

Confor response to Defra's England Tree Strategy Consultation - **DRAFT**

27 AUGUST 2020

Introduction

Confor is the representative organisation for sustainable forestry and wood-using businesses in the UK. We have more than 1,500 member companies, 730 of those are in England, representing the whole forestry and wood supply chain. Confor focuses on the strategic issues that are vital to the success and sustainable future of the sector. These include helping to build the market for wood and forest products, creating a supportive policy environment and helping members to become more competitive and successful.

Confor welcomes the 30k hectare target for new woodland creation in the UK, that it suggested to government, and wants to work with the government to deliver it. However, the latest statistics show that the most recent target of 11 million trees has not been met and, apart from in Scotland, tree planting policy across the UK has failed. This Strategy offers a chance to recognise the mistakes of the past and put them right. The most obvious example where tree planting has been encouraged and it has been successful is in Scotland where 90% of new woodland creation is done by the private sector with funding and encouragement from the government.

The UK imports over 80% of the wood it uses. Increasing the use of timber, particularly in construction as an alternative to concrete and steel, is at the heart of low-carbon and bioeconomy policies such as the BEIS Clean Growth Strategy and Committee on Climate Change net zero recommendations, while wood for bioenergy is an important alternative to fossil fuel in an adaptable renewable energy mix. Global timber demand is forecast by WWF to treble by 2050. Unless the UK increases the share of the wood it grows for its own use, its economic growth will be at the mercy of an increasingly competitive global timber market, and its imports will put increasing pressure on an over-stretched global supply chain resulting in potential increases in illegal logging and exploitation of intact global forest habitats.

Addressing these risks by increasing the amount of wood grown at home does not have to mean compromising on other environmental benefits. On the contrary, the importance of modern forestry and wood production in sequestering carbon and tackling the climate emergency is well known, while the role they can play in slowing and reversing the 'nature emergency', which is becoming imperative across land uses, is now better understood.¹

Trees and woodlands are critical to solving both the climate emergency and the nature crisis. The objectives of the:

¹ Confor's Biodiversity, Forestry and Wood report, <http://www.confor.org.uk/media/247794/confor-biodiversity-forestry-report.pdf>

- Net Zero target
- The 25-Year Environment Plan
- Nature Recovery Networks
- The Tree Health Resilience Plan
- The developing Biosecurity Strategy (GB)
- The Industrial Strategy
- The Clean Growth Strategy
- The Agriculture Bill
- The Environment Bill
- The government's tree planting targets
- This proposed England Tree Strategy
- The commitment to a green recovery; and,
- The ELM scheme

These all require land-use change, forest management and timber growing on a landscape scale. This depends on a skilled, professional and empowered forestry sector at the heart of the UK economy.

This response considers the collective views of Confor member businesses who make up the forestry and wood-based industries and:

- Grow the forestry trees planted in the UK – our nursery sector
- Establish and maintain the forestry grown in the UK – our establishment sector
- Own and/or manage the forestry growing in the UK – our growing sector
- Harvest and market the produce derived from the forestry in the UK – our contracting sector
- Primary process the produce derived from the forestry in the UK – our sawmill sector
- Secondary process the produce derived from the forestry in the UK – our board mill sector

Confor has responded to the questions in the consultation but the following are areas of the consultation that need further development and issues that need addressing in the England Tree Strategy:

General

- Energy crops must be referred to as fibre crops. The term energy crops could limit any support and the end use of that crop to energy only rather than chip or pulp for board manufacture which locks up carbon in construction, or potential emerging markets such as bio-refining.
- It is vital that the Strategy recognises that there is an industry that can deliver much of what all parties wish to see – the key is that public policy and funding works with woodland owners' and businesses' interests. Doing that will ensure benefits are sustainable and enduring, and not for the lifetime of a grant or a publicly funded initiative.
- The Strategy also needs to be joined up in its delivery from the forest to the end product. Using more home-grown wood is good for reducing carbon in the atmosphere and for our global environmental footprint (reducing pressures for illegal logging and harvesting in

fragile forests). Selling wood from a woodland, brings more woodland into management or sustains its management – delivering a wide range of economic, environmental and societal benefits. 95% of the home-grown wood that we use is conifer because that is what we are competitive in growing and manufacturing. That won't change in the short term, and it will take many decades to grow the broadleaved timber supply and market.

Question 4

- Why is there no category for business using wood? This omission perpetuates the lack of consideration given to the UK businesses who process wood throughout this consultation. These businesses are not only major rural employers but keep our construction, logistics, farm fencing and packaging sectors supplied with essential, local and low-carbon material.

