

FORESTRY & TIMBER NEWS

February 2021 Issue 103

HUMAN
resources

FOREST
management

THE FUTURE IS HAMPTON STEEL

BRITISH WIRE FENCING &
METAL POST MANUFACTURER

ALL
POSTS
GUARANTEED
FOR
30 YEARS

ONE OF THE
MOST COMPREHENSIVE
WIRE FENCING RANGES
AVAILABLE

For a superior integrated solution to your fencing needs, combine the award-winning **Versalok**[®] intermediate metal post and clip system and **Hampton's Metal Strainers**, all **guaranteed for 30 years**, with any woven wire fencing pattern. Choose from Class A galvanised **Hampton Net**[™] fixed knot fencing or **Sentinel**[®] hinge joint supplied in rolls of up to 500 metres.

Alternatively opt for our longer life green passivated **Hampton Net**[™] **Green**, **Rylock**[®] **Green** or **Rylock**[®] **One** products. All these can be supplied with barbed wire, line wire and fencing staples in complementary coating options. Also available, **chainlink** fencing either class A galvanised or PVC coated with barbed or knuckled ends, fully galvanised **hexagonal wire netting** and **Gripple**[®] wire joining products.

The future of wire fencing is
Hampton Steel.



HAMPTON[®]

+44 (0) 1933 234070 | sales@hamptonsteel.co.uk | www.hamptonsteel.co.uk

Confor is a membership organisation that promotes sustainable forestry and wood-using businesses. Confor members receive *Forestry and Timber News* for free as part of their membership. For more information on membership, visit www.confor.org.uk/join-us

Past issues and articles can be accessed online at www.confor.org.uk/news/ftn-magazine

Non-member subscriptions: £62/(£67 overseas)
Please contact Liz@confor.org.uk

CONFOR CONTACTS



Stuart Goodall
Chief Executive
stuartg@confor.org.uk
T: 131 240 1416



Andy Leitch
Deputy Chief Executive
Andy.leitch@confor.org.uk
Mob - 07881510171



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



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



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



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



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



Confor head office and editorial office
59 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 2JG



0131 240 1410



info@confor.org.uk



www.confor.org.uk



For the latest news of forestry and wood sign up to #forestandwood on Twitter

Published by Countrywide Publications, Fountain Way, Reydon, Suffolk IP18 6SZ on behalf of Confor.

For advertising, contact Laura Munnings
01502 725866
laura.munnings@micropress.co.uk

Printed by Micropress Printers Ltd

CONTENTS



NEWS & COMMENT

5 | EDITORIAL

6 | WORKPLACE

BEYOND CORONA: WORKPLACE TRENDS 2021

9 | CONFOR

CONFOR INTRODUCES NEW DUAL BOARD STRUCTURE

10 | GRANTS

GRANT US A GREEN RECOVERY

11 | CONFOR

CONFOR WELCOMES NEW COMPANY SECRETARY AND HEAD OF FINANCE...

... AND SAYS FAREWELL TO ROLAND STIVEN

19 | NEWS

SUREVY PUTS A VALUE ON NATURAL CAPITAL OF NEW WOODLANDS

REPORT PUTS £BN PRICE TAG ON GREY SQUIRREL DAMAGE

IS SCOTLAND READY FOR RETURN OF LYNX?

REGULARS

13 | NEWS FROM MEMBERS

16 | MEMBER PROFILE

DSHwood

37 | ENVIRONMENT

THE FOREST PLASTIC GROUP: AVOIDING A 'KNEE JERK' REACTION

41 | MARKETS

TIMBER MARKET REPORT
TIMBER AUCTIONS MARKET REPORT

44 | REMOTE WORKING

HOW TO MAKE YOUR ONLINE EVENT WORK

47 | WOODLAND CARBON

WOODLAND CARBON GUARANTEE IN ENGLAND

49 | CLIMATE CHANGE

SCOTLAND'S FINEST WOODS AWARDS TO HONOUR CLIMATE CHANGE CHAMPIONS IN 2021
THE PATH TO NET ZERO IS PAVED WITH WOOD

50 | CHANGING ATTITUDES

SHAPING A BALANCED PERCEPTION OF FORESTRY FROM A YOUNG AGE

61 | MACHINERY

THE PETERSON WPF SAW

62 | TIMBER TRANSPORT

SURVEY TO SHED LIGHT ON TIMBER HAULAGE FLEET

64 | GREEN RECOVERY

REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE

67 | MOTOR

MOTORSPORT COMES TO AID OF GRAVEL ROAD MAINTENANCE

68 | BOOK REVIEW

MOTORSPORT COMES TO AID OF GRAVEL ROAD MAINTENANCE

69 | SMALL WOODLAND OWNER

70 | FORESTRY IN PICTURES

FEATURES

22 | HUMAN RESOURCES

EMPLOYER'S CHECK LIST 2021
FAST-TRACKING THE PATH TO A POSITIVE AND INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE

TRACKPLOT VIDEO RAISES AWARENESS OF AND MITIGATES LONE WORKER RISKS

MACHINE OPERATORS - HOW ARE YOU STAYING HEALTHY AND SANE?
SAFE FORESTRY

52 | FOREST MANAGEMENT AND RURAL DIVERSIFICATION

FARMING HOUSES
WORKING FORESTS: A HOME FOR ALL CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL - AND ME!

CAMBUSMORE: FARMER CREATES LARGE-SCALE WOODLAND FOR BIODIVERSITY AND TIMBER PRODUCTION

COVER: WINTER SUNSET AT TORLUM WOOD NEAR CRIEFF. DRONE PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARK SIMPSON

WE ARE THE VERY BEST WORKDAY



NEW AND UPDATED!

HUSQVARNA 560 XP® SPEED, POWER AND CONVENIENCE

In the end, it's all about convenience, about the best combination of cutting capacity and manoeuvrability. Husqvarna's 560 XP® and 562 XP® now feature an improved air filter for reliable operation, upgrades on key components for durability and an updated design. **Visit your dealer today!**



Husqvarna®

Cautious optimism

STUART GOODALL CHIEF EXECUTIVE, CONFOR

The world is coming to Glasgow in November to discuss how, collectively, countries can avoid devastating climate change. President Biden's intention that the US will re-join the club, means carbon will feature even more highly in UK media and government thinking in 2021.

For some years, the key role of trees and timber in locking up carbon and contributing to "Net Zero" emissions targets has helped Confor to champion the sector with ministers and through the media, and many Members have been active in presenting their own strong carbon stories. Wood for Good has also made real strides in promoting the use of wood through the "Wood CO2ts less" campaign.

