler for smaller forest owners.

If the area of certified woodland in the UK continues to plateau, or even reduce, while levels of consumption increase, the need for change will become ever stronger.

Questionnaire results and further details are available on the Confor website.

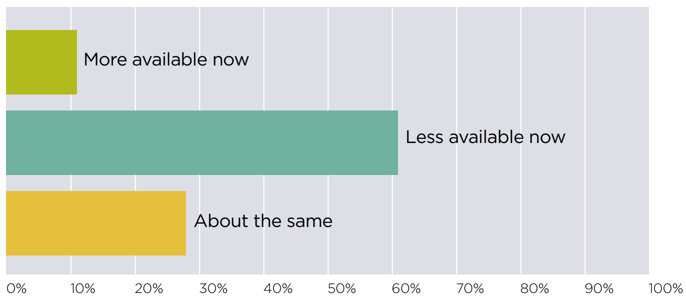
Is there a price differential for certified material that you buy?

Answered: 17 Skipped: 3



Compared to five years ago, has the availability of certified material changed?

Answered: 18 Skipped: 2



Forestry making the news

The forestry and timber sector continues to increase its presence in the mainstream media – thanks to the efforts of Confor.

The **BBC Countryfile** special on forestry, broadcast to 7.5 million viewers in April, marked a high point in Confor's efforts to publicise the positive, modern face of the sector.

Since the peak-time Sunday evening broadcast, Confor has continued working hard to ensure general media interest in forestry has remained high - with major success.

After signing a letter by think-tank We Are Bright Blue, calling for post-Brexit funding to encourage more tree planting (published in **The Daily Telegraph**), Confor Chief Executive Stuart Goodall was interviewed on Radio 4's **Farming Today**.

This interview was broadcast on May 3, with further positive coverage of forestry (the new Scottish Bill) on **Farming Today** on May 12. Two national newspapers, **The Daily Telegraph** and **Daily Express**, picked up Confor's press release on woeful tree planting in the same week, while Confor featured heavily on Radio 4's flagship environment programme, **Costing The Earth**, on a Future Forests special on May 23.

Stuart Goodall worked with producer Sarah Swadling to set up interviews at two high-profile planting sites, Jerah in central Scotland and Doddington in Northumberland, as well as the Windymains sawmill in East Lothian.

Mr Goodall met presenter Tom Heap with Tilhill Forestry's Andrew Vaughan, the driving-force behind Jerah. On site, Mr Vaughan described how Tilhill prepared 19 different designs for the former hill farm between Menstrie and Dunblane, with around 580 of the 1000-hectare site designated for planting a mixture of productive softwood species and broadleaves.

He told the programme Jerah had been designed to help with flood mitigation. Menstrie had been prone to flooding and the old site had almost 100km of drainage channels to send water down the hill, adding to flood risks. The new design keeps the majority of water up the hill, and even less water will flow down as the trees grow and the canopy soaks up rainfall.

Mr Vaughan also talked about wildlife on the site; short-eared owls, buzzards and hen harriers have been seen at Jerah, while the design encourages black grouse to return to the area. He also discussed vast improvements to public access to the site.

Tom Heap asked Mr Vaughan: "When you combine all these things - flood alleviation, access, appearance, species diversity - it must cost a lot more to set up and yield less return. So why do you do it?"

Mr Vaughan said modern high-quality trees would deliver the same amount of saw logs from a smaller area than a forest planted in the 1970s or 80s.

He continued: "By generating public access, amenity, landscape [value] and wildlife benefits, that is the cost of getting approval - but it is also the right thing to do. It's improved the site and I want to be proud of it and for people to enjoy it."

Stuart Goodall said Jerah showed that large areas of Scotland and northern England could be planted with mixed, modern productive forestry which delivered a range of economic, environmental and social benefits.

However, he warned of the danger of the drop-off in planting in England: "We were planting a lot of trees until the 1980s and then it almost completely stopped overnight. All those mature forests are coming through for harvesting in the next 20-25 years, and then there is a complete falling away.

"We expect investment in saw milling and the number of jobs supported by the industry will suffer unless we start planting more trees immediately."

Davey Rodger, who manages Glennon Brothers' Windymains Sawmill in East Lothian, told the programme: "The raw material is a concern for us. If we invest a lot of money in the sawmill, which we intend to do, we need guaranteed supplies. In 20 years' time, there are not enough logs, simple as that."

Tom Heap ended the **Costing the Earth** programme by describing the many benefits of modern forestry, including timber production, and concluded: "Woodlands are to be used, not just admired."

Stuart Goodall said the hard work of the whole Confor team in taking the forestry and wood story to a wider audience was really paying off: "There is very strong interest in what the sector is doing in terms of its economic, environmental and social contribution.

"Every story increases the understanding of the importance and value of our sector. It is vital that experienced and skilled presenters like Tom Heap and Charlotte Smith have seen the forestry and timber story up close and spread the message of what it can offer."

www.confor.org.uk/news/forestry-in-the-media

BBC RADIO 4

COUNTRYFILE

The Daily Telegraph

A summary of recent general media coverage

BBC Countryfile special on forestry 02 April

The Daily Telegraph

Radio 4 Farming Today 03 May

Radio 4 Farming Today 12 May

The Telegraph 15 May

BBC Radio Scotland, Out of Doors (Andrew Heald on pest control) 20 May

Radio 4 Costing the Earth forestry special 23 May

Tom Heap interviews Davy Rodger at Windymains Sawmill with producer Sarah Swadling (Centre)

Creating economies of scale

The Western-most "Bundesland" in Austria, is a pioneering region for timber design, renewable energy and sustainable land use in general. **Stefanie Kaiser** finds out how a co-operative forest service allows small forests to be managed making use of economies of scale for timber marketing and conservation.

BUNDESLAND
Land area 260,100ha
Forest cover 37%
Total forest area c. 95,000ha
Area productive forests c. 60,000ha

The alpine and densily populated region of Vorarlberg features a network of very small forest lots, with an average size of only five hectares. This includes some larger forest enterprises but mainly holdings of about one to two hectares, often privately owned. Nevertheless, forest management in the region is not only highly sustainably in the ecological sense, but also economically viable, thanks to a structure of collective management.

"We have the advantage that CCF has a long tradition and on our small forest areas we have a semi-natural mixed-aged structure. Felling has a very low visual footprint in the management of 'close-to-nature forests, and therefore, public acceptance is fairly high. According to a National study in Austria, Vorarlberg ranks highest in 'naturalness' of their forests", says Thomas Ölz, Head of Forestry, Chamber of Agriculture.

Mastering cross-ownership management

"The 'urbanised' landowner, with no knowledge of or interest in forestry and timber marketing, is becoming more and more common in the region. They are often unaware of the location or sometimes even the existence of a forest lot they have inherited. It is

Making small-scale low-impact timber production work

Clearfelling, defined as >0.5ha in protective forest and >2ha in productive forest, is not part of the Austrian forest management approach.

The use of harvesters in felling only accounts for about 2-3% in the main valleys of Vorarlberg and low-impact harvesters are used for thinnings. The secret lies in the logistics of collective forest management.

A landowner who wants to fell a few trees can call the *Waldverband* and enquiry about current market prizes and timber sizes in demand. He/she then cuts to size and leaves the timber at roadside. The *Waldverband* collects the logs at a suitable time to save transport costs. Logistics are the decisive factor here.

"In the case of protective forests, we mostly have to use skylines due to difficult access. Luckily we can cover costs here, as better rural development grants are available in the case of very low-impact felling methods, which otherwise would not be affordable", says Walter Ammann, chairman of *Waldverband*.

Overall, forestry is usually profitable within the currently used collective management system. Some of this profit will be invested in forest maintenance and maintenance of trails and forest roads. But it has to be considered that in such semi-natural forests, maintenance costs are significantly reduced due to the fact that no replanting is undertaken. This can save around €5000-10,000 of afforestation costs per hectare.

"Our maintenance costs are minimal, as timber extraction serves the purpose of forest maintenance at the same time. Basically most of the management costs you have in a plantation forest don't occur here."

for small-scale forestry

for those people that the Chamber of Agriculture, a governmental body representing land owners, offers a forest management and timber marketing service called *Waldverband*, a forestry co-operative", explains Thomas Ölz. Owners of land over one hectare are obliged to be members of the Chamber, but using the service of the *Waldverband* is optional.

This non-for profit service aims to ensure the management of a network of very small forest holdings. It allows for cross-ownership management to be conducted by experts with relevant forestry skills.

Different services available
- Round wood marketing
- Specific forest management contracts
- Complete lease of forest to chamber (hands-off approach): the chamber is in charge of everything from compliance with legislation to management and timber marketing. The owner gets a percentage of any net profit.

Timber species and marketing

Conifer species predominate in the region. In terms of land area, 60% is spruce (*Picea abies*) and around 12% is Silver fir (*Abies alba*). The remaining part are

Continued on p21

Walter Ammann, chairman *Waldverband*, and Thomas Ölz, Head of Forestry, Chamber of Agriculture

Thomas Ölz and Walter Ammann show examples of skyline and harvester extraction sites. (1) Rack resulting from a skyline extraction performed two months earlier (2) impact of recent harvester extraction

Skyline extraction

"We fitted a skyline of about 300m between two slopes to fell trees along the rack. This is an example of a protective forest that is also managed for timber. Some older trees are felled to allow for younger, stronger trees to regrow and stabilise the slope. And at the same time (and not less important), we want to market good timber. We extracted 400m^3 of timber from three racks".

The hand felling along each of the racks takes a pair of contractors roughly a day. The skyline is set up in half to three-quarters of a day, and the timber transported down to roadside in another day and a half. In this convex landscape, no pillars are needed. "We simply use pillar trees and anchor trees. Once the trees are left at roadside, a small processor debranches and pre-cuts them before a haulier picks up the logs and later, the firewood.

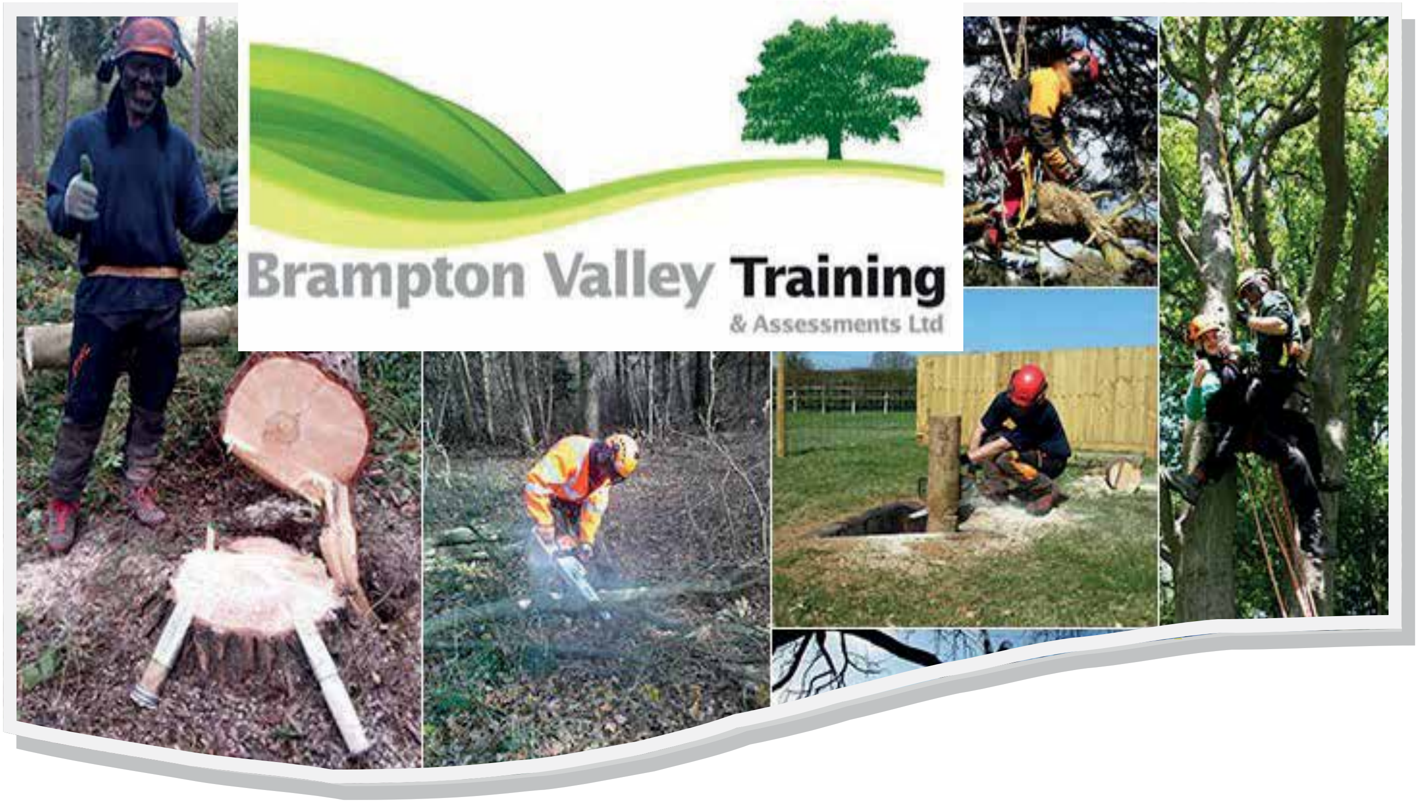
- Skyline extraction cost per m^3 €40
- Ave value or profit per m^3 €20-30

In spite of the additional small fee for the public forest management service, a small profit can be achieved even in small-scale and difficult-to-access forests.

Harvester and forwarder

"In the example (2), we have taken out 300m^3 of timber (that's 10 lorry loads) but, as you can see, you can hardly notice the felling impact at all."

These extraction racks will be used again in ten years' time. The harvester only move along the racks and trees are hand-felled selectively on each side into the rack. "We only fell trees that can be pulled out to the access route (eg using winches attached to the harvester) without further impact to the surrounding forest." Extraction routes are planned every 40-50m to reach most of the forest areas. On occasions, horses are used for log extraction.



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Bregenzerwald, a region of Vorarlberg, is particularly famous for its timber buildings and is has attracted many architects from around the world in the last decades. (1) A typical contemporary timber building in Andelsbuch featuring a Silver fir cladding (source: www.holzbaukunst.at) **and (2) traditional shingled house in the same village** (source: Flickr gaschy22)

Continued from p19

broadleaves, mainly beech, sycamore and ash.

In the case of softwoods, the 'top-half' of saw log production is fed into the regional network of mainly small sawmills (with some medium-sized mills producing up to 70,000 solid m^3 pa). Sawmills are mostly specialised, working with band saws that process logs of >40cm dbh into a variety of products. Small round wood is fed into larger-scale processors in other Austrian regions. At present, wood up to 50cm goes into these markets, as a sawlog processor in the region has shut down and regional saw log supply is currently exceeding demand from sawmills.

Roundwood is mainly processed into biomass (due to the distance of other processors, this is currently the most cost-effective market), plywood and board or traded internationally as raw-material for other wood-based industries. Some larger forest companies also sell into the pulp industry. This can be profitable even for small-scale forestry. It is an option in areas where mechanised harvesting is possible and timber down to 8cm dbh can be used.