Expanding and connecting our trees and woodlands:

- A Mackinnon type review of all current arrangements for the consideration and approval of forestry planting proposals should be undertaken alongside the England Tree Strategy.
- There should be a presumption in favour of new productive planting and restocking that is UKFS compliant.
- Woodland management and creation is a long-term commitment. We need a 25-year Strategy with policy consistency to support this.
- The England Tree Strategy must be consistent with and aligned with ELMS. Woodland creation and management should be supported under both Tiers 1 & 2 of ELMS ensuring support for land use is consistent across all sectors.
- The England Tree Strategy must have cross departmental support and endorsement from DEFRA, BEIS and DCLG, plus Defra's own agencies – the Forestry Commission, Natural England and the Environment Agency.
- There needs to be clear and measurable targets, with online reporting of applications, approvals and completions showing national progress versus annual targets. This will allow real time reporting of achievement versus ambition.
- Woodland management must be integrated with other land use planning to allow a holistic approach to be taken. Existing woodland and landscape should be integrated into designs of new woodland.

Protecting and improving our trees and woodlands:

- Whether the desired outputs of a woodland are economic, social, environmental or all three, landowners must have clarity on the costs involved in maintaining a woodland in good condition to deliver these over the long term, and on the income stream that will fund this. A “wood that pays is a wood that stays”.
- There must be consistent support to remove the impact of the alien grey squirrel and responsibly manage negative deer impacts if objectives to increase woodland biodiversity and stimulate the hardwood supply chain are to be achieved. All land managers must take responsibility for pest control. This requires effective incentivisation, collaboration and research.

Engaging people with our trees and woodlands:

- “All trees matter”. Work to increase the understanding of social, environmental and economic benefits of all tree species and move away from native and exotic, conifer and broadleaf arguments towards a concept of forest resilience and biodiversity on a landscape scale.
- Commission essential research to provide facts to counter “single issue” arguments against woodland creation.

Maximise trees role in supporting the economy:

- Woodlands should have a long-term income stream to meet the cost of maintenance.
- Consider the creation of productive woodlands with definable economic outputs as a means of pump priming the low carbon economy. Focus on resilient productive species with a definable route to market. Consider structural properties of timber, yield class improvement, resilience, etc.
- Invest in innovation to increase longer-term storage of carbon through significantly increasing the use of long-life wood-based products, particularly in construction.
- Invest in R&D on tree breeding to develop more resilient and productive plants for all the main commercial species.
- Support the development of technologies to use wood-fibre as a feedstock for the replacement of fossil fuel/petro-chemical based products, such as bioethanol
- Improve wood-fibre resource efficiency, including added-value use of recycled wood.
- Evaluate and adopt the principles of wood cascading/hierarchy.
- Invest in infrastructure – focused investment into public sector construction and retrofit programmes using existing and new UK wood-based products and systems, such as the timber off-site construction model and mass timber manufacture in the UK. This will increase UK manufacturing, provide higher skilled employment and deliver more carbon sequestration.
- The majority of managed UK forestry is audited annually against the UK Woodland Assurance Scheme, providing the basis for international FSC and PEFC certification. Yet, the only scheme mentioned throughout the consultation is Grown in Britain.

Skills:

- Develop a public and private sector partnership to support delivery of the forestry skills action plan.
- Invest in and support talent attraction and training across the wood supply chain, working with existing training suppliers.
- Develop a job/skills match-up scheme to attract Post-Covid career changers to the forest and wood-based industries.
- Introduce adequate support mechanisms for micro and SME businesses to recruit and support new talent.

- Subsidise training on operating certificates for forest operation activities to accelerate.
- Continue to explore opportunities to support employers and increase uptake of modern apprenticeships, particularly forest machine operators.
- Develop specific forest focussed rural leadership and business support programmes.
- Develop opportunities for working with other rural industries to train and employ multi-skilled workers that can work across sectors.

Please tell us who you are

1. *Would you like your response to be treated as confidential (please see this consultation's Data Privacy Notice)?*

No.