There are reasons, however, to be cautious about what 2021 could bring.

Some groups still seek to portray forestry as principally an environmental issue, focusing on biodiversity or public access.

They assert that modern productive forestry delivers little of these - despite the widespread evidence to the

contrary and they appear to seek to tap into a suspicion that many people have about 'industry' and the environment.

Mechanisms like the Woodland Carbon Code calculate the carbon sequestered in an area of planted land, but they aren't life-cycle carbon tools. Ignoring downstream carbon benefits, and misusing tools like the WCC means groups produce 'evidence' that distort public policy and communicate inaccurate messages to the public.

I was disappointed to hear a representative of the Committee on Climate Change warn recently of the dangers of planting on 'deep peat and wildflower meadows', while making no mention of jobs during a presentation on the economic benefits for society of investing in low-carbon activities.

With COP26 in mind, Confor and Members need to work even more closely together in 2021 to ensure that objective evidence cuts through. Providing a consistent narrative will help promote greater awareness and understanding of what our sector can deliver in the fight against climate change and more widely for society.



Beyond Corona: Workplace trends 2021



Stef Kaiser explores how the wider business world has responded to the pandemic to identify potential lessons for employers in the forestry sector.

“So far, Covid-19 has been a fast forward button for change. It accelerated a lot of the changes that we were already planning; achieving it in a matter of weeks, what otherwise would have taken months to implement and embed.”

Rosetta Forbes, Head of HR, FLS and Scottish Forestry

Business leaders across the globe have reflected on how fast-tracked crisis adaptations will affect the way we think of our workplaces in the long-term. Some believe that 2020 has taught us to be more open-minded to change in general, and to say “yes we can” to innovation and growth. Experts at tech company Konica Minolta predict that while 2020 was a year for finding solutions, 2021 will be the year for following these up with strategic approaches that address the new post-corona work reality.*

The forestry and timber industries are an essential supply chain and have only a moderate proportion of office workers; as a sector, it has therefore been significantly less affected by Covid-19 restrictions than industries that are still effectively shut down – tourism, entertainment or hospitality – or office-based industries that had to move their entire workforce to home-working. However, with even parts of our workforce in home-offices, intermittent childcare provision for non-key workers and social distancing requirements, many businesses in our industry will have made some adjustments to the way they work – whether it be dealing with home-working or vulnerable staff, fur-

loughed workers, or having to communicate with clients, suppliers and other stakeholders virtually, rather than in person.

Innovative muscle

Looking at the economy in general, 2020 has shown that businesses and individuals have the innovative muscle to adapt fast if an emergency requires it. But after a year of never-ending restrictions, it is unlikely that post-corona, life in all its aspects will go back to how it was before. Outside of the forestry and timber industries, business leaders and think tanks are analysing the lessons learned from the pandemic, and how they are shaping what is called a ‘new normal’ – in particular in the workplace. In many aspects of work life, a return to pre-corona normality is the most desirable path to take – the possibility of returning to the office, or face-to-face business meetings on site; but in other aspects, our adaptive response to 2020 might have shown a potential to re-evaluate our processes and find better, more efficient ways of doing things.

* <https://newsroom.konicaminolta.eu/what-will-shape-the-digital-workplace-in-2021/>

The reality of reduced

Face-to-face interactions are what holds relationships together – even in business. Formal meetings and events fulfil a purpose of delivering information, but it is those small, informal social interactions that build team cohesion – the ‘catching up with the lads’ after a long day working on site; the quick exchange of words as we pass our co-workers in the office; the regional committee meetings or forestry shows, where we meet old acquaintances to renew business relationships and friendships.

Although it is jokingly said that people become foresters because trees are easier to deal with than humans, our sector still thrives on strong human relationships with the people we work with. Luckily, many of us are still able to continue our operations almost as usual, but everyone will have noticed a significant reduction in personal contact with team members, clients, suppliers – and wider family. Businesses with office-based staff will now have staff working from home, and all meetings, events or shows have been cancelled for almost a year now.

If restrictions come and go, companies and individuals may need to be prepared to understand and adapt to part-virtual working.

Virtual events?

Although we all crave in-real-life interactions, virtual events and meeting can have practical benefits as well. Most likely, we will see a combination of face-to-face and virtual events in the future.

“Online meetings have been a mixed bag: adapting to the new format has often led to more focused and productive discussions that riff nicely between the ‘talking head in a box’ and the chat bar, with much clearer decisions and action points. Downside is in establishing any personal interaction in a group session with people you don’t know in person.”

Jo O’Hara via LinkedIn



We will likely continue with virtual meetings for the majority of FISA Working Group meetings as these groups are supported by volunteers who give their time around their day-jobs, so reducing travel is a great plus. With FISA membership drawn from the whole of the UK and All Ireland, ensuring all regions can participate in meetings is easier using virtual options; with face-to face, even moving meeting locations means some would have a long journey to a meeting.

Gillian Clark, UK FISA



face-to-face interactions

Managing and engaging a remote workforce

For those businesses managing home or lone working staff, finding ways to maintain productivity and consistent staff performance will remain a key issue. Ensuring good staff engagement can be challenging. Here are some proactive steps employers can take:

1 Well equipped home office workers
Make sure everyone in your team has adequate tools to do their job – even if they work from home. This covers obvious aspects like having access to essential work devices. Other considerations are: do staff have a suitable space to work from? Is their internet connectivity adequate? Having a well and consistently equipped team will boost productivity and foster equality.

2 Monitor and manage your team's wellbeing
"Employee wellbeing is an important aspect of any business. There are tangible links between mental ill health and high

levels of absence, poor productivity, poor employee engagement and staff turnover. Same as for physical health, employers have a duty to protect their employees from harm to mental health", says Gillian Mair of Brodies LLP. Staff members of a business will adapt differently to lone or home-based working and will be dealing with different personal circumstances, including childcare or caring duties. In particular during times of reduced face-to-face contact within teams, increasing communication and fostering an open dialogue is crucial. Mair recommends employers to signpost additional advice and support services to staff, such as employee assistance programmes, details of trained mental health first aiders, or helpful information such as wellbeing guides, online classes, or workstation health and safety guides. She also highlights that "a range of mental impairments, including anxiety and depression can amount to a disability under the Equality Act 2010. This should be taken into account when employers are assessing their



"I work in ground preparation, and we are often the guys working on our own the most. There are the little positive moments that make a difference to well-being: stopping to enjoy the view or wildlife, or being told you're doing a great job and feeling appreciated."