Only just over half of the available annual increment is being used, ie about 350,000 of around 600,000 solid m^3 per year.

TIMBER PRODUCTION IN VORARLBERG

Annual figures in solid m^3
Total 300,000 - 350,000
From total of small Waldverband forests 50,000 - 60,000
From the largest single business (8000 ha) 15,000 - 20,000

Source: Walter Ammann, Waldverband

A zoning approach for deer management

For deer management purposes, Vorarlberg is divided in core zones, buffer zones and free zones. The red deer is encouraged to remain in the core zones, which are managed to offer a suitable habitat for them.

Regional culling quota are negotiated on an annual basis. Every three years, the impact of deer on vegetation is assessed for this purpose, using 6x6m plots in a 50m grid. This is system is applied regardless of land tenure, across the whole county.

Unlike in other countries, in Austria deer is being fed over the winter. In particular in the densely populated and alpine regions, large parts of natural habitats have been lost; in nature, the animals would follow a pattern of remaining in lowlands in winter and moving up into higher altitudes in summer. By feeding them, they can be kept in areas that offer a habitat for conservation while protecting managed forests in other areas at the same time.

Forest and deer management are planned in parallel, and the zoning approach allows foresters to rely on natural regeneration in managed forests despite the existence of deer. Silver fir, for example, is a very delicate species, but the deer density is kept low enough in this type of forest to be sustainable and not significantly threatened the regrowth.

Despite all the efforts, deer remains a big challenge for foresters in the region. However, due to the zoned management, at least in the 'free' lowland zones many different tree species can now thrive. But the problem has now moved upwards and remains a threat to protective forests.

Although there is a well-structured regional-level management plan, the actual deer population almost doubles the target numbers. Private hunting is only allowed on private land of more than 115 ha. Smaller lots are organised in collective hunting grounds of at least 300ha. The leasing of hunting rights is decided by the co-operative, and individual forest owners get their share of any revenues from the lease of hunting rights.

Rewildering is a hot topic in a region with several remote alpine borders. The lynx is slowly moving back in from neighbouring Switzerland, and is a welcome predator. The occasional sighting of wolves, however, is seen as much more problematic.

Red deer (Photo: Franz Kovacs, Bundesforste)

Canadian lumber producers now face tariffs of around 20% on exports to the US

Global trends

by **Oliver Combe**

Global demand for timber and wood products continues to increase and prices for roundwood have bottomed out and in some of the more competitive areas are starting to increase. Global consumption continues to increase and is estimated to have reached a new record high of 126m m^3 in 2016.

Globally, all eyes are on the US and China as these are the two big factors driving changes in global trading patterns.

US lumber prices are soaring, reaching levels last seen more than a decade ago. China's softwood lumber imports rose more than 20% in 2016, compared with 2015.

The major recent disturbance to trade patterns has been the conclusion to negotiations between the USA and Canada over trade tariffs for Canadian timber exports into the USA.

The Canadians have a 31.5% market share in the US which is worth about $5bn to Canada.

The Trump administration has put import tariffs of around 20% on all Canadian lumber producers which range from 3% for Tolko industries up to 24% for West Frazer lumber.

The USA maintains that the Canadian states which own the forest lands have sold their timber resources to the processors at artificially low prices thereby indirectly subsidising the industry and making it difficult for the domestic US mills to compete with them.

The 20% tariff is designed to negate this perceived subsidy and create a level playing field.

In the short-term, there will be little immediate impact on sawn timber prices in the US as most buyers had factored recent events into their purchasing decisions. In the medium term, US producers will have to increase production levels which will push up sawlog prices whilst changes in global trade patterns will also lead to pricing pressure.

In the USA, it has been calculated that the new tariffs will add $3500 to the cost of a new house in a market where lumber prices have risen 20% in the first four months of the year. One commentator observed "Trump's protectionist policies have just created a new enemy for the US housing market".

Imports of sawn timber from non-Canadian sources have been steadily rising since 2012 but still only comprise 5% of the total market (Canada alone has 32%) and are just a quarter of their highest ever level in 2005.

As US demand for lumber is predicted to rise faster than domestic production can increase there is an urgent need to find additional supplies.

The USA is actively seeking new sources of supply for sawn timber into the US to make up for any Canadian shortfall with Brazil and Sweden identified as two possible candidates to increase supplies.

At the same time, the Canadian producers are having to diversify their markets and are actively targeting, Asia, Europe, Middle East and North Africa

The extent to which the Swedish mills engage with the US opportunity will have a significant impact on the UK market over the next 18 months.

• *See Oliver Combe's Timber Auctions market report, p49*

European Sawlog Price Index has declined by 6.6% over the last two years...

Exports from Norway, France, Ukraine and Latvia have dwindled the most...

Sweden remains the single biggest exporter of timber to the UK...

But a weak Sterling means imports in the UK have been increasing...

Read more in Peter Whitfield's market report on p46

Seán Lenihan,
Kestrel Forestry
Consultants

New Forestry Act comes into force

Ireland's new Forestry Act becomes law on 24 May 2017, introducing some significant changes for the forest industry - some good, some not so good. The new act replaces the 1946 Forestry Act which most foresters agreed was in need of an overhaul, however some of the new regulations especially in relation to afforestation could have a detrimental impact on planting levels.

From 24 May a Site Notice will have to be placed on all sites where new planting is proposed, and where an application for approval has been submitted to the Forest Service. This regulation will be similar to the Site Notice requirement for Planning Permission for a new house or building. The view is that it some case it will act as a deterrent to land owners who don't want their neighbours to know of their intention to plant, and as a result won't go ahead. In other cases where an application proceeds with the Site Notice the owner may come under pressure not to plant from neighbours or farmer organisations who are anti-forestry and may decide to withdraw the application or not act on an approval. In addition, it will make it easier for the general public and/or environmental groups to object to a new afforestation application. With an expected 6000ha outturn this year, viewed as disappointing by most commentators, it is hard to see how these new measures are going to help increase planting levels. On a brighter note, the new Act will simplify the Felling Licence process and allow for ten-year licences with possible extensions up to five years. Previously, the maximum duration of any licence was five years.

Euroforest move into Ireland

Irish forestry has a new and potentially big player in the timber trade with the arrival of Euroforest Ireland which commenced operations here on 01 January 17. A joining of forces between the former Irish company Forwood Forestry, and Euroforest in the UK, Euroforest Ireland have based their HQ in Arklow, Co. Wicklow the most heavily forested county in Ireland, and within striking distance of some of the biggest processors like Woodfab in Aughrim, Co. Wicklow, Murray's in Ballon, Co. Carlow and Smartply Europe in Co. Waterford. According to David Symons, Euroforest MD, their "goal is to replicate the Euroforest business model in Ireland which has proven successful in the UK, benefitting forest owners and allowing the forest industry to expand". Jim Hurley, formerly of Woodfab and Forwood, has been appointed Managing Director, and brings a wealth of experience, contacts and know-how to the position. The establishment of a new timber harvesting and marketing company especially one with Euroforest's track record will obviously introduce strong competition for all grades of timber, and is undoubtedly good news especially for private growers.

Mountain on fire at Gougane Barra. Co. Cork, May 2017.
©Gougane Barra Hotel

Forest Fires

Drought conditions in April and early May in conjunction with easterly and northerly winds contributed to an epidemic of forest fires countrywide from Donegal to Cork mostly caused by illegal burning of vegetation like gorse by farmers and landowners. The damage caused is estimated in to be in the millions with both private sector and state sector forests affected. However, by far the most devastating fire occurred at Cloosh Valley in County Galway in a Coillte plantation where 1500 hectares were destroyed. This has been the worst year for forest fires since 2011.

Irish Forestry &Woodland Show

The biennial show took place on 05/06 May at Stradbally Hall Estate, Co. Laois and while there was a big improvement in the organisation and promotion of this year's show, including the addition of onsite announcements by an MC, the general consensus among exhibitors was that there was no marked increase in the numbers attending the show, and that number may even have been down on 2015.

The absence of four of the biggest forest management companies and also Coillte from the event was disappointing, as was the limited presence of the Forest Service who had been absent in 2015. Despite all this many of the machinery stands reported a strong interest and indeed sales of harvesting and wood processing equipment, a reflection of the vibrant market for timber and woodfuel in Ireland right now. Weather conditions were cold but dry, and site conditions were perfect over the two days.

Timber Prices

Timber prices have improved since the last quarter of 2016 with roadside prices currently averaging: Commercial sawlog: €70, Pallet: €50 and Pulp €26. Demand is strong for all grades.

www.kestrelforestry.ie

Q&A

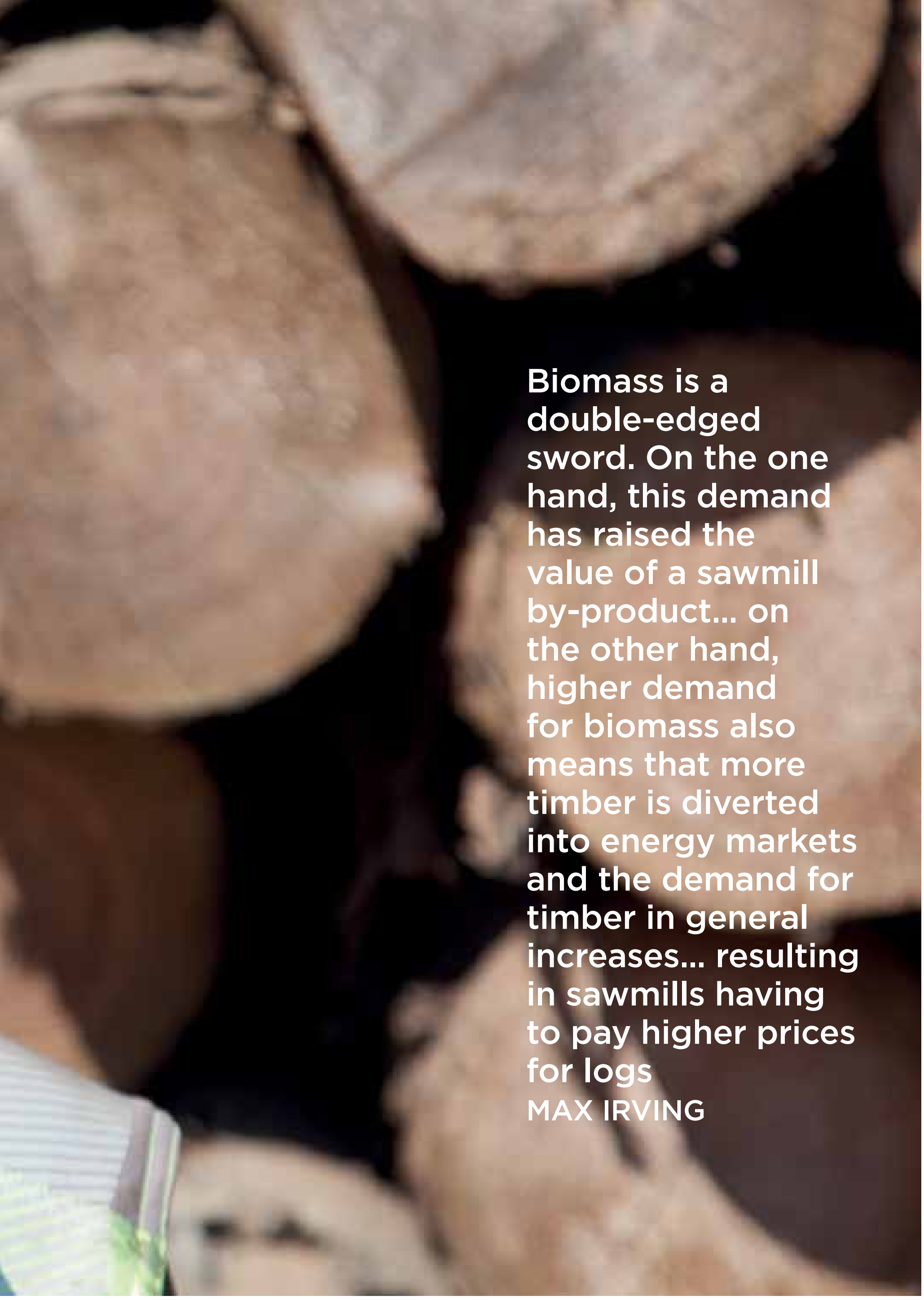
MAX IRVING

Stefanie Kaiser in conversation with Max Irving, of P. Irving & Sons Ltd, a traditional family-run sawmilling business in the North of England.

SK: Q: Two years ago, you invested in two biomass boilers and drying plants. How has your business changed since then?
MI: Biomass has become more of a valuable product, rather than a by-product that one needs to get rid of. It has become part of our product portfolio. That is why we decided to invest in the boilers to produce heat for a woodchip drying system, and to be able to sell it as ready-to-use woodfuel.
And with the new boilers we benefit from RHI payments, of course. This added income allows us to invest in other areas of the business. We are thinking of investing in a kiln. We are currently not using the boilers to its full capacity, and we could use the surplus heat to dry our fencing products and heat-treat our pallet boards as well. We would be able to sell a higher quality product but would also save money on haulage costs.

Do you use the boiler to heat the premises or even for power?
No, only to dry woodchip for now. However, in the past, my father had considered generating electricity from woodchip through gasification. But in the end, it looked like for our size of company it wasn't economically feasible. We also struggled to find a plant working consistently at our scale with this technology and we did not want this investment risk. There was also the issue of having to employ somebody who is knowledgeable of this technology. We are not ruling it out, however, as we have the raw material and we have an energy demand, we just need to be confident in the investment.

Are you using any other renewable energies for your premises?
Yes, in the last two years we have put solar panels on two of our sawmill



> **Biomass is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, this demand has raised the value of a sawmill by-product… on the other hand, higher demand for biomass also means that more timber is diverted into energy markets and the demand for timber in general increases… resulting in sawmills having to pay higher prices for logs**
> MAX IRVING

buildings and are looking to put up more on two other buildings. With these extra solar panels, we would generate nearly enough electricity as estimated in the gasification plants that we have considered - plus without loosing space in an already tight yard. The joy with solar is that you can let it work itself and there is very little time taken up to keep them running.

Tell me a bit more about how trends in the biomass market have influenced business decisions of sawmillers like yourself.

Woodfuel has definitely become a more important product for all those companies that deal with forestry products. Demand has increased considerably due to the RHI creating incentives for the use of biomass as a renewable energy source, in particular for consumers such as large hotels, schools or hospitals. And of course, this has right now a positive impact on sawmills who produce this type of fuels as a by-product.

Is this increasing demand for biomass sustainable?

Biomass is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, this demand has raised the value of a sawmill by-product, but on the other hand, higher demand for biomass also means that more timber is diverted into energy markets and the demand for timber in general increases. This is resulting in sawmills having to pay higher prices for logs because the 'poor end' of the tree is becoming more valuable. So, is it sustainable? Probably not. For us, and probably a lot of other sawmills, one of the biggest concerns is where the timber will come from. In other words, although we can see that a more valuable biomass has created an incentive for the management of unmanaged forests, what happens when there is less and less timber in the future? The issue with biomass and the funding through the RHI is that it distorts the market and we compete for our stock against a new market that is subsidised.