2. *What is your name?*

Caroline Ayre

3. *What is your e-mail address?*

caroline@confor.org.uk

4. *Please tell us about yourself (select one option):*

A membership organisation

5. *What is your organisation?*

The Confederation of Forest Industries

Expanding and connecting our trees and woodlands

6. *Which actions would address the financial barriers that prevent the creation of new woodland? (select all that apply – **selection in bold text**)*
- **Consolidating the current range of woodland creation grants into one**
 - **Increasing the payment rates for incentives for woodland creation**
 - **Widening the eligibility criteria for applicants to our woodland creation grants so more applicants can apply**

- Widening the eligibility criteria for the type of woodlands and tree planting that can be funded
 - Providing a clear explanation and guarantees of how trees planted between now and 2024 will be considered under Environmental Land Management Scheme
 - A quicker approval process for grant agreements
 - Support if trees fail to establish due to no fault of the owner (for example, due to tree health or severe weather)
 - Introducing mechanisms that provide an annual cash flow in the woodlands' early years
 - Introducing mechanisms to realise a secure long-term cash flow for ecosystem services
 - Introducing measures to stimulate more private investment (e.g. green finance) in woodland creation
 - Developing new approaches to partnerships between landowners and woodland investors or managers which enable the landowner to derive an ongoing annual income from the land
 - Other - please specify in no more than 25 words
7. *Which actions would be most effective in addressing the financial barriers that prevent the creation of new woodland? (select up to three options – **selection in bold text**)*
- Consolidating the current range of woodland creation grants into one
 - **Increasing the payment rates for incentives for woodland creation**
 - Widening the eligibility criteria for applicants to our woodland creation grants so more applicants can apply
 - Widening the eligibility criteria for the type of woodlands and tree planting that can be funded
 - Providing a clear explanation and guarantees of how trees planted between now and 2024 will be considered under Environmental land management Scheme
 - **A quicker approval process for grant agreements**
 - Support if trees fail to establish due to no fault of the owner (for example, due to tree health or severe weather)
 - **Introducing mechanisms that provide an annual cash flow in the woodlands' early years**
 - Introducing mechanisms to realise a secure long-term cash flow for ecosystem services
 - Introducing measures to stimulate more private investment (e.g. green finance) in woodland creation
 - Developing new approaches to partnerships between landowners and woodland investors or managers which enable the landowner to derive an ongoing annual income from the land
 - Other (if added, your own entry to question 6)
8. *Woodlands provide a range of ecosystem services that provide benefits to businesses and society. How could government better encourage private investment in establishing trees and woodland creation? (Maximum 150 word response)*

Woodland creation already involves significant private investment by the landowner in terms of the land value, which for forestry land at present is around £4-5000/hectare (approximately 'match-funding the grant'). Landowners often also contribute additional investment either financially or in kind (eg labour) to woodland creation; and at present all management eg. squirrel/deer control, thinning, access maintenance, liability for dangerous trees is funded by the landowner alone. The investment repays as high quality forested land increases in value, but to plant woodland on better land such as peri-urban or cultivated land, the length of the return on investment goes up substantially. Encouraging more investment could be done by:

- de-risking woodland creation so investors can be confident land can be planted;
- acknowledging and celebrating the contribution and natural capital benefits already being delivered by private investors to encourage new green investors to come forward.

9. *Which actions would address the non-financial barriers to the creation of new woodland? (select all that apply – **selection in bold text**)*

- Consolidating the current range of woodland creation grants into one
- **Providing access to better information on the income streams well managed woodland can provide**
- **Providing land managers with better access to expert advice on woodland creation and forestry knowledge and skills**
- **Providing the investment community with access to expert advice on woodland creation and forestry knowledge and skills**
- **Outreach to present the benefits of trees and forestry to land managers**
- **Outreach to present the benefits of trees and forestry to the investment community**
- **Outreach to present the benefits of trees and forestry to local communities**
- **Changing policy so it does not treat afforestation as a permanent land use change**
- **Increasing availability and access to contractors to plant and maintain the trees**
- **Increasing availability of desired bio secure planting material**
- **Educate and enthuse a new generation to expand the forestry industry**
- Developing new approaches to partnerships between landowners and woodland investors or managers which enable the landowner to retain ownership of the land
- Developing a supply of diverse and locally-appropriate seed and planting material by supporting community tree nurseries and other small nurseries that provide UK sourced and grown trees.
- Providing best practice guidance on how best to achieve tree cover through natural establishment (e.g. most suitable locations, ground preparation, fencing requirements and decisions on management over time).
- Other - please specify in no more than 25 words

10. Which actions would be most effective in addressing the non-financial barriers to the creation of new woodland? (select up to three options – **selection in bold text**)