Dave Shanks, contractor, Crieff

obligations to employees (eg their duty to make reasonable adjustments); potential discrimination risks; and the appropriate support that is required.

Continued overleaf

Is flexible working here to stay? Not for everyone...

For those companies with parts of their staff currently working from home, or with staff who have to reconcile work with family or caring duties, flexible working was probably the only realistic solution in the last months. But when restrictions get eased and childcare resumes, there might be an influx of requests from employees looking to make their current flexible working patterns permanent. Employers will need to be prepared for this and will have to consider whether this is in their best interest and within the possibilities of the company.

In the case of office-based industries, the Covid-19 situation has brought upon a change in the way work is approached; a shift from a culture of rigid working hours and agreements to a more outcomes-focused approach. In our sector, however, not all businesses will be in a position to embrace such thinking, and many workers have a preference for traditional working patterns; but it is worthwhile being aware of it – and maybe get inspired to challenge our view of how a workplace should look like. Lantra HR manager Rachel Campbell

believes that "by considering more flexible working arrangements employers can open the door to a huge and rich excluded talent pool, increase diversity and increase productivity."

However, there are costs and challenges

to flexible arrangements – from the cost of home equipment, to performance management and team communication, to productivity and wellbeing issues. Flexible working is not a blanket solution and will not work for all companies.

Flexible working in the public sector

Prior to Covid-19, Scottish Forestry (SF) and Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS) already had extensive flexible working policies in place, however there was limited use of these, says *Rosetta Forbes, Head of HR, FLS and Forestry Scotland*. During the first and second lockdowns, we've got creative and worked in a much more collaborative and supportive way than ever before.

Much of our learning moved online, however we are still working through how best to deliver the practical element of technical training given that we are likely to have restrictions for some time. It is vital that colleagues continue to learn, refresh their skills and keep their certification up to date to ensure safe working practices, but also reduce the risks associated with Covid-19.

Going forward, we will continue to break down the barriers about mental health and wellbeing and expand our flexible approach to working so that our staff achieve a better work/life balance.

Both agencies plan to allow staff to work from home more and use our offices as a place to bring people together and collaborate. In doing this we will be adopting new technologies that help us learn and work remotely and reduce the need to travel.

Continued from previous page

3 Flexible working
 “Where appropriate, flexible working options such as unpaid leave, flexible working or reduced working hours may help to alleviate the stress or difficulties some employees are facing at the moment. If these are available, ensure employees know about them, as they may not feel able to ask directly, or may fear a negative response”, says Gillian Mair. Until the end of the furlough scheme in April, flexible furlough may still be an option, meaning employees can work part-time and receive a furlough grant for their unworked hours. Flexible working may not be suitable for certain business models.

4 Team dynamics or client interactions might change
 Different personality types respond differently to the lack of face-to-face interaction and might change the way they engage with the team, or even work with the team. This can cause friction within the team, or conflicts not being resolved efficiently. An ongoing dialogue with team members is useful and can help managers adjust communication processes within the team, including coaching on how to make virtual exchanges more effective. The same can be true for interactions with clients or suppliers.

5 Motivate the team
 Recognition of staff’s individual contribution to the company’s success is more important than ever when dealing with a potentially isolated workforce.

RELATED STORIES

- David Lee: Running successful online events (p48)
- Lone workers on site: wellbeing (p29)
- Brodies LLP: Key employers issues in 2021 (p22)
- Lantra: Shaping a positive workplace (p25)

GET INVOLVED

Will we need more IT skills in the forestry and timber sector?

Have you been recruiting lately or are you planning to do so? Are you adding new IT-related skills to your job descriptions?
 If so, get in touch. We will be reporting on Skills and career in our April issue of FTN.

Digital transformation

“When digitalization was a major trend before Covid-19, it certainly accelerated at lightspeed during lockdowns. Many organizations were forced to rethink their way of working, dealing with processes and data, and doing business with their customers”, says digital agency Youwe*.

For many companies – in particular in supply chains like ours – adopting digital processes had not ranked high on the priority list pre-2020. The first lockdown in spring 2020 brought a sudden need for home working and virtual engagement with clients and suppliers. Within a matter of days, IT was offering the tools to keep employees working and client communication flowing. Operations in our sector were less affected and after the summer, many of us could return to almost business-as-usual. But we are not an island. Shutdowns of most workplaces in the world around us (60% of UK adults were homeworking at the height of lockdown last year**) resulted in a global trend from ‘physical to

online’. Some of our readers will recognise that shift happening in their businesses to some extent, at least. The flagship example is Zoom: it existed before March 2020 but had you heard of it? By now, it has become a household name and part of both our work and private life. Beyond video calls, it is likely that some of us are increasingly favouring digital communication channels in general – whether it be e-newsletters, client updates, webinar follow ups or online enquiries. Taking order and payments online is another example of digital transformation. Adopting digital processes means using and processing data. The Covid-induced digital transformation happened in a rush and this year, it will be time for businesses to consolidate and to make sure that any new digital tools are used in a safe and responsible manner.

* www.youweagency.com

** www.finder.com/uk/working-from-home-statistics

Safety, security and compliance

Digital systems are an important part of this digital transformation brought upon by Covid-19. As with any sudden change in business processes, there are risks and a few key questions that companies should address:

- Are we able to support this new way of working?
- Will our systems cope with the sudden spike in demand?
- Will our systems be safe and secure?

In order to ensure the continuity of our businesses during a transformation accelerated by the pandemic, it’s important to validate systems for use in a new manner. It’s worthwhile to assess the basics, such the capacity, the security and the relevant privileges granted to the users of said systems.

Ran J Sandhu, Lead Consultant, Enterprise Transformation



Confor introduces new dual Board structure

Good governance is vital for any membership body, as is strong and effective communication with Members. Following approval at the 2020 AGM, Confor has moved from a single Board to two new Boards.

A small **Management Board** (MB) of eight Directors (including the Chair and CEO) is responsible for good governance and ensuring Confor meets its statutory obligations. The Directors will primarily be responsible for managing Confor's finances and investments.

An interim 'Shadow' MB has been established that will serve until the 2021 AGM, following which a new MB will be appointed. The members of the Shadow MB are: Will Anderson, Ralland Browne, Gavin Davidson, Ian Duncan, Stuart Goodall, James Hamilton Stubber, George McRobbie and George Webb

Alongside the MB is an **Advisory Board** (AB) made up of Member representatives from across the countries and the supply chain, acting as a high-level forum to identify the priority issues of concern to the industry, helping to set and moni-



tor the business plan and ensuring good communication with, and service to, Members.