If we wanted to use a tree as a resource sustainably, we would probably follow the cascade of wood use. We would only send wood into biomass markets that is not usable for any higher-value purpose. Woodchip or biomass should be considered as the end of the product life. But nowadays, market factors dictate how a resource is used, and this might not always be the most sustainable way.

What is your opinion on the RHI subsidies? What opportunities does it create and what challenges does it bring?

I think the basis of incentivizing the use of biomass is good. In Scandinavian countries or Central Europe, this has been happening for years. But the difference is that those countries have a significantly higher woodland cover and therefore wood resource. I think that we need in the UK is closer monitoring to make sure the RHI doesn't create the wrong incentives. Nobody would buy extra oil or gas in summer, as they would have less demand compared to the winter months. However now, they might keep the boilers running more than actually needed, because they are getting paid for it through the RHI. Of course, in a lot of cases, this could not be a misuse of the grant, as it might give companies more opportunities to diversify with more affordable energy available. The problem is if companies only use biomass to get the grants. It's when the grant becomes the purpose that we have a problem.

In our case for example, it has opened opportunities. We had never thought of drying woodchip before as there wasn't the demand for it and it may not have been financially viable previously. The RHI definitely helps as an additional income stream. Or in the case of kilning: we are using our own co-product, the biomass, burning it to produce heat which eventually leads to an added value for our fencing products and importantly our customers. It's a great concept, almost a bit like circular economy. This is how sawmills in America often work.

Continued on p27

Continued from p25

Are there any incentives for rural biomass users to grow timber for their own chip supply?

A lot of farmers in the area now use biomass boilers and they are noticing how woodchip prices have gone up over the last few years because of increased demand. I ask them: where will you get your fuel supply from in the future? You've got 20 years of RHI payments and therefore you will want to continue using the boiler.

One of my best friends has a farm and its only now that he has bought a biomass boiler for heating that he has become interested in timber; because he needs it for energy. I help him with supplying timber from harvesting sites, but now I keep saying to him: "If you have any marginal land that you don't use for any of your core farming activities, would it not be useful to plant this land up? Then in a few years' time you can start using the thinnings for your boiler."

I offered him to take care of his forestry activities on his land. We could pay for the planting, the management and the harvesting and would then keep part of the timber and he could keep the biomass or any material he has demand for on his farm.

Another barrier are grants. We would need good grants that make it very interesting for farmers to plant trees. A lot of the grants for smaller plantings focus on native woodlands, I think, but less on purely productive woodlands that are planted as part of a diversified farm portfolio. In our country, there is still a lot of land that could be used for forestry.

How do you think the processing sector is future-proofing itself?

I think it is business-as-usual until anything alters. Let's say the Forestry Commission decides to plant less Sitka spruce but a

"All our investments are based on the business approach of my grand-dad and my dad – I feel our unique selling point is our flexibility.

set of other species, eg for reasons of diversification for pest resilience. Knowing this, the long rotations in forestry give the processing sector enough time to make adjustments. If suddenly we anticipate an increase in, let's say, Western Red Cedar, then we can start finding markets for it. Speak to our customers to see how they could utilise different timbers.

And are you, as a processor, preparing for the anticipated drop in timber supply?[1]

Part of the discussion at the Roots to Prosperity meetings with Oliver Combe is that in the North of England, the volume we are going to be in deficit is the same size of either a Grizedale or a Kielder. This is a massive amount, and what are the chances of this scale of new planting? You can see the struggles of the Doddington forest creation scheme[2] and this is a small percentage of the volumes required in the industry.

But does this prospect somehow affect your investment decisions?

Yes, it does as we are trying to predict the market going forward. We have been planning our next investment since we installed the biomass system, and this should be in place in early 2018. We are replacing our board edging line and rather than replacing the machine like-for-like, we have tried to look at more future-proof options. We have considered things like where logs will be sourced from in the future, or how log sizes might change. If we consider the upcoming drop in timber supply in the next two decades, at some point thinning's and smaller diameter timber will become more important.

Our new line will give us greater flexibility in regards to cutting speed and cutting depth. We currently have a 40mm cut depth for our boards, however this line will be able to cut to a maximum depth of 100mm and will be able to cut a cant as well as a sideboard. This means we can cut a greater array of products (higher recovery percentage hopefully) as well as cutting a smaller log quicker, which is needed to maintain production levels.

All our investments are based on the business approach of my granddad and my dad – I feel our unique selling point is our flexibility. This is where we benefit from being a medium-sized company – it allows us to be more responsive to changing external factors via our investments. If we see an opportunity, we can act fairly fast.

And to come back to future-proofing – biomass is going to be a big part of our future. We might only be using a fifth of our residues right now for our own heating needs and for dried woodchip. There is more scope there for investment. It would be nice to use as much as we can of our by-products and convert it into a higher-end product.

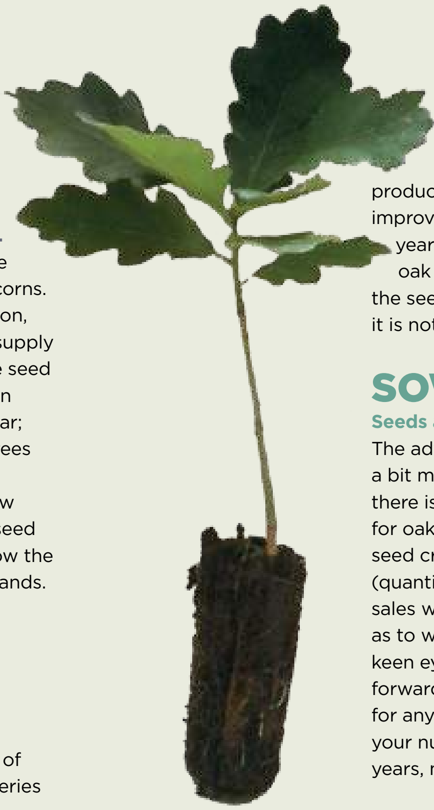
REFERENCES & RESOURCES

1: *The Missing Millions: Protecting Jobs and Cutting Carbon* is a Confor report available on our website

2: See *The Doddington test: is England open for new forest creation?* FTN April 2017, p10

The Life of a Tree Chapter 1: Nursery

OAK 1–3 years from seed collection to sale to the forester



COLLECT

Seed is collected in autumn (October – November).
Seeds are picked out of woodlands; directly from the forest floor, or from nets deliberately laid to catch acorns. It is important to bag the seed in a dry, clean condition, and get it to the seed house with no delays. Acorn supply cannot be predicted more than a few months before seed collection; it is controlled by nature. Seed will form in the east of the country one year, or west the next year; wherever the springtime weather is kind when the trees are flowering. Oak breeding work is underway (see www.futuretrees.org/our-work/oak) however the slow growth of oak means a reliable supply of improved seed from seed orchards remains a pipedream, and for now the industry continues to collect from stands and woodlands.

STORE UP TO 1 YEAR

Seed storage is not traditionally possible with 'recalcitrant' species like oak, but now sometimes possible for one year.
New techniques are now beginning to allow storage of acorns from one season to the next! This helps nurseries produce a steady supply of oak for the industry; great improvements from only a few years ago when poor seed years meant no acorns for nurseries, and disruptions in oak supply to foresters. Success of storage depends on the seed quantity and quality, and autumn weather though; it is not a guaranteed option every year.

SOW

Seeds are sown October – April.
The advancement of oak seed storage is starting to enable a bit more forward planning than previously, nevertheless there is still little point in placing an advance seed order for oak because supply cannot be confirmed until the seed crop is assessed. **Nurseries base their seed order (1)** (quantities and provenances of seed) on previous years sales with feedback from their customers and the industry as to whether demands might increase or decrease. A keen eye on the grant system situation, and an ear out for forward orders and contract growing are requisite tools for any nursery trying to forecast their markets. Talk to your nursery about your planting plans for the next few years, not just this year; your feedback and plans are truly

DOUGLAS FIR 2-20 years from seed collection to sale to the forester

COLLECT	STORE

COLLECT

Seed is collected in autumn (September)
Cones are picked from stands in the forest by hand, by climbing trees; a hands on task with no room for error! Picking seeds by tree climbing is more difficult, slower and more expensive than collecting seed from the forest floor or from hedgerows. Breeding work has resulted in a number of Douglas fir seed orchards in the UK, USA and Europe (particularly France). Seed from these seed sources is widely available in the UK nursery trade as well as seed from forestry quality stands in the USA and UK.

STORE 0-20 YEARS

Seed can be sown fresh or stored for over 20 years.
Following collection, seed is extracted over the winter months by heating cones gently in a kiln. The moisture content of the seed is calculated most commonly by weighing a small portion of seeds, drying them in an oven overnight and comparing the dried weight to the previous

weight. Carefully dried seeds can be stored for over 20 years in the cold store, which is great news for nurseries as supply can therefore be fairly reliable providing seed houses are happy to collect a lot of seed in good years and store it. **Forward planning of Douglas fir seed orders and sowing (1)** is a practical possibility, unlike some nursery species!

SOW

Seeds are sown April – July.
Douglas fir seed is usually broadcast and sown on the surface, and covered with a thin layer of substrate rather than being drilled down into the soil. The sowing machinery is carefully calibrated to scatter or position the seeds at an exact rate; the seedlings must be spaced precisely to ensure they grow into strong, balanced plants. Poor seed sowing resulting in seedlings being sown too densely or too sparsely will **greatly affect the crop quality, quantity and therefore profitability (4)**. There is no room for error by the nursery during sowing season!

In the next few editions of FTN we will be following the life journey taken by a tree as it passes through the hands of a series of growers, from seed to harvest and final use of timber. Certain themes recur several times during the Life of a Tree, numbered in text:

1. **Prediction of future markets**
2. **Governance and external certification**
3. **Challenges for growers**
4. **Profits and purpose of growing**

COLLECT | STORE | SOW | GROW | DISPATCH

valuable! Acorns can be sown immediately after collection in the autumn, or in the spring. The seeds are drilled below the soil surface. Roots will begin growing downwards soon after sowing, but the seedlings will not emerge until spring. The variable size of oak seeds means nurseries often sow them sorted by size to produce a more uniform crop. Larger acorns usually mean larger plants, but the **profitability (4)** of a crop is really determined by its uniformity. **Number of saleable trees per nursery metre is key (4)**, and non-uniform crops where plants shade each other out, and which take longer to grade, are never preferable.

GROW

Growth on the nursery (1-2 years).

Oaks grow in spurts, or 'flushes', usually three a year. The oak tree will source much of the energy for its first flush of growth from its acorn, but needs plentiful fertiliser and irrigation for subsequent growth. Oak crops must be checked by **Government Plant Health staff for notifiable pests and pathogens (e.g. oak processionary moth, *Cryphonectria parasitica* and *Phytophthora ramorum*) (2)**, and by nursery staff for more **commonplace problems (powdery mildew, aphids and oak bud midge). Nurseries apply pesticides to protect crops against commonplace problems (3)**. **When oak is imported to the UK from European nurseries, a 'pre import notification' (2)** must be made by the purchaser; this enables Plant Health officials keep track of what's coming into the country, and where it's coming from. Buying home grown plants is the best option for British foresters and nurseries alike.

SOW | GROW | DISPATCH

GROW

Growth on the nursery (2-3 years).

Douglas fir (like most conifers) is slower growing and will stay on the nursery about a year longer than most broadleaves. It is susceptible to **relatively few commonplace pests and diseases (3)**. Once the new seedlings are strong enough to be safe from damping off diseases, Douglas fir rarely struggles with pests or diseases on the nursery, and requires relatively few pesticide applications so long as it receives adequate nutrition. **Government plant health staff check Douglas fir crops are clear of notifiable diseases such as Poplar rust, and pitch pine canker, both of which can affect Douglas fir (2)**. It would be a big deal and likely to be featured in Plant Health news if a notifiable disease were to be found on a British nursery; the crop would have to be destroyed and trading of that species may not be possible from that site in future years. Let's all hope no such headlines are featured any time soon! **Winter weather can affect conifers and evergreens on the nursery (3)**; drying winds can be especially desiccating to foliage when roots are frozen and unable to draw up water, and late spring frosts (the nurseries worst nightmare!) can catch soft new growth once buds have burst. This is where the differences between seed provenances really become apparent; buds that burst even a few days later (thereby avoiding more frosty mornings) will make sure growth is not hindered during the growing season at all. With so much choice available in Douglas fir seed provenance, talking to your nursery to ensure they are growing the best seed provenance for your site is a must.

SALE AND DISPATCH TO THE FORESTER

Most despatching occurs in winter when the trees are dormant. Trees are lifted from the fields or trays, packaged and despatched according to the foresters requirements, ready to begin chapter 2 of the Life of a Tree (to be continued in the August edition of FTN).

The Bradford-Hutt system: success or failure?

Gary Kerr (Forest Research) and **Mark Snellgrove** (Tavistock Estate forester) review the results of applying the system for 54 years at Tavistock Estate, Devon.

Have you ever heard of the Bradford-Hutt system? It is a unique method for transforming young even-aged stands to achieve continuous cover. Back in the 1960s, when the system first started at the Tavistock Estate in Devon, the system was the subject of hot debate in forestry. However, despite much criticism and its inability to fit the grant mechanisms at the time, the system was put into practice and, commendably, has been followed through to the present day.

The Bradford-Hutt system is unique because it is not inspired by traditional silvicultural systems such as shelterwood or selection. Instead, the system takes the main elements of clearfelling, ie planting, thinning and felling, and organizes them on a small-scale grid pattern in such a way that there will be continuous canopy cover and good access for forest operations. Another reason why it's unique is because nobody else, anywhere in the world, has designed and implemented such a system!

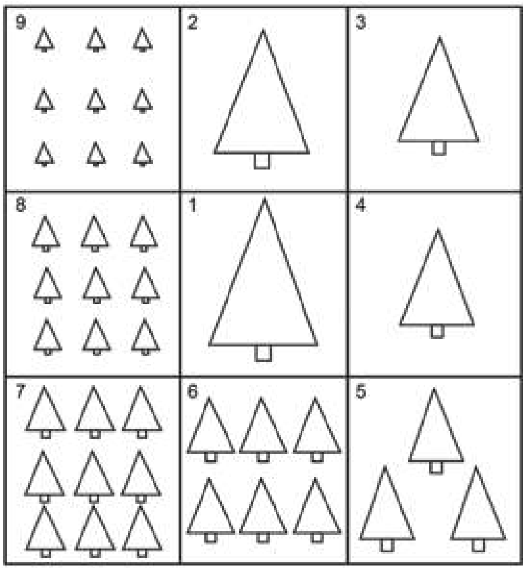
To learn more about the Bradford-Hutt system and its relevance to modern forestry in Britain we recently undertook a project to review results after 54 years of application. The results have recently been published in a scientific paper[1] and this has led to international recognition for what has been achieved at Tavistock.