- Consolidating the current range of woodland creation grants into one
- **Providing access to better information on the income streams well managed woodland can provide**
- **Providing land managers with better access to expert advice on woodland creation and forestry knowledge and skills**
- Providing the investment community with access to expert advice on woodland creation and forestry knowledge and skills
- **Outreach to present the benefits of trees and forestry to land managers**
- Outreach to present the benefits of trees and forestry to the investment community
- Outreach to present the benefits of trees and forestry to local communities
- Changing policy so it does not treat afforestation as a permanent land use change
- Increasing availability and access to contractors to plant and maintain the trees
- Increasing availability of desired bio secure planting material
- Educate and enthuse a new generation to expand the forestry industry
- Developing new approaches to partnerships between landowners and woodland investors or managers which enable the landowner to retain ownership of the land
- Developing a supply of diverse and locally appropriate seed and planting material by supporting community tree nurseries and other small nurseries that provide UK sourced and grown trees.
- Providing best practice guidance on how best to achieve tree cover through natural establishment (e.g. most suitable locations, ground preparation, fencing requirements and decisions on management over time)
- Other (if added, your own entry to question 9)

11. Which actions would address the regulatory barriers that prevent the creation of new woodland? (select all that apply – **selection in bold text**)

- Providing access to better guidance on how to meet the UK Forestry Standard
- **Local partners agreeing and setting priorities for woodland creation and other habitat restoration across landscapes**
- **Enabling regulatory decisions by the Forestry Commission which reflect the national obligation to meet net zero emissions by 2050 and achieve the investment in natural capital set out in our 25 Year Environment Plan**
- **Implementing a joint approach to land management across central government and its agencies including those responsible for protected landscapes**
- **Providing a clear explanation and guarantees of how trees planted between now and 2024 will be considered under Environmental Land Management Scheme**
- **Reduce the time and costs associated with Environmental Impact Assessment for afforestation.**
- Other -please specify in no more than 25 words

12. *Which actions would be most effective in addressing the regulatory barriers that prevent the creation of new woodland? (select up to three options – **selection in bold text**)*

- Providing access to better guidance on how to meet the UK Forestry Standard
- Local partners agreeing and setting priorities for woodland creation and other habitat restoration across landscapes
- **Enabling regulatory decisions by the Forestry Commission which reflect the national obligation to meet net zero emissions by 2050 and achieve the investment in natural capital set out in our 25 Year Environment Plan**
- **Implementing a joint approach to land management across central government and its agencies including those responsible for protected landscapes**
- Implementing a joint approach to land management across central government and its agencies including those responsible for protected landscapes
- Providing a clear explanation and guarantees of how trees planted between now and 2024 will be considered under Environmental Land Management Scheme
- **Reduce the time and costs associated with Environmental Impact Assessment for afforestation**
- Other (if added, your own entry to question 11)

13. *How can we most effectively support the natural establishment of trees and woodland in the landscape? (Maximum 100 words)*

Natural regeneration is effective in certain locations: fencing upland riparian zones where there is still a natural seed bank has proved effective in parts of Scotland; while ancient woodlands can be restored and expanded through deer control, where older trees are still providing seed. However, regeneration is likely to have more potential in England as a woodland management tool than a woodland creation tool. The favoured locations for woodland creation – those with low existing ecological value such as improved grazing – are the least likely to have regeneration potential, so the great majority of new woods will require to be planted.

14. *Are there any other actions - beyond the options you have already selected or submitted - that would help landowners and managers to transform the level of woodland creation and increase the number of non-woodland trees in England? (Maximum 150 words)*

See previous answers and comments.

15. *Which of the following actions would be most effective in helping expand woodland creation in locations which deliver water, flood risk benefits and nature recovery? (select up to three options – **selection in bold text**)*

- Widening the eligibility criteria for woodland creation grants so more applicants can apply and more forms of woodland are eligible
- Widening the eligibility criteria for woodland creation grants so more sizes of woodland are eligible

- **Increasing grant payments for tree planting along water courses, steep sided slopes and difficult sites**
- **Quicker approval process for grant agreements**
- Providing a clear explanation and guarantees of how trees planted between now and 2024 will be considered under Environmental Land Management Scheme
- **Implementing a joint approach to land management across government, including authorities responsible for protected landscapes**
- Providing better access to advice and guidance on woodland creation, forestry expertise and training
- Other - please specify in no more than 25 words

16. *What role could the nation's National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) play in increasing woodland cover? (Maximum 150 word response)*

They have the potential to showcase the best in modern forestry as rural land use creating jobs and a local, sustainable product. This has been done on Exmoor where, under the management of a professional forestry team, timber produced from the National Park's woodlands is used to build infrastructure like signage and bridges around the estate and sold to create income for conservation activities. Activity is publicised through communication networks such as the park membership, and local children are involved in woodland management activities such as installing bird boxes and 'adopting' natural regeneration in clearings for management.