The members of the previous Board have transferred over to form the initial AB and going forward there will be a process of nomination/election to facilitate the representative involvement of Members from across the sector.

In the future, we envision to make notes of the AB's meetings available to Members on the Members' area of the website.

The eight-strong Management Board will include the Chair and CEO, currently Lord Duncan of Springbank and Stuart Goodall (above left to right respectively)

GET INVOLVED

Any Member with an interest in serving on the AB has a route open to them. If you would like further information, please get in touch with our CEO Stuart Goodall.

Stuartg@confor.org.uk

Advisory Board structure (plus Chair and CEO)

Regional Committees of woodland owners and small businesses

6 appointments: (2 England, 2 Scotland, 1 Wales, 1 Northern Ireland)

Harvesting/ Management/Investment
(4 appointments)

Regional Wood Processors Groups
(4 appointments)

Large Mills
(4 appointments)

Nurseries
(1 appointment)

Technical Committees
(1 appointment)

Younger Members
(1 appointment)

Sector Diversity
(1 appointment)

Grant us a Green Recovery

Throughout the nations of England, Wales and Scotland there has been recognition that growing forests first requires investment to grow forestry. For all the stresses and strains of the Covid-19

pandemic, support for the industry has never been so forthcoming. In this article we will take a brief snapshot of the successes of the schemes launched in 2020 and what's to follow for 2021.

SCOTLAND

Scottish Forestry has made over £2 million available to tree nurseries, small forestry businesses and farmers to help them gear up and play their part in creating more woodland across Scotland. This included a new agreement with the UK and Welsh Governments, allowing tree nurseries in England and Wales, which supply trees to Scotland, to be able to apply for the funding also.

The scale of this success is truly encouraging with £2.6m in grant offers seeking to deliver £6.9m of overall project investment across 120 projects, all by the end of 2020.

Awards from this scheme are being finalised and it will be important that these projects are delivered this financial year so that the funding is utilised. Details of future rounds or further funding is expected to be released shortly.

ENGLAND

After a good run of funding in England through the LEADER projects, the Countryside Productivity Scheme, and the Forestry Innovation Fund, there are currently no funds open in England. However, there is hope of support in England for machinery, circa autumn 2021, but this has yet to be confirmed.

Productivity will form one of the new Environmental Land Management scheme pilots, but there is no detail yet on content or timing.

As reported previously, in July 2020, Defra contributed £1 million to Scottish Forestry's Harvesting and Processing Grant so that nurseries in England could apply for support offered via this scheme. This was welcomed by English nurseries, and applicants to this scheme have started to receive confirmation of their success. We await publication of the outcomes of the scheme and are inviting members to come forward with details of their success and how this will help their businesses develop.

Whilst the Countryside Productivity Scheme has closed to new applicants, those applicants in round three have had the deadline extended due to concerns over Covid delays. They now have until midnight on the 31 May 2021 to buy and install all their items and submit their claim for payment.

WALES

Wales also contributed to the Scottish Forestry's Harvesting and Processing Grant. In addition, the National Forest for Wales project was focused to deliver some support funding to Welsh businesses through the Forest Industry Recovery Scheme (FIRS).

The National Forest project is aimed at delivering against a wide range of priorities which includes a contribution towards maximising the number of trees planted to contribute to decarbonisation goals; supporting the reversal of decline in biodiversity; seeing positive effects on physical health and wellbeing; supporting commercial business activity, for example from timber production; and adventure tourism.

The focus of FIRS was to cover tangible investments that will enhance the applicant's ability to:

- increase the tree nursery's capacity to produce young trees; and/or
- undertake ground preparation work ahead of tree planting; and/or
- undertake tree safety works for trees affected by Ash Dieback (Chalara); and/or
- improve harvesting of timber from thinning, or small scale, inaccessible woodland using appropriate machinery.

The final awards from FIRS are understood to be still in process but there is confidence that all of the £1.5m fund will be successfully allocated. There were in excess of 110 applications seeking to support investment ranging from timber winches to substantial capital investment for buildings. The level of appetite for these grants sends a very clear message to our governments. The industry is keen to invest and develop its potential.

Further support has been announced in Wales via the Timber

Business Investment Scheme (TBIS) which will be delivered through Rural Payment Wales. A further £1 million has been made available from the Rural Development Programme.

Support under this scheme covers tangible and/or intangible investments that will enhance forestry potential or relate to the mobilising, processing and adding value to forest products.

Examples of eligible activities under the scheme include:

- small to medium scale forest-based investments that will enhance forestry potential or that relate to the harvesting, processing and adding value to forest products, particularly environmentally friendly technology, including cable-cranes, skidders and other equipment suitable for small and/or inaccessible woodlands;
- investments in development and rationalisation of the marketing and processing of wood and wood products;
- investments related to the use of wood as a raw material and energy source prior to industrial processing;
- investment may include small forest nursery related developments that are specifically related to one or more forest holdings;
- investments must be related to the improvement of the economic value of specific forests.

The next round opens on 1 March 2021. The deadline for applications will be 9 April 2021.

Further advice and assistance with submitting an application may be sought directly from the Welsh Government Website.

In a new machinery series, grant recipients will review their newly purchased equipment. Read more on p61.

Confor welcomes new Company Secretary and Head of Finance

At the start of January, Confor has welcomed Kirstin Donaldson to the team as Head of Finance.

"As Confor's Head of Finance, I will be responsible for managing all areas of Finance including financial planning and monitoring, reporting to the Board, advising on financial strategy and for company reporting as per regulatory and legal requirements. In my role as Company Secretary, I will be responsible for overseeing the day-to-day administration of the company, HR and for ensuring good corporate governance.

"I am an experienced Chief Operating Officer with a strong financial background having qualified as a Chartered Accountant at KPMG- a Big Four Firm. After qualification I then spent four years working for

Scottish Power as Group Financial Accountant before moving to become Financial Controller for Speirs & Jeffrey (S&J)- a wealth management firm which managed over £6.5bn of investments for clients. During this period, I was heavily involved in several IT and transformational projects that were key to S&J's strategy. These included the implementation of a new front office system, the refurbishment of and subsequent move to new office premises and the development of a public website and client portal.

"In 2015 I joined the main Board of Speirs & Jeffrey (S&J) as Chief Operating Officer and I was proud to become the first female director in its 109 years history. Following the purchase of S&J by Rathbones in 2018 I led the integration of the two companies which was a large multi-year project that I delivered

successfully.