The project was undertaken in 2014, at the end of the first full 54 year cycle as specified in the initial 1960 Bradford-Hutt plan. The last account of the system was published in 1994 so we thought it was a good time to: 1, examine the species composition and structure produced; 2, understand if the system has been successful; and 3, suggest what lessons can be learned and applied elsewhere.

The Bradford-Hutt System

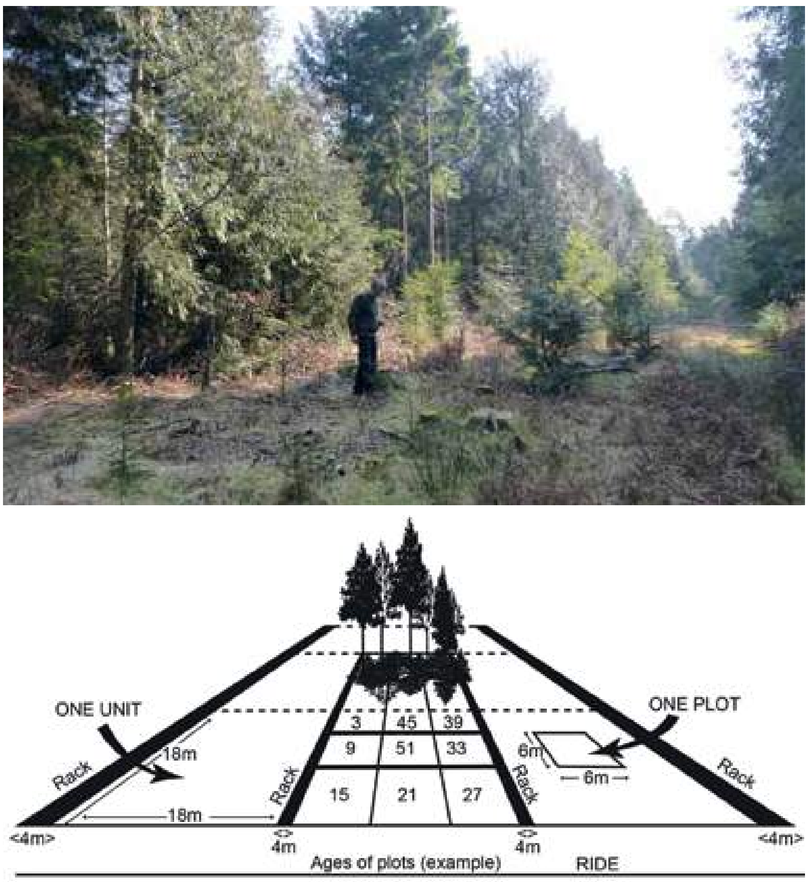
The Bradford-Hutt system was devised by the sixth Earl of Bradford and his forester Phil Hutt, who applied the approach at the Tavistock Estate in Devon. Starting in 1960, it marked the start of a large-scale experiment to see how the system worked in practice.

FIGURE 1



Plot	Age	No. of trees
1	54	1
2	48	1
3	42	1
4	36	1
5	30	3-4
6	24	6-7
7	18	9
8	12	9
9	6	9

FIGURE 2



The system is made up of 'Units' that are 18m x 18m square. Each Unit is in turn divided into nine Plots, each of 6m x 6m (Figure 1).

Transformation of the existing stand starts with the felling of all the overstorey trees in the central plot, Plot 1, followed by the planting of nine trees in the Plot at a spacing of 2m x 2m with a species that is shade tolerant. Six years later this process is repeated in Plot 2 and then repeated every six years sequentially in a characteristic 'spiral pattern' in Plots 3 to 9, with the last felling/planting being in Plot 9. Once the sequence had been completed after 54 years, the idea was that one tree would be felled and extracted from each Plot every six years.

At all stages of implementation the plan specified that all plots should be considered for thinning. To avoid damage to newly planted trees when harvesting, the system had regularly spaced parallel extraction racks placed every 18m running between each line of Units (Figure 2).

Early records describing the ideas behind the Bradford-Hutt system have now been published along with the scientific paper[1] of the main results. From these documents it is clear that the main drivers for the development of the system were to balance producing a high proportion of quality timber along with protecting the forest from: soil erosion, frost, insect damage, fungal attack and wind; as well as preservation of ecological habitats and creating a forest that was aesthetically more desirable.

> "The Bradford-Hutt system is unique because it is not inspired by traditional silvicultural systems such as shelterwood or selection.

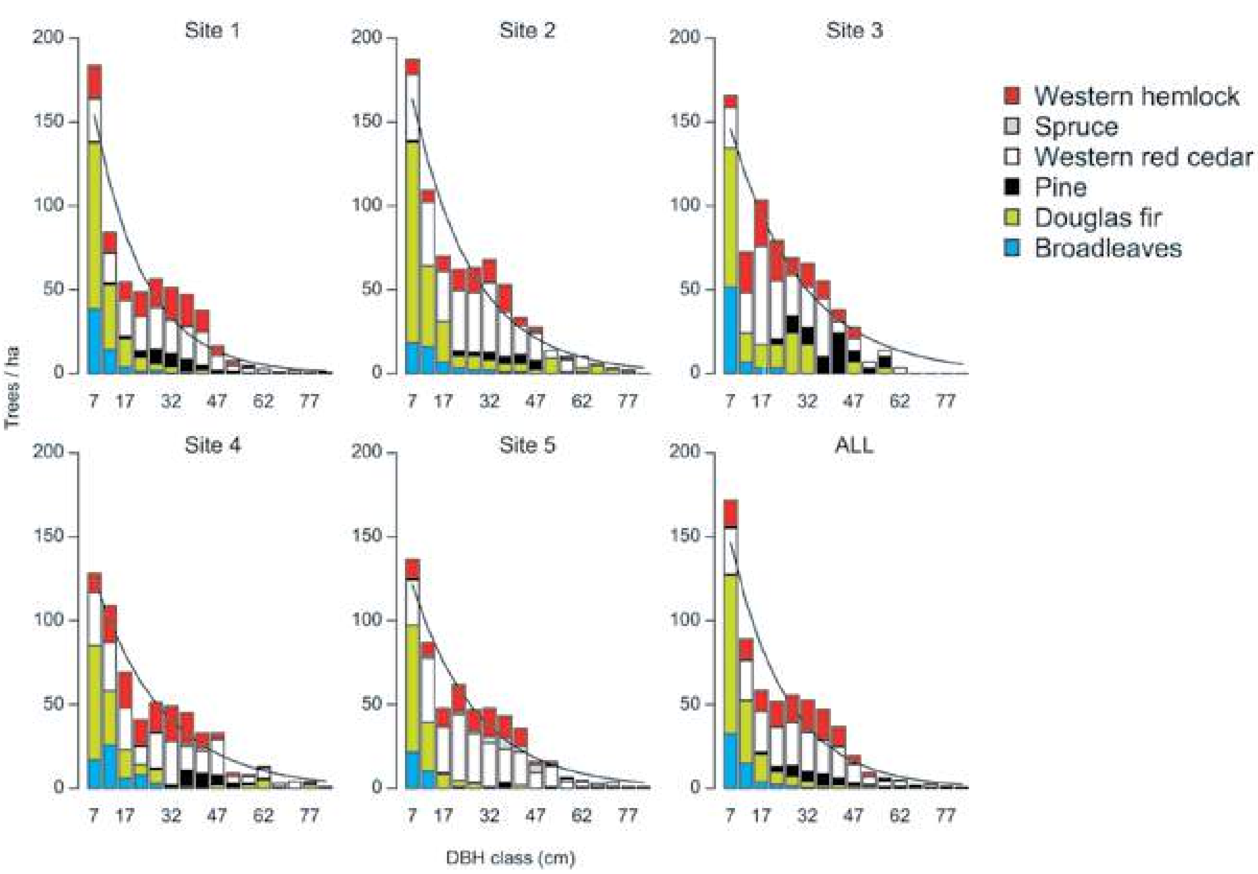
Species composition and structure

Each of the five woodlands in which the Bradford-Hutt system has been applied now has a characteristic 'reverse-J' diameter distribution (Figure 3), with a small number of big trees, a moderate number of medium sized trees and many small trees. This is characteristic of forests with an uneven-aged structure and means a number of options are available for future management, including continued application of the Bradford-Hutt system (for more on this read the scientific paper[1]).

In terms of species composition, the stands were initially mainly Scots pine, larch and Douglas fir. The early plantings were of shade tolerant species in Plots 1-3, mainly western hemlock and western red cedar; Douglas fir was planted later. However, the Douglas fir was not always a great success due to the lack of basal area control in the application of thinning. Some species included in the early plantings, particularly Nothofagus, have not been successful. Other species planted in small quantities

Continued on p33

FIGURE 3



Continued on p31

such as coast redwood, Leyland cypress and Norway spruce have been successful and could have been deployed more widely. However, as can be seen from Figure 3, each of the five areas has a diverse species composition and would fulfil modern expectations of resilience.

Has the Bradford-Hutt system been successful?

After 54 years, the system has created mixed species stands with an uneven-age structure that meet the vision of the sixth Earl of Bradford and Phil Hutt for a 'Continuous Cover Forestry System'. It now seems clear that the experiment has been a success but this was not so clear earlier in the life of the project and hence it has not been widely applied elsewhere.

The lack of uptake elsewhere is probably to do with concerns about costs and perceptions of the complexity of the system. Unfortunately, there is no readily available information on the costs of implementing the Bradford-Hutt system. Mark Snellgrove, the current forest manager, judges that the costs of the system compared to other woodland on the Estate are similar for level ground but when applied to steep ground the costs of the Bradford-Hutt system are higher.

International recognition

When the scientific paper describing the results of the study was being reviewed by international experts, Dr. Geoff Wang (Clemson University, South Carolina, USA) commented: "When I teach silviculture classes I ask my students to visualize a balanced uneven-aged stand as a mosaic of small even-aged patches with all age classes equally represented in area. Therefore, I'm delighted to see that this idealistic management has actually been practised in Britain through a 54 year cycle". This comment emphasizes the international significance of what has been achieved at Tavistock.

An inspiration for forest managers

The sixth Earl of Bradford and Phil Hutt deserve credit for their pioneering efforts to examine alternatives to clearfell some 30-40 years before continuous cover forestry became part of mainstream forest management in Britain. Their Bradford-Hutt system has provided a unique and valuable example of forestry practice which can be used to inspire and inform contemporary approaches to continuous cover management and the creation of more 'resilient' woodlands.

REFERENCES & RESOURCES

1: 1 Kerr, G., Snellgrove, M., Hale, S. and Stokes, V. (2017) *The Bradford-Hutt system for transforming young even-aged stands to continuous cover management.* Forestry, (doi: 10.1093/forestry/cpx009)]

Further information on CCF: www.forestry.gov.uk/fr/ccf

The research was funded by the Forestry Commission and the Tavistock Estate (owner: Rt. Hon. 7th Earl of Bradford; Agent: James Squier). For more information and to request a copy of the research paper contact gary.kerr@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

BRADFORD-HUTT: WHAT LESSONS CAN BE LEARNED?

Based on the findings of the project we think there are four main lessons that can be taken from the experience of applying the Bradford-Hutt system at Tavistock:

1

Continuity of management. The most important reason for success is the continuity of management; since its implementation there have only been four forest managers, all of whom have been committed to the Bradford-Hutt system. This success acts as a reminder that policies and approaches which aim to diversify species and forest structure need to be consistently followed for long periods in order to achieve success.

2

The importance of access. One excellent aspect of the system is the regularly spaced extraction racks for operational access. They have been successful in providing a clear zone where access is the priority.

3

The need for 'adaptive forest management', that is having clear objectives for management and monitoring progress against those objectives so that adjustments can be made according to how things are working in practice. For example, from early documents it is clear that there was a strong preference for planting to maintain control of species composition. This was carried on despite the appearance of natural regeneration, which could have been better utilised if it was of desirable species. The lack of basal area guidance for thinning has also been noted and led to a problem for Douglas fir, which is less shade tolerant than western hemlock and western red cedar.

4

The importance of recording management actions. The forest managers have recorded a lot of management and silvicultural information and this has been important in unlocking what has happened in the past. However, it is a pity that better financial records were not kept to compare the Bradford-Hutt system with more traditional approaches to management.

"The most important reason for success is the continuity of management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Bowland Bionergy, now a team of seven, is currently managed by directors Mike Ingoldby, Anne Seed and Ralph Assheton, whose family owns the Smithfield estate.

Quality at core for biomass pioneers

Stefanie Kaiser visits Bowland Bioenergy and discovers a feel-good mix of professionalism and warming family business atmosphere

On a sunny late morning in May, I arrive at Smithfield estate near the picturesque Downham village in Lancashire. Mike Ingoldby, one of Bowland's directors, is already waiting at the gate of his office premises – as he puts it, "we are located behind an anonymous green door". Behind the narrow wooden door of what used to be a farm barn, I am surprised to find a small biomass lab, offices for seven people and an upstairs kitchen/meeting area with a contemporary touch of industrial repurposing.

Mike introduces me to co-director Anne Seed. I instantly feel welcome and I want to know more about the funding of their business in pre-RHI times.

The company was formed over ten years ago by founding partners Mike Ingoldby and Ralph Assheton. Mike worked at the Forestry Commission at the time and he and Ralph worked together on a project looking at ways to increase the income for local woodland owners. With growing interest in the topic, Mike left the FC and together with Ralph formed Bowland Bioenergy in 2005. "We were pretty much 'first kid on the block'. We started by felling some trees from Ralph's estate, bought a chipper and produced the first chip. That put us in a position where we could approach people and say 'look, we can produce woodchip for you'. At that point it was more than just an idea".

They had a vision and although there were no subsidies for biomass back then, they came in at the right time. "Within 2-3 months of starting the business, we already had management companies approaching us and telling us that they had secured some public building contracts which would be heated by biomass. They needed fuel for those buildings within 18 months! We didn't have any competitors in the county at that time, although there were already some companies in other areas of the UK, for example ForestFuels in the Southwest."

Nowadays, the well established company prides itself of its close relationship with its customers. "We look after them and go the extra mile, if necessary. We are accommodating and flexible. Clients appreciate it and that is the best publicity for us."

The company feeds boilers from about 15kW to 999kW. The bulk of the bigger ones are probably around the 500kW mark, those are mostly used in schools or public buildings. Some costumers might need a wagon delivery (=27,000kWh/40m^3) every day, some people order once, twice or three times a week, a month. A typical school takes around a lorry load a week. A typical small business, eg holiday cottages, might take a ton of pellets a month.

Timber yards

Anne and Mike take me on a tour of the production premises. We start at one of the five small timber yards, where stocks are low at the end of the season.

Mike explains that sometimes oversized logs would come in, that, on occasions, end up in the biomass market due to inefficient logistics at harvesting sites. The chippers can cope with up to 40cm dbh. It does mean extra work to pre-split those large

Continued on p37

1: Anne enjoying a ride on the loader, feeding wet chip into the dryer
2: : Biomass sample kept in the company's laboratory
3: Woodchip leaving the dryer

Continued from p35
timbers, though. "If you are not fussy about accepting supply, people will bring you timber happily. The only issue can be really twisted or forked logs, as they don't go through the chipper. What we really don't accept are rotten logs", says Mike.