National Parks can also develop forests on the model of Forestry England, who have been creating and managing public benefit forests for timber, people and wildlife on a national scale for a century.

Protecting and improving our trees and woodlands

17. *Which actions would be most effective to increase protection for trees and woodland from unsustainable management? (select up to three options – selection in bold text)*

- **Introducing measures to support compliance with the UK Forestry Standard**
- More effective information sharing between government departments and their delivery bodies to inform decisions impacting on woodland, including to prevent woodland loss
- Introducing clearer processes for licencing tree felling, with felling licences that can be suspended, withdrawn or superseded
- Greater penalties for non-compliance with the requirements of the Forestry Act
- **Powers to set wider felling licence conditions, for example to enable enforcement of compliance with the UK Forestry Standard**
- **A clearer policy presumption that all trees felled without a licence will be replaced (except in exceptional circumstances)**
- Refining the process of making Tree Preservation Orders, and clarifying the criteria to improve consistency in application of the policy across local authorities

- Other - please specify in no more than 25 words

18. *Which actions would best help the planning system support better protection and enhancement of the ancient and wider woodland environment and trees? (select up to two options – **selection in bold text**)*

- **Providing support to fully complete revision of the Ancient Woodland Inventory (to include ancient woodlands under two hectares in area)**
- **Commissioning research into effective size and use of buffer zones around woodland for different impacts**
- Providing better monitoring and recording of decisions on planning applications affecting ancient woodland
- Sharing best practice guidance and training to support implementation of National Planning Policy Framework policy on ancient woodland with local authority planners
- Encouraging more woodland to be brought into management where impacted by development
- More effective information sharing between agencies and local planning authorities to inform decision making impacting on woodland including to prevent woodland loss
- Refining the process of making Tree Preservation Orders and clarifying the criteria to improve consistency in application of the policy across local authorities.
- Other - please specify in no more than 25 words

19. *What actions would be most effective in reducing the use of plastics in forestry? (select one option – **selection in bold text**)*

- **Providing support to land managers for deer control and fencing**
 - Supporting further testing and trial of non-plastic alternatives such as tree guards
 - Introducing stronger control on the recovery and disposal of plastics in grant agreements and public sector contracts for woodland creation and management
 - Promoting the use of non-plastic tree guards
 - Other - please specify in no more than 25 words
- A Deer Strategy for England.**

20. *Which actions would overcome financial barriers to woodland management? (select all that apply – **selection in bold text**)*

- **Providing better information on timber prices, grant schemes and market opportunities for wood and non-wood products**
- **Providing grant support for a wider range of management activities**
- Providing grant support for the restoration of Plantations on Ancient Woodlands Sites (PAWS)
- **Providing support for woodland infrastructure such as roading**
- **Providing grants or loans for equipment, for example, harvesters**
- **Support to increase the productivity/supply chains for woodland products**

- **Support for landowner collaboration in woodland management**
- **Government requiring more domestic timber through procurement policies**
- Other - please specify in no more than 25 words

21. *Which actions would be most effective at overcoming the financial barriers to woodland management? (select up to three options – **selection in bold text**)*

- Providing better information on timber prices, grant schemes and market opportunities for wood and non-wood products
- Providing grant support for a wider range of management activities
- Providing grant support for the restoration of Plantations on Ancient Woodlands Sites (PAWS)
- **Providing support for woodland infrastructure such as roading**
- Providing grants or loans for equipment, for example, harvesters
- **Support to increase the productivity/supply chains for woodland products**
- Support for landowner collaboration in woodland management
- **Government requiring more domestic timber through procurement policies**
- Other (if added, your own entry to question 20)

22. *Which actions would address the non-financial barriers to woodland management? (select all that apply – **selection in bold text**)*

- **Providing user friendly woodland management services aimed at ‘non forester’ woodland owners**
- **Ensuring public recognition of woodlands that are managed sustainably (for example, like Green Flag awards)**
- **Providing better communication of the benefits and need for woodland management with land managers and investors**
- **Providing better information on timber prices, grant schemes and market opportunities for wood and non-wood products**
- **Training to increase the forestry skills capacity in agricultural workers**
- Other - please specify in no more than 25 words