"I am now excited to be joining a sector which provides both environmental benefits and jobs for rural economies at what should be a growth point with changing attitudes and indeed COP26 in Glasgow later this year. I have a lot of very relevant knowledge and experience which I hope that I will be able to put to good use in this new sector to me and I very much look forward to working with you going forward."



And says farewell to Roland Stiven

With the start of the New Year, the Confor team bids farewell to Roland Stiven, Timber Transport lead and Confor company secretary, who has moved on to begin a new role with Scottish Forestry.

As Business Development Advisor in the Business Development Team he is covering areas including timber transport and the Strategic Timber Transport Fund, biomass, and the Scottish Windblow Contingency Plan.

Confor employed Roland in 2009 to work with the Timber Transport Forum and to help manage the Scottish Timber Transport Fund. Roland quickly got to grasp with his new role and soon became an effective and widely respected figure in timber transport.

In recent years, Roland also became Confor's Company Secretary and managed budgets for Confor and for Wood for Good.

While Roland will be missed,

everyone at Confor wishes him well in the new role.

A recruitment process is underway to secure a new Timber Transport Officer whereas the new Head of Finance, Kirstin Donaldson, will take over the role of Company Secretary.



Strengthening technical support to members

Confor will welcome a new Technical Support Officer in April. Following the departure of Andrew Heald last year, and then the recruitment of Andy Leitch, Confor is pleased to be filling a new post. Technical advice is important for Members, and the new recruit will work with Andy and his team to strengthen the advice, representation and support that Confor can make available.



CONFOR WELCOMES NEW MEMEBRS

- Balcas Invergordon Mill, Inverness-shire
- Brook Forestry Limited, Aberdeenshire
- DSHWOOD UK Ltd, Inverness-shire
- Goldcrest Land & Forestry Group, Midlothian
- Holkham Estate, Norfolk
- Kilmaha, Gloucestershire
- Lumsden Forestry Ltd, Inverness-shire
- Safe Forestry Ltd, Inverness-shire
- True North European Real Estate Partnership, Northumberland
- Alexander Benson, Northumberland
- Emma Eberhardt, Oxfordshire
- Conway Gray, Cumbria
- Daniel Greenall, Lancashire
- Emma Mercer, Norfolk
- K Gibson Tree Surgery & Rural Services, Devon

HYPRO



+44 2838 330011
info@oakleafforestry.com
35a Derryall Road, Portadown, Co. Armagh BT62 1PL

Oakleaf
FORESTRY.COM

VIMEK

MERICRUSHER
DIFFERENT FOR A REASON

PALAX

 **SAMPO ROSENLEW**

KESLA

Familiar faces launch Land and Forestry Group

Well-known forestry specialists have launched GOLDCREST Land & Forestry Group in early January 2021.

Surveyors Jon Lambert, Fenning Welstead and Jock Galbraith, who previously worked for John Clegg & Co, have formed a new partnership operating throughout the UK.

Based in Edinburgh's Charlotte Square, Goldcrest's services include buying and selling forestry and land on behalf of clients, valuations, asset management and strategic advice on rural estates and businesses.

The three chartered rural practice surveyors and chartered foresters drove the John Clegg & Co business forward for a combined total of more than 70 years.

Mr Lambert said: "I am delighted to be part of this new partnership. We have an unrivalled knowledge of the forestry market and as a team we have an excellent reputa-

tion, having been responsible for brokering the majority of commercial forestry transactions in the UK over the last two to three decades."

He said: "The forestry market remains a buoyant growth sector, underpinned by significant interest from corporate firms keen to earn carbon credits as a way of ensuring compliance with Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) criteria. Additionally, the importance placed on natural capital is increasingly realised both in the valuation of forestry assets and through the rural support and grants offered by devolved governments in the UK as we leave the EU.

"The forestry sector has been relatively unscathed by Covid-19 with very considerable capital appreciation of woodlands, forests and planting land in the last year. Some properties have increased at an astonishing rate - in excess of 30% in the last twelve months.



Demand remains sustained for this bespoke investment asset class. I believe this interest will only intensify during the next 12-18 months and that we are likely to see further yield compression as a result. It is an exciting time to be setting up a new business in the sector."

<http://goldcrestifg.com>

Group Founding Partners (l-r): Jon Lambert, Jock Galbraith and Fenning Welstead

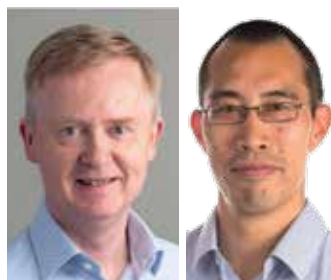
Maelor appointments

On 14 January, Maelor Forest Nurseries Ltd announced the appointment of Ben Goh as its new Commercial Manager.

Ben took up his post on 12 January 2021 and will lead the Company's customer service team as they continue to deliver great quality products and a high level of service to all their customers.

Ben brings with him many years' experience working in renewables with AMP Clean Energy and biomass with E.ON and also has a family background in the plant nursery sector.

Only recently, in late November 2020, the company appointed Mark Appleton as its new Managing Director. Mark has taken over the day-to-day running of the nursery from long-standing Managing Director and founder, Mike Harvey. Mike will be taking retirement in 2021 having built



Mark Appleton (left) and Ben Goh

the business to the success it is today. Mike was pivotal to the successful acquisition of Maelor by BSW Timber Ltd in 2019. Mike and Mark will be working in tandem over the coming months to ensure a smooth transition is achieved. Mark brings with him many years' experience operating at a senior level, notably holding the role of Managing Director at MWF (a leading supplier of biomass fuel) before their purchase by AMP Clean Energy in 2016.

BSW acquires SCA Wood UK's Building & Supply Solutions division

In early December, BSW announced the acquisition of the Building and Supply Solutions division of SCA Wood UK, which includes the manufacture and distribution of timber and associated products to the home improvement and builders merchant sectors.

This heralds the beginning of BSW's growth strategy under the ownership of Endless LLP. Tony Hackney, CEO of BSW, said: "We are very pleased to have agreed a common approach with SCA to acquire the UK operations, which will significantly strengthen our position with our expanding customer base.

"The opportunity to add value to our established products and widen the products we offer and dis-

tribute is extremely exciting. This major milestone in the timber industry provides our customers with a strengthened and broader range and will extend our excellent service provision.

"Through this acquisition, we will deliver a combined package of timber solutions adding to the security of supply for the market."