"The price difference between sawlogs and biomass is getting smaller for sure. The price we have to pay for our material has more than doubled over the last five years. This puts a lot of pressure on us because we have a ceiling on how much we can charge our customers, because of the competition from other energy sources. So, we get by, but the markets are not as favourable for us as they used to be."

We move on to the production yard to see how logs are processed into ready-to-use woodfuel. But first, we stop for a group picture of the team, followed by a fun photo shoot on one of the woodchip mountains.

The fairly small chipper processes about a lorry load of timber (24t) in a bit over an hour. The wet chip is fed into the dryer. This all happens in the same yard. The dryer does not have a moisture sensor – the drying time is determined from experience, and samples of each lorry load are tested for moisture and particles for quality assurance.

Timber from different tree species is processed. The wood is identified by arrival date and origin and from these factors the required drying time is calculated. Different species can be dried at the same time, the material would be intimately mixed. Some species, such as pine require different drying times, and are treated separately.

"Once the chip is dry, the species doesn't really matter that much anymore", explains Mike. Two loads are dried per working day. The chip is dried a bit more than needed, as it will reabsorb some moisture when stored. The heat for the drying facility comes from the company's own biomass boiler, just a few metres away. The boiler also heats the business premises.

Quality assurance

At the end of the tour, Mike and Anne take me to their small laboratory, where they regularly analyse woodchip samples. From the moment I met Anne and Mike, it was clear to me that quality assurance was a core priority for Bowland Bioenergy.

"Every boiler has a specification for the maximum moisture content of the chip it can burn, and that's the minimum quality that should be supplied, of course. But there are suppliers that will sell to the unsuspecting anything they can get away with. Regardless of chip size, quality, content and moisture content" said Mike.

"In theory, the regulation is there to make sure only suitable fuel is burned. But enforcement of this appears somewhat lacking.

"Standards for quality are primarily about particle size. ISO 17225 is the current standard which focuses on fuel specification. But for some reason, there is a huge inertia in the sector to use this standard which has superceded the previous ones. People still quote the old standards. It is surprising that some of the UK's quality assurance analysts for woodfuel still test against Onörm and EN Standards. There is a belief that some boilers cannot burn the new standard of fuel. But in reality, the ISO standard generally has a tighter specification than the old one. The original standard allowed you to have around 21% of small and fine particles. the new standard only allows less than 8% of fines. And the less finer particles you have, the better the quality.

"We ourselves put a lot of effort in our own quality assurance and we would like to raise the standard within the industry. We take a random sample of every single load that goes out, test it a minimum of five times and keep the samples for a three months.

"We were the first chip producer to be accredited by the HETAS Scheme (now Woodsure) and more recently in demonstrating our commitment to quality of product and service we won the Ribble Valley Business Award followed by the Red Rose Award which is a hotly contested county-wide competition."

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Keeping powerlines in the clear

The challenge of keeping Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks' powerlines free of trees and foliage falls to the group's dedicated tree cutting and harvesting teams

Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) owns and operates 106,000 substations and 130,000km of overhead and underground cables across one third of the UK, and is responsible for maintaining supplies to approximately 3.7m homes and businesses.

In Scotland, a large proportion of its electricity network runs through wooded areas and in particular, commercial forestry. Trees and foliage can pose a risk to the electricity network, with contact to overhead lines causing faults and outages. To manage this, SSEN has a dedicated tree cutting department consisting of 130 chainsaw operatives, tree climbers, surveyors, managers and planners responsible for maintaining the required statutory wayleave clearances.

A small specialist harvesting team works along side the tree cutting department and is responsible for harvesting liaison, facilitation of third party outages associated with forestry works, GS6 advice and live line harvesting.

Harvesting liaison

SSEN has three harvesting liaison managers (HLMs) based regionally in the North East, the Highlands and in Tayside. They are available to provide advice for forest managers with particular reference to long-term felling plans, fencing, restocking and sequencing of works adjacent to the network. The HLMs are particularly keen to engage closely with the forest industry and will attend seminars, conferences and engagement events as well as local planning meetings on request.

Third party forestry outages

Landowners, forestry management companies, timber merchants, contractors and anyone else involved in forestry works have a responsibility under FISA 804 to start discussions with the network operator at least two months in advance of starting any works that are within two tree lengths of a live conductor. The majority of works requiring an outage involve tree felling or commercial timber harvesting. Specialist members of staff are on hand to carry out amber zone assessments, provide advice on the method and progression of works adjacent to the network and facilitate an outage or alternative solution to ensure that forestry works are carried out safely and with no risk to either the third party or the network.

GS6 advice

Where works are required to be carried out by a third party in close proximity to a live network, such as forest road construction and maintenance, fencing, tractor mounted flailing and mulching and extraction of timber under overhead lines, all works must be carried out in accordance with HSE GS6. This includes a requirement to seek network operator approval and SSEN can provide advice on how to carry out works in accordance with GS6 and where required, can provide safe working clearances for the transport of timber, plant and equipment.

Live line harvesting

The harvesting team has two purpose-built Tigercat Harvesters configured to carry out felling within a

Continued on p40

Premier pioneers biomass savings

World-leading gasification system sees group go carbon neutral

Premier Forest/Grant Wyness

Three years ago, the team at Premier Forest Group embarked on an intense and investment-heavy drive to push sustainability to the forefront of the business.

The jewel in the crown of its programme was the installation of a full biomass gasification system at its South Wales headquarters in April 2016. The system, one of the first of its kind in the UK, has gone on to save the business £84,000 in waste disposal and electricity costs in its first year.

The £850,000 project to bring the gasification system from India to Newport was two years in the making. The Ankur WBG Gasifier has transformed the business' waste management and energy use, converting all landfill waste from the site into a combustible gas mixture. The power derived from this process creates renewable energy that now provides more than enough electricity for the entire 33,200m^2 site, with excess electricity being exported to the National Grid.

Not only does the gasifier provide clean energy for the site, which is home to Premier Forest Products and Premier Forest Processing, it has also significantly reduced the business' impact on landfill.

Every year 1250 tonnes of wood waste is created on site, including plywood and OSB chipboard off-cuts and wooden packaging. This required the hire of 30 skips a year, in addition to 30 lorries to transport the waste to landfill, at an annual cost of £26,000. Now all wood waste is recycled into energy in the gasifier.

John Nelmes, a divisional director at Premier Forest Group, pioneered the project with Dilwyn Howells, Executive Director "A system of this size and scale had never been brought to the UK before so it was a challenge. We built a bespoke modular building on site in Newport, measuring 243m^2, to house the system, which was transported by boat from India alongside the team from Ankur. It took five months to install it on site and this was overseen by Ankur's specialist team.

"As soon as it was fired up, the savings were instant. We are already carbon neutral and saving thousands of pounds in wood waste disposal and electricity costs every month. We are an ambitious group and so savings like these allow us to plough more money back into our business to continue with our growth plans."

Premier Forest Group is already planning a second gasifier at Premier Forest Sawmilling in Crumlin, South Wales, in order to produce enough electricity to heat its kilns and reduce the number of biomass lorries on the road.

Premier Forest Group is one of the UK's leading vertically integrated timber groups. It operates from 15 sites within the UK and Eire and is principally engaged in sawmilling, processing, importation and the distribution of timber and associated products. The group employs over 300 members of staff.

www.premierforest.co.uk

Continued from p39

falling distance of live overhead conductors under an ENA and HSE approved protocol. Having developed live line harvesting over the past 11 years, and gaining full approval relatively recently, they are believed to be the only network operator in the world with this capability at this time. The operation is carried out by a two-man team who are both electrically authorised and directly engaged by SSEN in accordance with ENA G96 and FISA 804.

The process includes utilising a specially-built fixed head harvester, but also requires electrical protection measures to be placed on the network during works. It is worth stressing that live line harvesting is an electrical operation and, as such, is a process which can only be carried out under the direct control of the network operator.

Where facilitating an outage for red zone felling proves particularly problematic, live line harvesting may be offered as a solution. Approximately 10% of all third party forestry outage requests are currently serviced through a live line harvesting solution and we expect this to rise to 20% over the next 12 to 18 months.

Scottish & Southern Electricity Networks

Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) is the trading name of three regulated network companies owned by SSE Plc. The three companies are Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission, Scottish Hydro Electric Power Distribution and Southern Electric Power Distribution.

GUIDANCE & ADVICE

Email the SSEN harvesting team for general guidance, GS6 advice, to request an outage for forestry works or discuss live line harvesting, forestry-outages@sse.com

For general enquiries relating to working in proximity of an overhead lines, line heights and passing clearances call 0800 048 3516.

In the case of an emergency call 105.

The importance of quality woodfuel

With wood burning stoves estimated to account for 10% of the Government's carbon reduction targets by 2020, the efficiency of modern heating appliances is at the forefront of both the industry's and consumers' minds. Yet, while manufacturers can continue to develop new and enhanced products to improve efficiency, it is the critical issue of the quality of the used woodfuel that is often overlooked.

Today, modern heating appliances and biomass boilers are highly engineered, efficient pieces of technology that do a fantastic job – but they can only do so much if the fuel burned in the appliance is not the right quality woodfuel. Even the most sophisticated of appliances could be relatively ineffective when it comes to reducing carbon if the user isn't burning the right wood. Think about it, if you bought a super clean energy-efficient car, would you choose to fill it with a fuel that you were unsure of? It's true that modern heating appliances are not as complex as car engines, but the same principles apply. Poor quality woodfuel leads to smoke and a poor fuel economy.

A healthy wood fuel industry partly depends on consumers being informed on the different fuel types, correct standards and processes. For wood pellet appliances we are approaching the same position as gas and oil where the European standard is recognised in the market place. The ENplus quality scheme is a benchmark for pellet quality and sign that the product allows for CO_2-neutral heating with the highest energy efficiency. All applications from UK-based pellet producers and traders must be made through HETAS.

However, a benchmark is yet to be recognised for logs and other wood fuels. As it stands, the supply chain is made up of many types and sizes of supplier. It is possible to purchase wet wood for seasoning, recycled wood (which should be a clean product that has not been chemically treated), wood that has been carefully chosen and ready to burn.

Moisture content

Woodsure advises ensuring burning properly sourced wood (hardwood timbers such as ash, birch and beech) and making sure it is around 20% moisture content. If seasoning at home, a moisture content meter is an extremely helpful tool for monitoring this.

Wet woodfuel is very inefficient as it demands a lot of heat to boil off the water before the appliance can give out the proper level of heat to the room, hot water or heating systems. Burning wet wood also creates a lot of smoke which damages the chimney and blackens the appliance.

Installers dealing with wood burners or biomass boilers will know that if it is not operated properly it will need extra servicing, maintenance and repair. Ultimately, it will cost more for the user to run, the benefits will be fewer and the environment will be harmed."

by **Helen Bentley-Fox**, director of Woodsure

In order for consumers to reduce carbon emissions, they must be given the right information and understand how to get the best from their appliance. Using clean, quality wood fuel is key to improving air quality and is a better use of our wood fuel reserves and forests. At the same time as keeping their conscience clear, consumers can enjoy fuel independence and the benefits of modern wood burning.

Woodsure is the UK's only woodfuel quality assurance scheme. The Woodsure Certification scheme ensures woodfuel meets EN and Onörm standards.

REFERENCES & RESOURCES

1: The Stove Industry Alliance

2: HETAS, the Heating Equipment Testing and Approvals Scheme authorised by government to operate approval schemes for installers, chimney sweeps, wood and solid fuel heating equipment, retailers and fuels, is the certification body for ENplus in the UK.

www.woodsure.co.uk

Download leaflets on choosing the correct wood fuel: www.hetas.co.uk (Advice section)

Connecting up supply chains

As technology innovator Steve Jobs once said: "Great things in business are never done by one person. They're done by a team of people." Connecting up supply chains from Britain's forests to the manufacturers is a team effort across industries, according to Grown in Britain's CEO, Dougal Driver

He said: "While Brexit could be useful, it is more beneficial in the long-term to present solid business arguments for getting more British-grown wood into supply chains. Recently we've been working with the joinery sector, producing specific literature to demonstrate the marketing advantages of using British-grown timber, including highlighting its social value."

Grown in Britain is also promoting links with the British Woodworking Federation's 'Made in Britain' campaign celebrating the high level of skill and wood knowledge amongst the nation's joiners.

Brexit is an on-going issue for the timber trading sector in the UK, with material price fluctuations likely to continue for some time to come. Yet it's not simply price concerns which are promoting timber merchants to gain a Grown in Britain chain of custody license. A pro-active attitude to corporate reputation has influenced leading timber merchant Arnold Laver & Co Ltd to gain Grown in Britain certification.

"We are a proud British company that trades on its heritage and reputation, so it's only right that we help to 'fly the flag' when it comes to supporting our own timber industry," says managing director Andrew Laver. "We felt that this was a good time to be supporting the development and expansion of our woodlands, particularly when there are so many conversations taking place about the UK's standing in both Europe and the world."

Some of the suite of new leaflets available from Grown in Britain

> It's only right that we help to 'fly the flag' when it comes to supporting our own timber industry
> ANDREW LAVER

Grown in Britain is also looking at other long-term factors which influence the market for British timber and wood products. Background research conducted through informal one-to-ones with key figures across the timber merchant, joinery and builders' merchants sector has revealed still-prevalent misconceptions about British timber, its properties and its availability. Grown in Britain will be countering these through a specific communications campaign in the months leading up to Grown in Britain Week in October.

"Grown in Britain Week is being held at the same time as UK Construction Week, further integrating the campaign with its end-user markets," said Dougal Driver. "Bringing the construction supply chain into the 'British timber team' is the most profitable way forward for everyone, pre- and post-Brexit," he added.

www.growninbritain.org

Exchange rates exchange rates

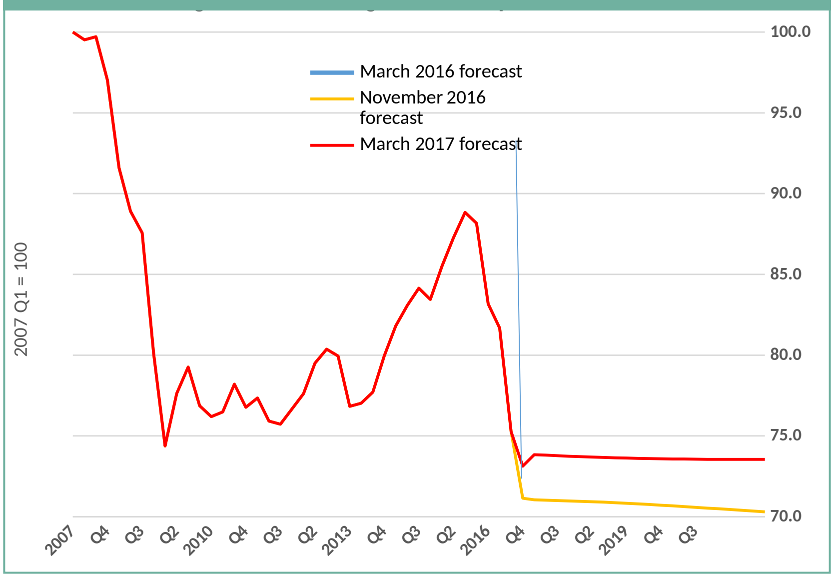
Peter Whitfield of Tilhill Forestry gives an overview of the international lumber market context and the impact of a weak Sterling on UK timber markets.