23. *Which actions would be most effective at overcoming the non-financial barriers to woodland management? (select a maximum of three options – **selection in bold text**)*

- Providing user friendly woodland management services aimed at ‘non forester’ woodland owners
- Ensuring public recognition of woodlands that are managed sustainably (for example like Green Flag awards)
- **Providing better communication of the benefits and need for woodland management with land managers and investors**
- **Providing better information on timber prices, grant schemes and market opportunities for wood and non-wood products**

- **Training to increase the forestry skills capacity in agricultural workers**
- Other (if added, your own entry to question 22)

24. *Which actions would overcome the regulatory barriers to woodland management? (select all that apply – **selection in bold text**)*

- **Streamlining delivery of current regulations (for example, self-service felling licences for tree felling proposals that would not reduce woodland cover)**
- **Placing responsibility for complying with woodland regulation on the woodland manager rather than the woodland owner**
- **Placing a legal obligation on all landowners to manage their woodland**
- Other - please specify in no more than 25 words

25. *Which actions would be most effective at overcoming the regulatory barriers to woodland management? (select one option – **selection in bold text**)*

- **Streamlining delivery of current regulations (for example, self-service felling licences for tree felling proposals that would not reduce woodland cover)**
- Placing responsibility for complying with woodland regulation on the woodland manager rather than the woodland owner
- Placing a legal obligation on all landowners to manage their woodland
- Other (if added, your own entry to question 24)

26. *If you own and/or manage woodland(s) that is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) what actions would help you most to bring that woodland(s) into management? (Maximum 100 word response)*

SSSI woodlands which are part of a larger forest unit managed for production and audited under UKWAS, are required to be maintained in good condition. This could be expanded to include all types of production by creating an integrated land use framework under ELMS in which landowners are required to maintain designated sites as a condition of production management for the whole unit. At present there is an unequal situation where a SSSI woodland is treated differently depending on whether it is part of a larger unit whose production is sheep, wheat or timber.

27. *Which of the following actions would be most effective in improving plant biosecurity across England's trees and woodlands? (pick up to two options – **selection in bold text**)*

- Increasing the number of nurseries that meet the 'Plant healthy' management standard
- Providing better best practice guidance and information about biosecurity
- **Introducing conditions which require suppliers to meet the "Plant Healthy" management standard for those public sector contracts and government grants that relate to tree planting and restocking**

- **Amending planning policy to encourage local planning authorities to source trees from suppliers who meet the 'Plant healthy' management standard**
- Sharing the Forestry England's experience and case studies
- Managing the impact of invasive non-native plants which provide a pathway for disease through targeted action, ongoing management and monitoring, and wider education
- Developing a supply of diverse and locally appropriate seed and planting material by supporting community tree nurseries and other small nurseries that provide UK sourced and grown trees
- Other - please specify in no more than 25 words

28. *Which of the following actions are or would be most appropriate for England's trees and woodlands to contribute to climate change mitigation and helping to achieve net zero? (pick up to three options – **selection in bold text**)*

- **Bringing woods into management to enhance their future resilience to climate change and secure greenhouse gas emissions reduction in other sectors through wood replacing 'carbon intensive' materials (acknowledging that this will lead to a short to medium reduction on carbon stored in the woodland)**
- **Planting UKFS-compliant productive forests to provide a strong carbon sink over the coming decades and then a source of sustainable timber to meet the needs of future generation**
- Planting predominantly native woodland to act as a long-term store of carbon
- **Establishing 'energy forest' plantations (short rotation coppice and short rotation forestry) to satisfy future biomass demand for bioenergy with carbon capture and storage**
- Encouraging agroforestry to increase the amount of carbon stored on productive farmland
- Strengthening the protection of all woodland to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation

Comment:

Planting UKFS-compliant productive forests to provide a strong carbon sink over the coming decades and then a source of sustainable timber to meet the needs of future generation

This is not a matter of opinion. Recent work by the James Hutton Institute in Scotland demonstrated that when both soil and tree carbon are taken into account, growing high-yielding timber crops and short-rotation forestry on better land is by far the best way to draw down carbon by 2050, even before the carbon benefits of the timber harvest. Native woodlands, while they may have many other benefits, requires far more high-quality land to sequester the same amount of carbon, and on upland sites with high soil organic content may in fact release carbon for several decades.