Jerry Larsson, President of SCA, commented: "I believe the business will further develop under the ownership of BSW. We will continue to supply raw materials into the UK market via BSW Timber, in addition to our existing Industrial Solutions import and distribution operation."

In November 2020, BSW had acquired Borders timber harvesting company Dick Brothers Forestry.

Tilhill presents top student award

A Harper Adams University graduate has won the Tilhill 'Top Student' Award for 2020. The award was presented at an online award presentation to Amy Shepherd, a graduate studying for a BSc (Hons) in Countryside and Environmental Management with the University.

As part of Tilhill's work to strengthen links with future foresters, the Company presents awards to top performing students at universities offering degrees in forestry-related subjects across the UK.

Upon receiving the award, Amy Shepherd said: "Winning the Tilhill Award has been a wonderful achievement and I am so grateful for it. I have been interested in Forestry since travelling to the pacific north west and seeing the vast forests there. During this time, I thought that a career in Forestry would be too good to be true.

When I found the Countryside and Environmental Management degree at Harper Adams University I knew this was my route into the Forestry industry. During the degree course my skills have developed in a wide range of areas from woodland management, soil science and ecology to water management, all inte-

gral to forestry activities and a career in this discipline. The lecturers have been fantastic and made my time at Harper Adams enjoyable.

The talks given by Tilhill during career events at Harper Adams continued to inspire me and reinforce my aspiration of working in the forestry sector. Forestry has taken a new positive turn in recent years, with local and national governments realising the importance of trees. Graduating during this time is exciting and I can't wait to see what the future will hold."

A carved wooden trophy along with £250 prize money was presented to Amy by David Edwards, Tilhill's Wales and Marches Regional Manager.



GET INVOLVED

Tilhill's 2021 Graduate Scheme is now open for applications. Just visit our website for details on how to apply. www.tilhill.com

Managing Ash Dieback

- Ash Die Back (Chalara) is now present throughout the UK.
- Sadly expectation is for up to 97% loss of ash trees.
- Ash is widespread in woodlands and roadside edges.
- Are you managing your liability, particularly in respect of falling trees around footpaths and highways?
- Secondary factors, such as honey fungus, can cause rapid decay.

Decide NOW, before the timber value tumbles, or the removal of increasingly unstable trees becomes more dangerous and costly.

Using specialised, cost-effective machinery and expert teams, supported by professional management, Euroforest will turn your dying woodland into a sustainable asset.

EUROFOREST

sustainable excellence

For further info visit www.euroforest.co.uk and speak to your local Area Manager, or simply call 01228 217517.



USED MACHINES

BUY A USED MACHINE & RECEIVE A

£4500

SPARE PARTS VOUCHER

SPECIAL PRICED NEW HARVESTER HEAD ON USED HARVESTER

KOMATSU 865



YEAR.....2013
HOURS.....14500

KOMATSU 931



YEAR.....2014
HOURS.....7000

**PONSSE
BUFFALO 10W**



YEAR.....2014
HOURS.....10000

PONSSE BEAR



YEAR.....2014
HOURS.....13000

PONSSE ELK



YEAR.....2005
HOURS.....23500

PONSSE FOX



YEAR.....2017
HOURS.....4375

PONSSE ERGO



YEAR.....2001
HOURS.....17000

PONSSE BUFFALO KING



YEAR.....2014
HOURS.....10000

HYUNDIA 145



YEAR.....2014
HOURS.....7000

PONSSE H7



YEAR.....2014
HOURS.....10000

PONSSE H7



YEAR.....2011
HOURS.....11500

SALES CONTACT INFORMATION

Craig Vernon

Scotland/Northern England
Tel: +44 (0)7826 414 482
Email: craig.vernon@ponsse.com

Dickie Todd

Wales/England
Tel: +44 (0)7730 952 080
Email: dickie.todd@ponsse.com

Ponsse UK Ltd

4 Annan Business Park, Annan DG12 6TZ
01461 207 510

A logger's best friend
www.ponsse.com

Building partnerships on integrity and trust

DSHwood is an international wood trading company, trading in both hardwood and softwood logs and all main wood products. **Stef Kaiser** spoke to Wales-based Iwan Lloyd-Williams, Director at DSHwood UK.

DSHwood UK is a subsidiary of multinational DSHwood and has been operating in Scotland since 2011 at a comparatively small scale. In the summer of 2020, DSHwood appointed Gavin Brown to head up the expansion of the company's operations throughout the UK and Iwan was subsequently appointed to lead operations in Wales and England.

Bred and trained in Wales, Iwan lives with his family in Llandrillo in North Wales. He has been involved in forestry for over 20 years, having worked for Tilhill for 15 years, followed by a short appointment as Head of Purchasing at Clifford Jones Timber. He is a well-known figure in the Welsh industry and holds the role of Vice Chairman of Confor Wales. He is also the Assistant Honorary Director of the forestry section at the Royal Welsh Show.

DSHwood UK Ltd is, "unashamedly", as Iwan says, a wood trading business. It does not have its own processing plants, but instead chooses to work in partnership with carefully chosen and trusted harvesting and processing businesses.

In the UK, its focus lies on purchasing standing timber, although the company is receptive to opportunities for buying or trading coniferous or broadleaved timber either at roadside or delivered.

DSHwood UK's vision is to grow the business quickly to provide a fully national service offering forest owners a truly independent timber marketing option in order to achieve best value for the timber grower. Iwan highlights the importance of developing strong partnerships and relationships and believes this can be achieved by a brand based on integrity and trust – a business that "delivers what it says on the package".

www.dshwood.com

QA

Does DSHwood UK operate differently from the European company model?

Yes, it does. In the UK, we are mainly a standing timber merchant purchasing on a tonnage basis either standing or at roadside, whereas in Denmark and Germany we mainly buy roadside logs. In France, we buy parcels both standing and roadside at auction, similar to what we do in the UK; the purchaser then pays a lump-sum price and is responsible for volumes and quality assessment

How has the 2020 lockdowns affected global (mainly European) timber markets?

At the beginning of last year, the overseas export market was severely affected in direct continuation of Chinese New Year in February 2020. The main part of all sales contracts was cancelled, which led to a harvesting stop in hardwood all over Europe. In March, the export market came back, but now Europe was in lockdown and European buyers hesitated to place orders. Overall, this led to a weak market for hardwood in the first half of 2020. During the summer, we faced a high demand for hardwood in both Europe and the Far East. This demand has continued through the second half of 2020.