As a very large importer of sawn timber it is well known that the UK timber market is strongly influenced by international markets, in their broadest sense, and particularly exchange rates. Over the years it has been well documented how the relationship between the Sterling exchange rate and the fortunes of the UK domestic timber market have generally worked in an inverse ratio: a weak Sterling is good for the domestic timber processors and vice versa. The recent decline in the value of Sterling has been driven by political factors, particularly Brexit. The outlook remains uncertain and with uncertainty over what Brexit actually means, it is likely that the period of uncertainty will continue and, with it, a weak Sterling. Indeed, the Government's Office for Budget Responsibility has issued a fairly pessimistic forecast for the effective exchange rate shown in figure one.

The exchange rate has been one of the main influences on steadily climbing log prices in the UK, as evidenced in the graph printed with my last update in FTN. This trend has continued into 2017. This is markedly different to what is happening in continental Europe where there has been a downward trend in log prices resulting in a decline of the European Sawlog Price Index by 6.6% over the course of two years.

Sawlog prices have fallen faster in Europe than in the rest of the world for the past two years but are still higher than in North America, Oceania and Latin America, reports the Wood Resource Quarterly. During the past two years, sawlog prices (in Euro terms), have fallen the most in Finland, Norway, Poland, Austria and Estonia, all countries that are major exporters of softwood logs or lumber. The discrepancy between the global and European sawlog price indices reached its lowest level since 2006. Wood raw-material costs for European lumber producers have declined faster than in most other regions of the world over the past few years and sawmills on the continent have become more competitive. The European Sawlog Price Index (in US dollar terms) has fallen 19% from 2014 to 2016, while sawlog prices in North America and Latin America have declined by six percent and 13 percent respectively, during the same period.

FIGURE 1 Sterling effective exchange rate assumption (source OBR)



The effective exchange rate is a weighted average of the movements in cross-exchange rates against a basket of other currencies with the weights reflecting the relevant importance of the other currencies as measured by trade flows between the relevant countries.

Decline

The slowing demand for lumber in Europe has also resulted in a decline in log trade on the continent. WRI estimates that total trade of softwood logs will be down about 12% in 2016 as compared to the previous year and that shipments will be at their lowest level since the global financial crisis in 2008 and

differently, with 2016 imports of softwood sawn timber increasing by 5.2% to 6.19Mm^3, according to the latest information from the stats published by TTF. As can be seen from figure two, Sweden remains the single biggest exporter of timber to the UK and has remained fairly flat over the recent past. The increases in imports come mainly from Finland, Latvia, Russia and Germany. Some importers are targeting the UK domestic producers more directly by differentiating C16 from C24 graded timber and pricing accordingly. Sweden are less sensitive to exchange rates as they have such a large sawn timber capacity they have to move their volumes. Swedish mills anecdotally report an uplift in demand from China and North America again, a demand which had diminished significantly in recent years.

So where does this leave the UK market?

Currently saw log demand is as high as it has ever been and all mills are busy with good order books. Demand for standing timber is strong and vigorous competition continues to be the norm, supporting strong prices for forest owners selling standing sales. The major issue for standing timber buyers is the lack of demand for small roundwood. Kronospan's reduced demand for chipwood over the past 12 months has had its impact. A mild winter has reduced biomass demand to some extent and importantly the high levels of sawmill production has led to a surfeit of coproducts which has filled the board mills and biomass markets to the disadvantage of small roundwood. In addition to this all the large biomass CHP boilers in the North have concurrent maintenance shuts in May which reduces demand dramatically. Subsequently, small roundwood stocks are building around the country, most evident in Scotland.

The increased demand for timber is coming from exchange rate factors, increased economic activity and in particular house building. Increasingly timber frame is the preferred method of build with levels estimated to reach 27% this year across the UK. Scotland leads the way at 75% of all new builds being timber frame.

The Bank of England trimmed its UK economic growth forecasts for 2017 from 2% to 1.9% in May. The slowdown appears to be concentrated in consumer-facing sectors, partly reflecting the impact of sterling's past depreciation on household income and spending, according to the Bank's report. Inflation is also set to rise higher than forecast. Along with political uncertainty around Brexit it is unlikely that stability will come in the short term.

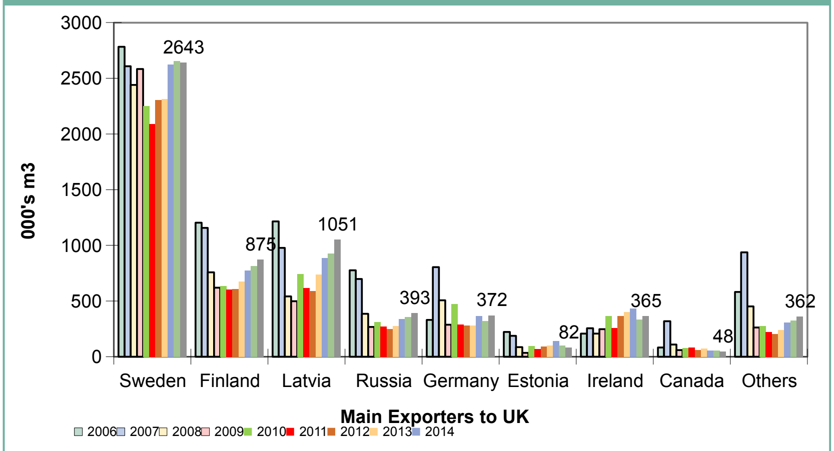
On the positive side, the exchange rate is likely to remain in our favour as discussed above and the downwards movement in oil prices as a result of over production should see a positive impact on operating costs and inflation. So, while uncertainty remains, there are up sides to the market and as we are such a significant importer of sawn timber there are always more opportunities for us to increase market share and develop the market in a positive direction favouring UK timber.

www.tilhill.com

2009. Some of the biggest decline in trade this year has been in exports from Norway, France, Ukraine and Latvia. Much of the recent decline has been the result of reduced demand for lumber in some markets and generally lower lumber prices in both domestic and export markets.

From a UK perspective this has translated slightly

FIGURE 2 Imported sawn softwood (source TTF)



Polarised markets

TIMBER AUCTIONS MARKET REPORT
Oliver Combe

Early in the year, in the light of Brexit, there was a strong body of opinion that we would see a steady weakening of the pound throughout the year until it stabilised at a level of €1.05 to €1.1 per GB pound. The reality has been that the markets have shown more confidence in the UK economy and the £ has stabilised in a band between €1.15 to €1.20 to the pound.

DOMESTIC DEMAND

After a slow start, demand has really picked up since Easter and has been strengthened by the run of fine weather in May. Sawmills are running at full capacity and are lifting timber as fast as the machines in the forest can produce them. There is little stock of sawlogs at roadside anywhere on the mainland and the upturn in production from the forest has come just at the right time for the sawmills.

As demand has increased, the sawmills have become very focused on trying to increase their sawn timber product prices to catch up with the surge in log prices experienced in spring 2017. Getting price increase to stick has been difficult as there are reasonable stocks of key products and the Irish mills remain ultra competitive especially on kiln dried business. The UK mills are having real difficulty getting prices back up to the £175m^3 for C16 KD material that reflects current log prices; the Irish mills are still competing on full load business, offering at £158 to £160m^3 delivered. The recent weeks have seen some signs of gaps in stock levels of key products at Irish mills so maybe we will now see some movement of prices from them.

The unseasoned market (fencing and pallet wood) has seen signs of shortages of key products earlier in the spring than the KD market and mills are now achieving modest price increases (£5m^3) especially in the South of England and Wales where demand is strong and stock yards are rapidly emptying giving mills the confidence to push through price increases.

Further north, mill stocks are more plentiful and sales although good are not setting any records, stock yards are not emptying fast enough and although the high logs require sawn timber prices to increase this is difficult to achieve with a full yard.

There are now signs though that some key products in all sectors are not available ex stock and longer and mill lead times are extending, providing demand holds up through the election and on into July then the processors should be able to make sawn timber price increases stick.

Small roundwood demand continues to lag behind supply especially in the borders and Scotland which are heavily dependent on the large industrial roundwood users. There have been a number of planned maintenance shutdowns (Iggesund & Land Energy) and strong production in the forest leading to most markets being full to capacity with roundwood. Some have seen this as an opportunity to reduce prices over the last month. This coupled with the knock on effect from Kronospan has seen stock levels steadily increasing across Scotland.

In England and Wales, the greater diversity of markets has softened the impact of Kronospans recent problems. Many of the smaller biomass users created over the last five years have become increasingly dependent on the open market for their timber supplies at the same time that Kronospans intake has been severely reduced.

Merchants have worked to find these new markets and develop trading relationships with them for roundwood volume that used to go to Kronospan, once Kronospan return to the market we will be in for interesting times. With the new Estover plant at Cramlington in Northumberland due to start runjing in the 3rd quarter of 2017 there is a feeling that we are through the worst of the small roundwood problems for 2017 and that the second half of the year will be better than the first half.

In the short term, the very high stocks of sawmill co-products being produced by sawmills currently will act as a buffer when demand from all the board mills picks up. As supplies from the forest fall away in the winter and the backlog of co-products is used up at the same time as small-scale biomass demand increases then we could be in for an interesting autumn with demand levels putting serious pressure on available roundwood supplies.

Supply

The imbalances in supply seen in Scotland earlier in the year have now largely settled out; there is more wood coming to the market on the East Coast, whilst the large offerings on the West Coast have been used by domestic mills and exported to Ireland. Production in the forest is always at its peak in the second quarter - better weather, longer daylight hours and warmer temperatures enable harvesters and hauliers to work at peak capacity. Where possible, merchants are concentrating their efforts on sawlog crops as most sawmills are hand-to-mouth for timber and are lift-

Continued on p50

PRICE TRENDS

£ per tonne delivered to customers in Wales, central and south England (May 2017)

Product	Lower price	Upper price	Trend
Log 18	£60.00	£65.00	↑
Bar 14	£50.00	£55.00	↑
SRW	£35.00	£40.00	=
Fencing	£48.00	£52.00	= ↑
H Wood firewood	£45.00	£50.00	↑

£ per tonne delivered to Customers in North England and Scotland (May 2017)

Product	Lower price	Upper price	Trend
Log 18	£58.00	£62.00	↑
Bar / pallet 14	£42.50	£50.00	↑
SRW	£30.00	£35.00	= ↓
Fencing	£48.00	£52.00	= ↑
H Wood firewood	£40.00	£42.00	↑

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

STEFANIE KAISER

Continued from p49

ing material as soon as it is put to roadside.

In England and Wales, the market goes from strength to strength, supply is barely keeping up with demand, mill productions levels are at record highs and there appears to be less timber offered to the market this year than in previous years. Contractors are struggling to keep machines in work and are having to consider jobs that would have been ignored a couple of years ago. This is leading to very competitive labour rates for good mechanised harvesting jobs.

Summary

Very strong demand for sawlogs across Scotland and England is leading to upwards pressure on sawlog prices whilst the oversupply of small roundwood and sawmill co-products is leading to downward price pressure. The net result is stable prices for all parcels except those with very high sawlog content and in situations where processors locally need to buy stocks.

In the Scottish borders most good spruce crops are fetching £35 to £40 per tonne standing except where there is a high log content or a processor needing to plug local supply issues then we are seeing prices of £40 to £3 per tonne standing.

In Wales and England there are less quality spruce crops coming to the market but where they do they regularly exceed £40 per tonne standing and can make towards £45 per tonne in exceptional cases.

Mixed conifer parcels are selling exceptionally well and even larch parcels are fetching good prices with £30 to £35 per tonne standing for medium quality clearfell parcels.

The further south in Wales and England one travels, the more competitive the market for mixed conifer becomes as availability of commercial timber becomes more of a challenge. There are many factors influencing timber availability:

- Increased importance of leisure activities and non timber land uses,
- Fragmentation of land holdings,
- Habitat restoration,
- Lack of infrastructure investment.

HARDWOODS

Sawlogs

The main season for selling UK hardwood logs is now almost over, this year the market has continued to be dominated by demand for oak. The European oak market continues to improve with prices up by 15% over the last three years and demand from all markets continues to increase and availability of European oak logs continues to be an issue, many mills are struggling to buy enough logs in the grades they require. The knock on effect of this is that prices for oak logs imported into the UK have increased steadily over the last three years which when coupled with the fall of the UK pound against the euro has made imported oak logs increasingly expensive for domestic producers.

Many UK mills that have been cutting predominantly imported oak sawlogs are now looking at UK grown material as an alternative which has been a welcome boost for the market, especially in the planking and beam oak sectors. This means that prices for UK and European are on a par now:

a) Good planking logs fetching £6 to £7 per hoppus foot at roadside
b) Planking/beam oak £4.50 to £6 per hoppus foot at roadside,
c) Beam oak £3.50 to £4.50 per hoppus foot at roadside,
d) Fencing oak £3.00 to £4.00 per hoppus foot at roadside.

Dark species are currently in fashion with oak dominating but also demand for good sweet chestnut and elm.

The white hardwoods are not currently in fashion and remain very difficult to sell in the UK due to low levels of demand. The export market for sycamore has been very quiet this year due to lack of demand from Europe.

The ash market has been much more positive with good demand from export markets for medium quality planking grade ash which can be coloured. Winter 2016 spring 2017 has seen some excellent prices paid by domestic mills for very good quality planking ash of 15" mid quarter girth and larger; this market is not for huge volumes but is a very positive development for English growers.

There continues to be a steady demand for good quality beech as prices above the firewood level, again the demand is not for huge volumes but it is a reliable and ongoing demand.

There is now a good diversity of hardwood markets with lots of smaller specialist mills prepared to give something interesting a go. Decorative timbers (burrs) continue to sell well, whilst historically the market was dominated by elm there is increasing interest in oak and other species.

There is also good interest in some of the more specialist softwoods:

- **Boat skin larch** (European) can fetch up to £4 per hoppus foot at roadside
- **Western Red Cedar** now has good demand and 30cm plus TDUB logs fetch £40 per tonne at roadside
- **Oversize Douglas fir** is always in demand although the location can have a big influence on the roadside price.
- **True Cedars** (Atlas, Lebanon and Deodar) are also in demand.

Firewood

There has been a noticeable improvement in the firewood market over the last six months. The high stock levels of 2015 and 2016 have gone and prices have started to move back upwards.

Demand has improved and with it prices, good quality processor sized firewood (ash, beech, birch and sycamore) is now fetching £45 to £50 per tonne at roadside with prices over £50 being achieved for very good parcels. The market has become more discerning though and oak firewood has become more difficult to sell and regularly fetches £10 to £20 per tonne less than the premium species (beech, ash, sycamore). Chestnut small roundwood is best sold has hardwood chipwood for the biomass market as the firewood market has learnt that it really does not like it.