29. *Which of these actions would be most effective in reducing damage to trees and woodlands caused by deer? (select up to two options – **selection in bold text**)*

- **Develop a national policy on sustainable deer management and control measures**
- Facilitate landscape scale control by land managers

- **Deer control as a requirement of grant or felling agreements**
- Incentives for the management of deer
- Supporting a range of approaches to tree protection, including fencing and other alternatives to plastic tree guards
- Better advice and guidance on the value of and options to control damage by deer
- Other - please specify in no more than 25 words

30. *Which of these actions would be most effective in reducing the damage to trees and woodlands caused by grey squirrels? (select up to two options – **selection in bold text**)*

- Making grey squirrel control a requirement of grant or felling agreements
- **Providing incentives for the management of grey squirrel**
- Researching contraception to prevent breeding
- **Reintroducing animals to help control squirrels, such as pine martens and goshawks**
- Providing better advice and guidance on grey squirrel control
- Other - please specify in no more than 25 words

Engaging people with our trees and woodlands

31. *Are any of the following significant barriers to securing and maintaining street trees? (select up to three options – **selection in bold text**)*

- Appropriate standards and guidance for securing the right trees in the right places
- Practical challenges in terms of street design, planting requirements and compatibility with other infrastructure provision
- The adoption of street trees by local highway authorities, or alternative arrangements where streets are not adopted
- **The skills and resources needed to deliver new street trees, including funding for planting**
- **The funding and skills for ongoing maintenance of street trees over their lifetime**
- Other – please specify in no more than 100 words

32. *How could government overcome the barriers to securing and maintaining street trees you have identified in question 30? (Maximum 150 word response)*

Resource local authorities adequately to sustain a planting and maintenance regime.

33. *Which of these actions would be most effective in increasing the number/coverage of trees in and around urban areas? (rank the following options in order of preference)*

- Promotion through national policy (including England Tree Strategy and national planning policy) including recognition that trees and woodlands are key components of green infrastructure, with equal status to other green and built infrastructure

- Promotion through national guidance (such as green infrastructure, planning and design, and code/street guidance, e.g., Manual for Streets) - stronger inclusion of appropriate engineering solutions
- Development and implementation of Local Tree and Woodland Strategies and local planning policies - setting local targets for tree canopy cover and recognition that trees and woodlands are key components of green infrastructure, with equal status to other green and built infrastructure
- Training for practitioners, including highways engineers and others
- Providing better support for community forests in areas of greatest need
- Creating new community forests in areas of greatest need
- **Other - please specify in no more than 25 words**

Resource local authorities adequately to sustain a planting and maintenance regime.

34. *Which actions would most help the preparation and implementation of local Tree and Woodland Strategies? (rank the following options in order of preference)*

- Preparing national guidance on developing Local Tree and Woodland Strategies
- Setting local targets for tree canopy cover
- Using canopy cover as a measure to monitor the scale and development of the urban forest
- Agreeing national data standards for urban trees
- Standardising the approach to measuring the value of the urban forest resource
- Adopting Local Tree and Woodland Strategies as supplementary planning documents
- **Strengthening technical expertise in tree and woodland management in local authorities**
- Recognising trees and woodlands as key components of green infrastructure, with equal status to green and built infrastructure

35. *Which actions would most effectively engage people in the management and creation of their local woodlands? (rank the following options in order of preference)*

- **Providing more training opportunities to support woodland management and creation**
- Providing legal support to community groups for the acquisition or lease of woodland
- Enabling community groups to influence decision making about the management of their local woodland
- Enabling community groups to participate in the management of their local woodland
- **Facilitating networks to exchange ideas and share good practice**
- Providing better support for community forests in areas of greatest need
- Creating new community forests in areas of greatest need
- **Supporting the growth of woodland social enterprise in and around towns and cities**

36. *Which actions by government would be most effective in addressing barriers to peoples' access to trees and woodlands? (rank the following options in order of preference)*

- Supporting woodland access through existing incentives and rights of way

- Offering more generous woodland management incentives for those woodlands with public access
- Creating new accessible woodlands in and around towns and cities
- Supporting woodland access with bespoke incentives, simply to allow access
- Improving the quality of access by investing in infrastructure (car parks, trails, path surfacing, signage, seating)
- Regulating to maintain access rights when creating new woodland
- Supporting people to become trained/accredited to better facilitate contact (learning and health) with nature
- **Other – treat woodland as part of an integrated access policy with the rest of the countryside under ELMS.**

37. *Which of the following do you most value about trees and woodland? (select up to two options – **selection in bold text**)*