The softwood market in Europe was less affected by the lockdown. This was mainly due to a huge oversupply of beetle-damaged logs from Central Europe, as diseased wood had to be harvested independently of market demand.

How are UK markets responding?

In our country, we have seen prices for logs continuing to strengthen and all indicators seem to show that this trend will continue until at least the end of summer 2021, mainly because of a lack of sawn



timber available from Europe and Scandinavia, as it gets diverted to the US.

Small roundwood (SRW) markets were oversupplied in 2020 during lockdown but have since recovered production, albeit with a significant backlog in the supply chain. SRW prices have a significant price gap as opposed to sawlogs. Two or three years ago, the price gap for SRW vs Sawlogs was in the region of £10/t but is now up to as much as £40 - £50/t for competitive purchasing.

Has DSHwood been significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic?

Like many businesses, DSHwood was affected by reduced demand during the initial lockdown in March 2020 as the construction sector shut down across the UK and mills closed or slowed production. Since the industry re-started, demand has been incredibly strong and has allowed us to purchase some meaningful volume.



Did your business have to make any significant changes to operations due to the pandemic?

Usually, all our hardwood inspections within Europe would be undertaken by meeting the supplier in the forest and agree on grading. In 2020, however, most DSH country branches would conduct hardwood gradings without engaging the supplier on site. In the UK, the situation was different, as we are adopting and developing COVID Risk Assessments to allow the continuation of operations across our sites.



The tariff-free Brexit can be positive for the UK timber industry.

How do you foresee UK timber markets reacting to Brexit?

It has been immensely pleasing that the UK has exited Europe

without trade tariffs; this will invigorate the domestic timber industry economy and prevent the UK market from becoming too insular.

The domestic wood processing markets will have to remain competitive in the wider international arena, which is directly beneficial for the forest owner, and ultimately will benefit a healthy and more sustainable / stable forest industry in the UK.

Over the next few years, I think we will see an increase in demand for homegrown timber from across the UK.

Strong prices, lack of trade tariffs and good demand can create a healthy industry. It is pleasing to see the volumes being brought to market by growers and their agents as they seek to maximise financial returns. I do worry, however, that the private sector might largely withdraw from placing timber on the market if/ when the prices go back down, potentially starving a falling market.

Customs paperwork could be a barrier for import/export of timber as this has certainly become more onerous.

Being a multinational company, how will your business be impacted by Brexit?

We continually see political conflicts showing up all over the world. This always causes panic and difficulties in the current business. But usually, after a short while the raw material finds another way to meet the end user request if there is an ongoing demand.

I do not see any significant impact caused to DSHwood by the terms of the Brexit deal. At least now we have some more certainty that trade tariffs are not going to be applied. It is now more a matter of currency, and how the strength of the pound is managed.

In the future, being outside of the European Union Europe will now us to be more reactive to wider international opportunities should they arise.

Tustins

WOODS FOR SALE

CEFN LLWYD FOREST PORTFOLIO, GWYNEDD

2,967 acres. As a whole £15,000,000
6 Lots from £700,000

LODGE WOOD, LINCOLNSHIRE

72.6 acres. Guide price £425,000

BWLCH COEDIOG, POWYS

232.2 acres. Guide price £250,000

ALL-Y-GOETRE, CARMARTHENSHIRE

36.6 acres. Guide price £148,000

MANDINAM ESTATE, LLANDOVERY

362 acres. Guide price £2,750,000

Details from www.tustins.co.uk

WOODS WANTED

Thinking of Selling?

Phone or email miketustin@tustins.co.uk
OR johnclegg@tustins.co.uk

01869 254938

www.tustins.co.uk



Eucalyptus Renewables Ltd



Delivering carbon sequestration, renewable energy and carbon positive materials

Eucalyptus Renewables works across the supply-chain from farmer & forester through to end user. We specialise in:

- Diversified land-uses integrating sustainable forestry within agricultural and woodland systems
- Carbon sequestration in fast-growing species selected for current and future climatic variation
- High growth rates 26 to 44 m³/ha/ annum and high density wood >500kg/m³
- No impact from grey squirrels and low browsing interest from deer
- Woodland Creation Grant opportunities
- Successfully growing in the UK, it is one of the worlds most used construction grade timber

bryan@eucalyptusrenewables.co.uk

www.eucalyptusrenewables.co.uk

@dukeofeuc

Visit woodmizer.co.uk and find out about current promotions, discounts and savings!

SAWMILLS



PLANER/MOULDERS



BLADES



WOOD-MIZER UK
HOPFIELD BARN
KENWARD ROAD, YALDING
KENT ME18 6JP

info@woodmizer.co.uk 01622 813 201

woodmizer.co.uk



Wood-Mizer
from forest to final form

Survey puts a value on natural capital of new woodlands

A study – the first of its kind in the UK – has provided quantitative evidence of the natural capital benefits of planting new woodlands.

Natural capital is the stock of natural resources, including plants, soils, air, water and greenspace, which all combine to provide benefits to people.

Commissioned by Scottish Forestry, Tilhill and SEPA, the study assessed a newly planted mixed woodland site at Larriston near Newcastleton which is managed by Tilhill. The woodland was then valued to measure its natural capital potential over the next 50 years.

In addition to future revenues from selling harvested timber, the analysis revealed substantial benefits for society through CO₂ removals, flood alleviation and biodiversity from modern-day forestry.

The key future benefits were valued at around £20m in today's prices, which included almost 200,000 tonnes of timber, just under 150,000 tonnes of CO₂ removals, and almost 3m m³ of water stored in the forest.

The analysis showed timber to provide the largest source of financial revenue for the project at £2.5m over the next 50 years. The value of net carbon sequestration to society was estimated at around £9m over the same period.

Dr Pat Snowdon, at Scottish Forestry, who led the study said: "This is a fresh approach to working with businesses in the forestry sector by putting a value on a range of natural capital benefits from planting new woodlands.

Challenging targets

"The survey provides important evidence about how woodland creation and nature supports a green recovery and will contribute towards our challenging climate change targets.

"The study will also be of interest to those in the forest products chain who will be able to see how

well designed woodland planting is a win-win for the economy, local communities and nature."

AECOM consultants, who carried out the study in association with RDI Associates and Cumulus Consultants, worked closely with Scottish Forestry and Tilhill to apply the Forest Products Sector Guide of the Natural Capital Protocol for the first time in the UK. The Protocol aims to show the reliance between business and nature, including in this case, benefits that forestry can generate for the economy and local communities.