Summary

The hardwood market is now as good as it has been for the last 15 to 20 years, there is diversity of markets for a range of species and the strong firewood market has had a really positive impact on the returns to the grower. Parcel size, stem quality, stem length and diameter, time of year and location of the parcel all influence the price the grower will receive but with good marketing and presentation timber sales can deliver a good outcome for the grower.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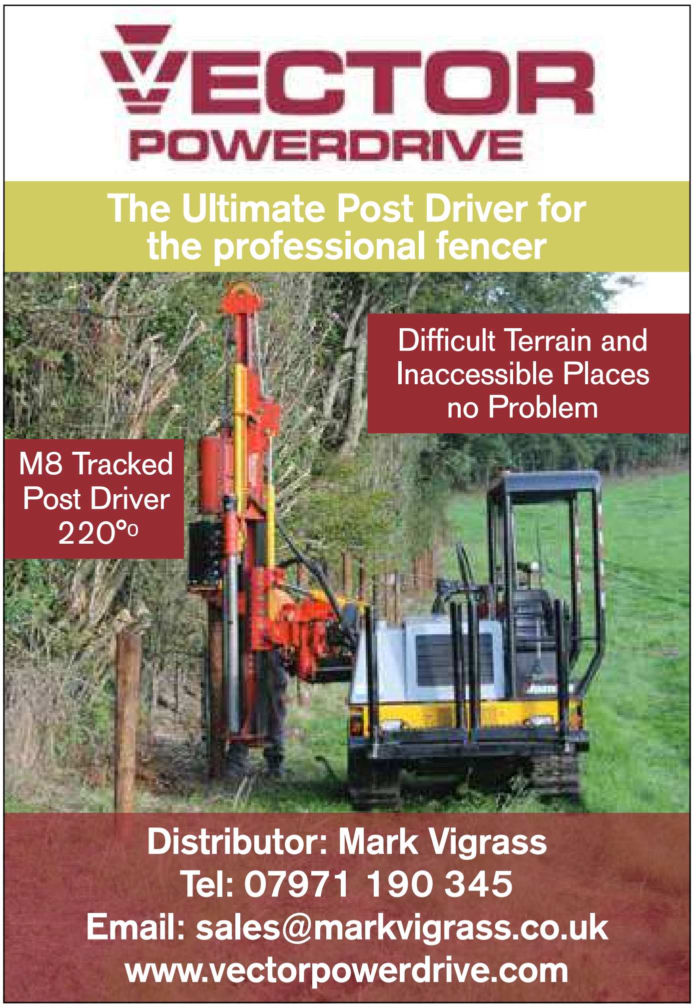
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Innovative inventory collection and surveying using Haglof forestry mensuration systems

Steve Fox, director of Barle Valley Forestry, reviews the Haglof DPII computer calliper system.

At Barle Valley Forestry, we have adopted an innovative approach to inventory collection and surveying. Utilising Geographical Information Systems (GIS) we bring together data collected in the field using the latest Haglof (Sweden) mensuration devices – specifically the DPII computer callipers – aerial photography, hard copy maps and existing field data records to create a comprehensive and powerful woodland management resource to suit our client needs. We also provide bespoke support that allows our clients to make informed decisions about the best way forward for their woodlands, whether large or small.

We are the first UK company to deploy the Haglof DPII Computer Calliper system. Having used other Haglof equipment for several years (ie the Vertex IV digital hypsometer), when we learned of the DPII, we arranged to visit Haglof in Sweden to discuss our exact requirements.

The equipment lived up to our expectations but the bespoke software for the DPII – Estimate Pro – needed to be adapted for UK mensuration methodology. We worked with Haglof to do this and we now use Estimate Pro UK specifically developed for our UK use. Estimate Pro UK is probably the most versatile and developed inventory software solution for standing tree inventory, sample plot inventory or quick inventory. Navigate, calculate total area, store coordinates, process timber and pulp shares & more.

We have been using the DPII computer callipers for about three years now having completed over 35,000 sample mensuration plots during this time. It is unimaginable that we could have achieved this using traditional survey methods with the same man/hour deployment.

The DPII system has made field data collection much more efficient and there is little or no need for a notepad or tape measure as everything is stored on the DPII computer terminal. Survey plots can be completed in well under half the time it takes using traditional techniques and indeed mensuration tasks traditionally carried out by a three-person team can be carried out by just one surveyor with the peace of mind that data collected is accurate, safely stored and easily accessible for later processing.

The data can also be easily downloaded when back in the office so reports can be produced quickly, again saving time. One of the advantages of the Estimate Pro software platform is that it can be customised to suit virtually any requirement; so if mensuration techniques change in future this will not be a problem.

The DPII is ruggedly designed having USB, Bluetooth & IR connectivity. A number of add-on modules are available for the DPII, including the combined GPS-DME (Distance Measuring Equipment) which we have found is a great additional feature. The GPS allows integrated navigation to sample plots and other areas of interest (ie where the car is parked!). This has proved particularly useful when revisiting plot locations and for auditing work such as in woodlands where spray paint or physical plot marking is not appropriate. The DME element allows fast, accurate distance measurement using ultrasound technology which is hugely beneficial when working within plots.

The DPII can also be used with more sophisticated Haglof height measurement devices such as the Vertex IV or VL5 ultrasound/laser distance/height measurement instrument.

Barle Valley Forestry (BVF) is a family owned forestry & timber harvesting company established in 2010 by father and son Steve and Sam Fox. The company is based within the Barle Valley in Exmoor National Park offering a broad range of professional consultancy and contracting services to woodland and forest owners throughout the UK and focusing on managing woodlands in a sustainable way, maximising economic benefits and ensuring the resource can be enjoyed by future generations.For more information email contact@barleforestry.co.uk

HAGLOF IN THE UK

More information on the DPII and other Haglof equipment can be obtained from UK master distributors, Sorbus International Limited on 01373 475540 or sales@sorbus-intl.co.uk

Timber housing creates jobs and new housing solutions in Wales

Timber housing is playing a key role in delivering high quality, affordable, environmentally sustainable homes which can be delivered quickly, in line with Welsh Government plans.

In February this year Carl Sargeant, Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children, unveiled funding plans to invest £20m in innovative new home building over the next two years.

Powys County Council (Powys CC) is committed to creating local jobs and improving homes and they are doing this by supporting the timber supply chain. Through the Home Grown Homes Partnership Powys CC have developed and adopted the first Wood Encouragement Policy to be introduced in the UK.

Leading housing association Wales & West Housing (WWH) have embraced the benefits of building homes from timber with the recent completion of 11 apartments in Rhos-on-Sea, Conwy *(right)*. The scheme houses 26 people using home grown timber from a local timber frame contractor, Williams Homes (Bala) Ltd. The development is estimated to have used 112 home grown trees, and directly supported 32 jobs in forestry and construction. This method of construction, and others like it, will be used to demonstrate how timber-based housing solutions can deliver high quality, affordable, adaptable and sustainable homes for the future.

SAVE THE DATE

Woodbuild Wales 2017
Powys Wood Encouragement Policy
15 June • LlandrindodWells, Metropole Hotel and Spa
Woodbuild Wales 2017 Conference and Expo is responding to the need to deliver more and better innovative housing solutions. On 15 June many of the major Welsh housing associations, county councils, architects, designers, planners, saw millers, house builders, timber specialists and suppliers, will meet in Llandrindod Wells to exchange the latest in knowledge and information in timber-based housing solutions and to help take the Welsh house building sector forward into an innovative and sustainable future.

RESOURCES

Woodknowledge Wales promotes industry innovation, research and development for the Welsh wood industry. Gary Newman, CEO Woodknowledge Wales, gary.newman@woodknowledgewales.co.uk Tel 07968 209303

ERRATUM

Seeing the wood from the trees: Research into tree and wood properties

by Paul McLean, Forest Research. FTN February 2017 (issue 79), p27-29

A mistake occurred during the editorial process and unfortunately some text was omitted, resulting in one incoherent sentence. The original paragraph is reproduced here, with the corrected sentences highlighted in bold:

Good saw log trees have straight stems and few branches, but the wood also needs to meet criteria for stiffness, strength, density and low drying distortion. We do research into all of these properties and specifically explore how they are influenced by genetics and the environment. **The most obvious genetic differences that we work on are those that exist between genera or species, but our research shows that the variation in a given wood property within one species, or even within one tree can be higher than the variation between species! This is because wood has been grown rather than manufactured, it is a naturally variable material with no two pieces being exactly the same.** When using sawn timber, architects and structural engineers therefore need to consider the properties of the population of timber and not the individual pieces. The properties and hence value of the population of timber are of course dependent on the population of trees. Therefore we help tree breeders look at how selectively breeding trees within a species can maintain or even improve these properties while also boosting volume production. We aim to produce super-fast fibre (or super fibre faster)!

Roland Stiven,
Project Manager,
Timber Transport Forum

Making the case for a better freight infrastructure

Timber is a freight-intensive industry with 10m tonnes a year hauled from forest to mill and a similar amount of processed material moved on to markets. But there is a wider rural economy and the Timber Transport Forum has long been trying to involve other sectors in making the case for better freight transport infrastructure.

According to SRUC's 'Rural Scotland in Focus', remote rural Scotland hosts 28,000 businesses; 16% of all enterprises. This covers freight-using sectors like forestry, farming and fishing as well as quarrying, construction, manufacturing, wholesale and transport. All these businesses need efficient freight transport and critically we need to share the narrow road space with other businesses and the wider rural population.

Transport Scotland has now agreed to the creation of a subgroup of their Scottish Freight & Logistics Advisory Group to look specifically at the issues facing rural freight. The group has met twice so far and includes representatives from the timber sector as well as from whisky, farming, estate management and minerals, and we are consulting with various other sectors and road-using groups. The sub-group hopes to report within 18 months or so, highlighting the issues and the opportunities to help rural businesses.

The Forum continues to make the case for investment; in rural roads, in rail freight to the more peripheral parts of the network, and in the small rural ports that have the potential to take freight off minor roads. Both national and local government are taking notice. Northumberland County Council has recently made a bid for challenge funding to invest in rural roads; we should hear if they are successful after the election. In Scotland the Strategic Timber Transport Scheme is looking to allocate £7m this year to public roads and other timber freight-related infrastructure. Several councils have identified priority roads and earmarked co-funding to apply to the scheme.

A host of new councillors have just been elected across Britain with a key role in allocating funding towards rural roads. Please take the time to contact them and let them know how important transport infrastructure is to your business.

Red Diesel

Lost amid the detail of the spring budget, the government announced a call for evidence on the use of red diesel. Their focus is on pollution in urban areas and they want to know where red diesel is being used. It is quite possible that HM Treasury officials have absolutely no inkling that there is a forest industry harvesting and forwarding 10m tonnes of timber/year. At, a rate of say three litres per tonne, that is 30m litres, vital for the timber supply chain and used in areas where there will be no measurable impact on urban pollution levels.

It is important that we give them an idea of the scale of use in forestry and make sure we don't get forgotten in metro-centric policy agendas. The Timber Transport Forum will submit a response but please make your business voice heard by responding to the consultation (search for 'red diesel call for evidence') before 30 June 2017.

www.timbertransportforum.org.uk

D-Max builds on workhorse appeal

Isuzu has launched its latest D-Max – with a surprise under the bonnet. **Simon Tooth** puts it through its paces

Sales of pick-ups are growing faster than any other light commercial vehicle sector. They are up by more than 20% in the year to March compared to a similar period 12 months ago, with much of the growth in the so-called 'lifestyle' sector.

Many pick-up manufacturers have steered their vehicles in the direction of these buyers, selling a more 'car-like' experience. Isuzu's well-proven D-Max is still perceived as very much a working vehicle – it's one of the few still offering a Utility single cab option in its five-model range – and the majority of the 5000-plus that will be sold this year will earn their living on forest and farm tracks and constructions sites.

The latest model D-Max was launched in April at the Commercial Vehicle Show in Birmingham, its looks further strengthening its rugged appeal. It's now Euro 6-compliant but the big news is how Isuzu has achieved that. Out has gone the old 2.5l diesel engine to be replaced by a completely new and lighter 1.9l engine and gearbox that meets Euro 6 emissions standards without the need for AdBlue. Isuzu anticipates that will be a significant bonus for many buyers as will fuel economy, at its most striking on the single cab 4x2 which is claimed can achieve a figure in the mid 40s.

The engine downsizing has reduced torque (from 400Nm to 360), but Isuzu says it has compensated for this by adjusting gear ratios to increase pulling power in lower gears. Certainly, its 3.5t towing capacity and 1t payload remains unchanged against the model it replaces. And the vehicle's unladen weight still falls under the 2040kg ceiling, above which reduced speed limits apply.

A choice of new six-speed manual or automatic gearbox options are available, specifically developed for the new D-Max. Auto boxes are increasingly popular options on pick-ups and this one is intuitive and smooth.

Pedestrian safety is improved with a redesigned front bumper and bonnet to absorb impact energy while space has been created for a bonnet crumple zone. LED daytime running lights are standard across the range. Hill start assist and hill descent control are also standard and help make D-Max an enjoyable drive.

It's easy to forget that this eager workhorse is powered by a substantially smaller engine than its rivals, even when hauling another D-Max on a twin-axle trailer as we did on a pre-launch test drive. Whether the engine's still as sweet after 100,000 miles of hard work remains to be seen but Isuzu is confident enough to retain its five-year/125,000 mile warranty.

Isuzu says it hopes to "consolidate its ownership of the worker-orientated sector" with its new D-Max and is launching with a 48-hour test drive programme. Prices start at £15,749 (CVOTR) for the single cab Utility while the top of the range double cab Blade starts at £26,999 (CVOTR).