- Places to exercise and relax and engage with nature
- Places for nature
- **A source of sustainable products and employment**
- A resource that provides water management
- A resource that cleans the air
- **A resource that stores carbon**
- As a feature within towns and cities
- As part of urban green space
- Other - please specify in no more than 25 words

38. *Which of these actions would best address the funding challenge for the planting and on-going maintenance of trees in urban areas? (select up to two options – **selection in bold text**)*

- Making central funding available to supplement private finance for establishing trees in existing developments.
- Using planning levers to require developers to plant trees relating to new development on streets and other public spaces
- **Using planning levers to raise funds for on-going maintenance**
- Ensuring the value of tree's longer-term benefits are captured to access financing
- Other - please specify in no more than 25 words

Supporting the economy

39. *What could the England Tree Strategy do to encourage the use of timber in construction? (select up to two options – **selection in bold text**)*

- Improving, encouraging or incentivising the growth of necessary skills such as those in green construction, design or forestry

- Promoting and incentivising Grown in Britain Certification
 - **Encouraging planning requirements to incorporate sustainable materials**
 - Amending public procurement standards to support Grown in Britain certified forest products, incorporate sustainable materials and signal long-term demand
 - **Increasing the availability of knowledge and stimulate an understanding of sustainable building practices**
 - Supporting new innovations in developing timber building materials such as cross laminated timber
 - Other - please specify in no more than 25 words
40. *How could policy about the permanency of woodlands better support tree establishment for agro forestry or energy crops? (select one option – **selection in bold text**)*
- Changing policy so it does not treat afforestation as a permanent land use change
 - **Adjusting policy so energy forestry crops (short rotation coppice and short rotation forestry) are not permanent land use change**
 - Retaining the current position whereby afforestation is generally a permanent land use change
 - Not sure
41. *Which actions would best increase the uptake of energy forestry? (select up to two options – **selection in bold text**)*
- Providing financial support for the capital costs of energy forestry
 - Clarifying the taxation of energy forestry (as either agriculture or forestry)
 - **Clarifying the regulatory position for energy forestry (for example, can I change land use in the future)**
 - **Providing support to develop a secure supply chain (such as forward contracts for feedstock)**
 - Providing better advice and guidance on energy forestry
 - Increasing skills capacity in energy forestry
 - Other - please specify in no more than 25 words
42. *Which actions would best increase the planting of more trees on farms? (select up to two options – **selection in bold text**)*
- Clarifying the regulation of agroforestry as either agriculture or forestry
 - **Clarifying the implications for the land holding's tax status of planting more trees**
 - Providing better advice and guidance on woodland creation and management
 - Providing incentives for a wider range of tree planting on farms
 - Funding for the advice and the design of schemes for trees on farms and agroforestry
 - **Providing better advice and guidance on how woodland creation and management can contribute to farm business models**
 - Other - please specify in no more than 25 words

43. *Which actions would best increase agroforestry, woodland creation and management on tenanted farmland? (select up to two options – **selection in bold text**)*

- **Providing industry led guidance, best practice and case studies of how tenants and landlords can work together to deliver benefits for both parties from diversification into tree planting and agroforestry on tenanted land**
- Providing eligibility criteria for tree establishment grant agreements to discourage the proactive resumption of tenanted farmland
- Reviewing how tenancy agreements approach the responsibility for and rights to trees
- **Confirming the property rights to long-term carbon benefits**
- Other - please specify in no more than 25 words

44. *What are the most urgent shortages in the workforce capacity needed to increase woodland creation, maintenance and management? (select up to two options – **selection in bold text**)*

- Professional forester
- Supervisor for forest works
- Machine operator, for example, tractor/harvester/forwarder drivers
- Hand cutter / chainsaw operator
- Tree planter
- Tree nursery workers
- Forestry educators
- Land agents, surveyors and architects with specialist forest knowledge
- **All of the above**
- Other - please specify in no more than 25 words

45. *Which actions would best strengthen productivity in forestry supply chains? (select up to three options – **selection in bold text**)*

- Providing grant support for wider range of management options
- **Providing support for woodland infrastructure such as roading**
- Providing grant or loans for equipment (for example, harvesters)
- **Providing support for productivity/supply chains for woodland products**
- Providing better information on market prices and opportunities
- **Training to increase the skills capacity in agricultural workers**
- Facilitating collaborative working between woodland owners
- **Developing options for private investment for ecosystem services that drive woodland management**
- Other - please specify in no more than 25 words