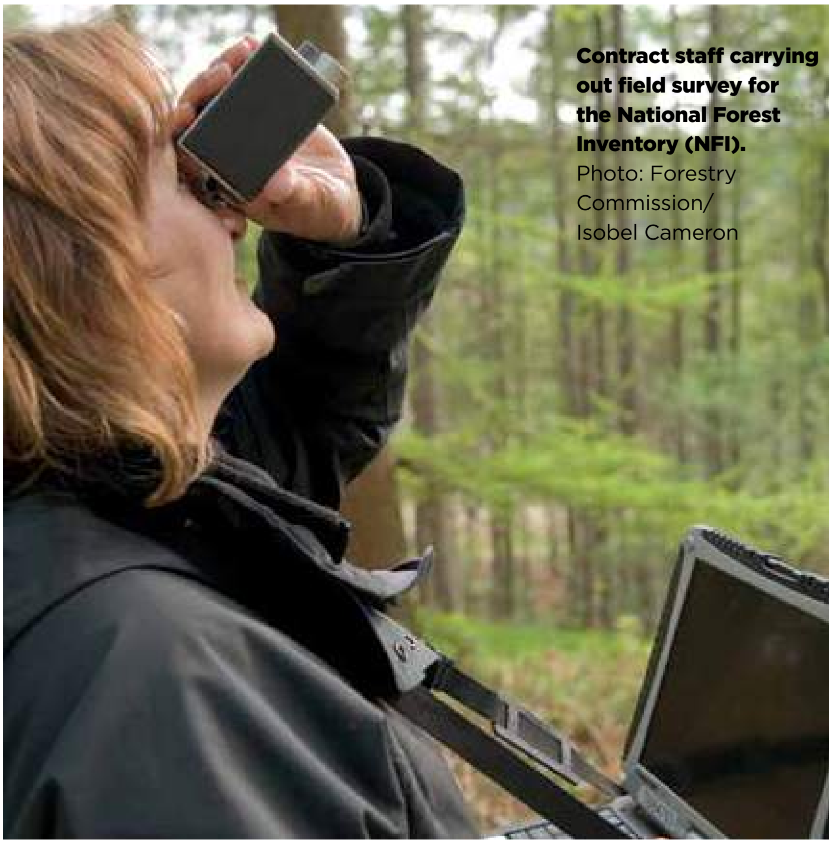
Simon Tooth is editor of VanUser magazine

NORMAN HALL-GARDNER

Vital statistics

There comes a point when one must acknowledge that time is catching up. Close to 40 years of working in the woods begins to tell, as the body starts to give indications that it's time to slow down. And when one is on piece-work, slowing down isn't really an option. Having felled thousands of tonnes of timber in my younger days, and subsequently planted over a million trees, I was reasonably satisfied with my contribution to the industry and to its future. But nor was retirement an option. So when the opportunity arose to become involved with the Forestry Commission's National Forest Inventory, as a self-employed surveyor, it was a perfect fit. New skills had to be learned, and a planting spade exchanged for a laptop, but the continuation of my forestry career (still on piece-work!) and the sense of making a meaningful contribution to my industry helped me through the steep learning curve.

Over the years, I have watched forestry repeatedly fail to convince short-term governments of its long-term vulnerability, a failure compounded by widespread public hostility to commercial forestry. That hostility has softened somewhat, and the recent 'Countryfile' episode on forestry was remarkably - and surprisingly - balanced , thanks in no small part to Confor's participation. Yet an uninformed bystander could be forgiven for assuming that the Commission looks after the wildlife, recreation, research and amenity, while the private sector does the nasty commercial stuff. (Possibly a perception the FC seeks to encourage?) In any case, the counter to mis-information must be the presentation of the facts, of data collected from randomly-chosen locations, without bias. As self-employed contractors, it matters not whether we are in private or State woodlands, ancient woodland or Sitka spruce, managed or not. We merely record what we find in that 1ha block, and hopefully return in five years' time to record the changes. It should essentially form a series of snapshots; there is no scope for silvicultural opinion or comment.



Contract staff carrying out field survey for the National Forest Inventory (NFI). Photo: Forestry Commission/ Isobel Cameron

And therein lies the value of the NFI at ground level; it is the gathering of hard data, on a national basis, randomly and impartially. That same data could be gathered by any local forester, but would only be of local value.

Of course, gathering the data is only the beginning. Its interpretation and subsequent presentation is what determines if the whole process meets the needs of the forest industry, present and future. As surveyors, this is beyond our control, but it would be disappointing to feel our efforts on the ground were not perceived as being of benefit to forestry as a whole. There may well be issues with how the Commission interprets and releases the data, but it is surely in the industry's interests that the data is collected in the first place.

"Over the years, I have watched forestry repeatedly fail to convince short-term governments of its long-term vulnerability

COLIN PALMER

Glyphosate - withdrawn products

There are currently some 300 glyphosate products with UK approval for use in the forest. However, when glyphosate gained a temporary re-approval last summer, it was on the basis that sales of all glyphosate products containing the ethoxylated tallow amine adjuvant would be revoked on 30 June 2017, with use by the forester permitted until 30 June 2018.

This will affect products such as Clinic Ace, Glyfos, Rosate 36 and Stirrup. So now is the time to check the chemical store for any of the revoked products, and ensure that they are used within the next 12 months. It is important to check not only the product name, but also the MAPP number, as a number of products have retained the same name, but have a different MAPP number as they have been reformulated without tallowamine, and the new formulation may, of course, be used. These products are shown with an asterisk in the list of revoked products below. Other products remain by with slightly different names - for example with "XL" or "Pro" added to the original name. The popular Clinic Ace, falls into this category with the replacement material now available as Clinic UP.

Glyphosate products with UK forest approval which will no longer be permitted to be used after 30 June 2018

ACCELERATE	M13390	MANIFEST	M11041
ACRION	M12677	MASTER GLY 36T	M15731
AZURAL	M14361	MON 79632	M14841
ARDEE	M17167	MONSANTO AMENITY *	M15227
BARCLAY BARBARIAN	M12714	MONTANA	M14843
BARCLAY GALLUP 360	M14988	MS THEON	M17150
BARCLAY GALLUP AMENITY	M13250	NASA	M17237
BARCLAY GARRYOWEN	M12715	NUFOSATE	M12699
CHARGER C	M14216	NUFOSATE ACE	M13794
CLEANCROP HOEDOWN*	M15404	NUFOSATE ACE	M14959
CLINIC	M12678	PONTIL 360	M14322
CLINIC ACE	M12980	PURE GLYPHOSATE 360	M14834
CLINIC ACE	M14040	REAPER	M14924
DOW AG GLYPHOSATE 360	M12720	RODEO *	M15242
ETNA	M14674	ROMANY	M12681
ETNA	M16962	ROSATE 36	M14459
EURO GLYFO 360	M14691	ROUNDUP	M12645
FIGARO	M16947	ROUNDUP AMENITY	M12672
FRONTSWEEP	M14700	ROUNDUP METRO	M14842
GLADIATOR	M16641	ROUNDUP RAIL	M12671
GLISTER	M12990	ROUNDUP ULTIMATE	M13081
GLYCEL	M15068	ROUNDUP VISTA	M17156
GLYDATE	M12679	ROUTEONE ROSATE 36	M15280
GLYDER	M15442	ROUTEONE ROSATE 360	M15284
GLYFO_TDI	M14743	ROUTEONE ROSATE 360	M15283
GLYFO-TDI	M13940	RVG GLYPHOSATE 360	M17072
GLYFOS	M10995	SAMURAI *	M12674
GLYFOS SUPREME	M12371	SCORPION *	M12673
GLYFOSAT 36	M14297	SHERLOCK	M16185
GLYMARK	M13870	SHYFO	M15040
GLYPER	M14383	SILVIO	M14626
GLYPHOGAN	M12668	STACATO	M12675
GLYPHOSATE 360	M12669	STIRRUP	M13875
GLYSTAR 360	M16179	SURRENDER	M16169
GLYWEED	M14444	TASK 360	M14570
HAUBERK	M16163	TORO 360	M15652
HI-FOSATE	M15062	TOTAL 360 WDC *	M16020
HY-GLO 360	M15194	VIVAL	M14550
HY-GLY 360	M14919	VIVAL	M17048
KERNEL	M10993	VIVAL	M17224
KN 540	M12009	WITHER 36	M15768
LANDMASTER	M15759	WOPRO GLYPHOSATE	M15462

* Reformulated with a new MAPP number.
Other well regarded glyphosate products such as Roundup ProActive and Roundup ProVantage are unaffected by these changes. A decision on the long term future of glyphosate in Europe is expected later in the year.

MEMBER SERVICES

Pesticides helpline

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

WOODLAND OWNER

PROFESSOR JULIAN EVANS OBE PICFor

Unusual products

At field meetings organised by ICF, RFS and others I am often impressed by the variety and profitability of niche markets for unusual products. The owner or manager proudly regales the group with what has been sold from the woodland or stand we are inspecting while careful not to give away too much about the price obtained or the purchaser's details! It sometimes makes me a little envious. But I can now offer my own two-penny worth.

Last month my neighbour, Mike, who grows organic vegetables and runs a box scheme, got in touch wanting to buy 15 8m (27ft) poles: he thought the scattered patches of sycamore coppice in my wood could supply them. The poles needed to be tall and slender, as straight as possible and free of snags and defects. He needed them before the summer.

Mike was not going into turnery, but had purchased a second-hand canvas for a traditional wigwam and needed the poles on which to 'hang' it. The wigwam is either for some of his seasonal workers who help with the harvesting and other jobs in his market garden business or, more likely, for the weekends when he has groups interested in learning traditional herb-based recipes and remedies. The photo shows the erected wigwam or Tepee.

The only remark to add is that I selected and felled the poles and my wife and I dragged them to road-side for Mike to pick up. Felling them in mid-spring meant they were very heavy with sap and Mike was surprised at our being able to assemble them for him in a couple of small piles of half-a-dozen or so. He threw in an extra £10 as a thank-you – as he and his mate had struggled with the weight to lift them on to his tractor and trailer – giving me £50 in total for the couple of hours of work it had taken us.

Another unusual 'product' turned up at the Wessex Silvicultural Group meeting in Ringwood (Dorset) in March. The Forestry Commission, in association with the local authority, has created a fabulous visitor facility called Moors Valley Country Park. In all my journeys to the West Country I had never before visited it – to my great regret.

The impressive and well-provisioned visitor centre was where we met as the rendezvous for our field meeting. The 'product' was the astonishingly successful combination of exotic pine plantations – mainly Corsican suffering moderate *Dothistroma* damage – and visitors in their hundreds on a weekday. While there is criticism in some quarters of past afforestation of lowland heath, there was no denying the pleasure many obtained from walking, riding and cycling among the pines.

There were mum and toddler groups, keen bikers, and dog walkers out for a stroll and us professionals anxious to learn more of the wretched affliction affecting Corsican and what can be done about it. We looked at heavy thinning options to minimise the disease and regeneration strategies relying mostly on Scots pine. But what remains the lasting impression of the day is the enjoyment so many had from being in and around woodland, big trees and small, even though in ecological terms it was pine monoculture.

"The lasting impression of the day is the enjoyment so many had from being in and around woodland

Tick list

With summer on our doorstep it's a good time for a reminder on ticks and the risk of Lyme disease for those of us working outdoors.

Ticks are small spider-like creatures that live in the countryside. They can be found in woodland, moorland, grassland and parks. Young ticks can be as small as a poppy seed, whilst older ticks look like a tiny spider. Populations of ticks carrying *Borrelia* - responsible for causing Lyme Disease in humans - are distributed widely throughout the UK. Late spring, early summer and autumn are peak feeding times for ticks. A lower level of feeding activity takes place in other seasons. Therefore, the risk to humans is potentially year-round. Although Lyme disease is relatively uncommon in the UK, the number of cases is increasing steadily and has quadrupled in 12 years. Left untreated Lyme Disease can cause long term and serious health problems.

When working in dense vegetation:

- Use a repellent on exposed skin
- Check for ticks in the evening
- Remove ticks quickly and safely.

A FISA leaflet on Lyme disease can be found on the FTN additional resource website at www.confor.org.

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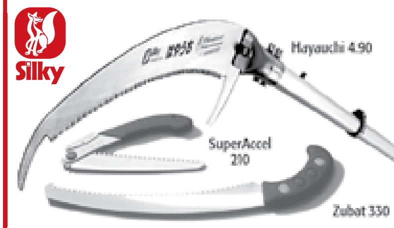

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1. Oversee Christmas tree operation. Including taking orders, stocking, organising temporary workers and handling cash transactions
2. Interpret Estate management plans, prioritise and scheduling of work programmes, overseeing contractors for felling, replanting and fencing
3. Manage landscapes both within the rural and urban fringe across the Estate portfolio
4. Undertake small forestry/woodland works and operate forestry machinery and vehicles
5. Engage and interact with local community, youth groups and schools
6. Liaise with Estate shooting syndicate and farming tenants
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Forest/Senior Forest Manager

Based Central Borders District, Scotland

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Ideally, we are looking for the following skills and experience:

- Relevant academic qualifications.
- Strong commercial acumen & at least 3 years' operational experience, depending on grade.
- Strong client relationship management skills.
- Good knowledge of the UK Forestry Standard & UKWAS.
- Professional membership of the Institute of Chartered Foresters or another relevant professional body is desirable.

Senior Forest Manager

Based Newmarket, Suffolk

This is a key leadership role responsible for providing a full woodland management service. Day to day, this will include preparation of client estimates, production of reports, implementation and control of work programmes and grant applications. The position will also involve helping to further develop our woodland management portfolio and other related opportunities.

Ideally, we are looking for the following skills and experience:

- Relevant academic qualifications.
- Strong commercial acumen & at least 5 years' operational experience.
- Well developed client relationship management skills.
- Good knowledge of the UK Forestry Standard & UKWAS.
- Professional membership of the Institute of Chartered Foresters or another relevant professional body is desirable.

In each case, candidates should also be highly motivated and possess solid organisation, communication and supervisory skills, as well as a good level of IT competence and the ability to apply high professional standards in a thriving, commercially driven business.

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To apply, email your CV and cover letter, clearly stating the position and area you are applying for, to: **careers@tilhill.com** Closing date: 23rd June 2017.

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Tilhill Forestry is an Equal Opportunities Employer

FORESTRY IN PICTURES

Buddah is everything in Burma, and everywhere. Their version of a woodland burial ground is acres of such statues, remains underneath, in an old regenerating mahogany forest. Located near Monywa near Mandalay. Burma has two other key aspects --natural resources and corruption, with the latter running and ruining the former. This area used to be a vast mahogany forest, now just abandoned, yet still capable of re-afforestation. We saw small areas of young mahogany, but none of any age. There are now few of the timber rafts left that used to clog this part of the Irrawaddy.

Photo and text: Timothy Kirk

Want to see your picture here?

Forestry in Pictures is a new regular feature in FTN. For every issue, we will select the most impacting photograph sent by a reader. If you have a photo you would like to see published here, please send your file to Stefanie.kaiser@confor.org before 11 July 2017. Please include your name, brief description of yourself and the picture and a credit.

Photos should relate to forestry and timber and be of high-quality (minimum resolution 300dpi).

Exceptional pictures might be considered for the front cover of a future FTN issue.

By submitting a picture to Forestry in Pictures you give Confor permission to use the file for non-commercial purposes in Forestry and Timber News or the Confor website. Photos will always be credited.

COMING UP IN AUGUST – GET INVOLVED

In FTN August we will get prepared for the Confor Woodland Show, so please get in touch with us if you are an exhibitor with exciting news to share. In a second feature, we will cover the ever more important topic of Communication in the Forestry and Timber sector.

If you would like to suggest an article for these features, please contact the editor before June 25. And, of course, we will continue to keep you up to date on important current topics, such as the general elections and Brexit.

We encourage members to inform us on what is going on in their businesses or raise interesting points to be discussed in future editions of Forestry and Timber News. Do you have an interesting story to tell? Get considered for a member profile!

Don't forget that your opinion counts. If you would like to comment on any of the articles published in this issue, please don't hesitate to send a letter to the editor at stefanie.kaiser@confor.org.uk

Remember that for the first time, we have made all additional web resources for this FTN issue accessible directly from our homepage at www.confor.org.uk . And don't forget to consult our infographic resources to download useful graphics for your presentations or social media posts.

www.confor.org.uk/resources/infographics-and-media