This type of analysis offers different practical applications in the future: whether as a way to examine the case for future forestry investments and markets; to assess different forest management strategies; or to monitor outcomes as woodlands grow and mature.

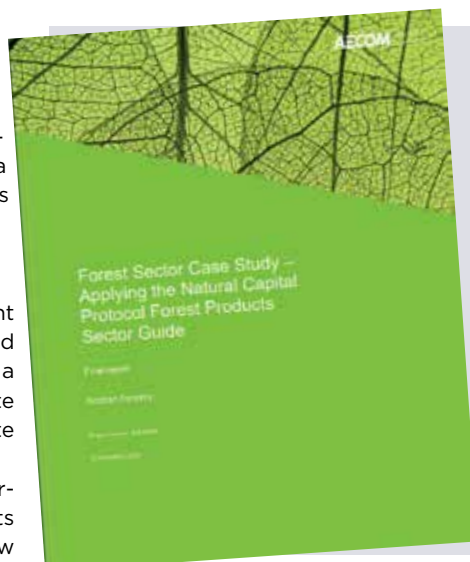
It offers complementary evidence to conventional Environmental Impact Assessments and serves to show how the forestry industry can support our economic recovery, while enhancing the natural environment.



The survey provides important evidence about how woodland creation and nature supports a Green Recovery

Applying the Natural Capital Protocol

The report can be downloaded from the Scottish Forestry Publications webpage (<https://forestry.gov.scot/publications/988-forest-sector-final-report>)





Family owned & operated since 1970



THOR LOG SPLITTERS - VARIOUS MODELS AVAILABLE FOR IMMEDIATE DELIVERY - CALL FOR LATEST PRICES



Introducing the revolutionary Hakki Pilke 55 Pro – Semi-automatic firewood factory with innovative functions!

Benefits

- AC 10 Automatic chain tensioner
- For industrial firewood processing
- Automatic chain oil lubrication
- High-end productivity
- Enormous splitting power
- HakkiCut™ cutting system
- HakkiSplit™ delay-free splitting
- Electric controlled cutting & splitting
- Ergonomic design
- Guide plates for controlled log landing
- Half-stroke splitting function
- Fast hydraulic functions
- Modern appearance
- Robust structure



T: 02890 342838 E: sales@mlarge.com W: www.mlarge.com

Report puts £bn price tag on grey squirrel damage

Damage by non-native grey squirrels is a major risk to the health of woodland. The animals have an appetite for stripping the bark of young trees, an act which can kill the trees outright or damage them enough to allow infections in. A new report, *Analysis of the Costs of Grey Squirrel Damage*, commissioned by the Royal Forestry Society (RFS) in partnership with Forestry Commission, estimates grey squirrels will cost the sector at least £1.1bn over the next 40 years – in damaged timber, lost carbon revenue, and tree replacements.

Land managers report a trend to avoid planting broadleaved tree species that are most vulnerable to grey squirrel damage, including oak, beech and sycamore. They argue the risks of grey squirrel damage and cost of mitigation can be too high to justify against final timber values for trees which often

take 80-100 years to mature. This shift could also have impacts for woodland biodiversity.

Woodland owners have named the grey squirrel as the number one threat to their broadleaf woods, and the organisations say previous calculations of the costs of squirrel damage (£6-10m per annum) are a huge underestimate.

The authors of the report developed a repeatable methodology for calculating grey squirrel damage by taking into account not just lost timber value but reduced carbon capture, as well as damage mitigation and the costs of trees to replace those that have died as a result of grey squirrel bark stripping.

The results show a wide range of values depending on assumptions. The ‘probable scenario’ estimates that grey squirrels are costing a total of £37m a year to the sector in England and Wales. Even this does



Grey squirrel stripping tree bark: Picture credit RFS

not include a range of more hard-to-measure impacts such as on landscape, public health or treasured wildlife caused by tree loss and damage.

The report recommends additions to the National Forestry Inventory squirrel damage survey methods to improve the quality of data available to help land managers calculate the true costs of impacts on woodland; and to help develop appropriate and effective grey squirrel control policies.

Read the Report Overview and the Full Report at www.rfs.org.uk/about/publications/rfs-reports/

Is Scotland ready for the return of lynx?

An extensive and impartial study to assess people’s views about the possible reintroduction of Eurasian lynx to the Scottish Highlands is being launched this month by a new partnership of charities.

Ecological research has shown that extensive areas of Scotland could support lynx, but the charities – Trees for Life, The Vincent Wildlife Trust and SCOTLAND: The Big Picture – say returning the shy and elusive animal is less about science and more about people’s willingness to live alongside a species that’s become forgotten on these shores.

The year-long “Lynx to Scotland” consultation will impartially and accurately assess public and stakeholder attitudes around the idea of lynx reintroduction, including in rural communities.

“With a global biodiversity crisis, we have a responsibility to have open and constructive conversations around restoring key native species to the Scottish landscape – and science shows that apex predators like lynx play a vital ecological role in maintaining healthy living

systems,” said Peter Cairns, Executive Director of SCOTLAND: The Big Picture.

Lynx are now expanding in range and numbers across mainland Europe as hunting laws are enforced and public attitudes to large predators soften. Several successful lynx reintroductions since the 1970s have brought ecological and environmental benefits to countries more densely populated than Scotland, and in areas used for farming, hunting, forestry and tourism.

As a shy and solitary woodland hunter, lynx are rarely glimpsed

Eurasian lynx in winter



and attacks on humans are virtually unknown. Research suggests the Highlands has sufficient habitat – and more than enough roe deer, the cat’s preferred prey – to support around 400 wild lynx.

Steve Micklewright, Chief Executive of Trees for Life, said: “Scotland has more woodland deer than any other European country, and their relentless browsing often prevents the expansion and healthy regeneration of our natural woodlands. By preying on roe deer, lynx would restore ecological processes that have been missing for centuries, and provide a free and efficient deer management service.”

The Eurasian lynx is native to Britain but was driven to extinction some 500-1000 years ago through hunting and habitat loss.

“Lynx to Scotland” runs from January 2021 to February 2022 and is not associated with any other previous or current initiatives to restore lynx to Britain

For details, see scotlandbigpicture.com/lynx-to-scotland.

Employer's check list 2021

Julie Keir, Practice Development Lawyer at Brodies LLP presents a look ahead to some of the key HR and employment issues for 2021. While the pandemic will undoubtedly continue to dominate the agenda, there are some other important issues on the horizon.



COVID-19

Preparing for the end of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS)

If you have furloughed employees and are relying on CJRS grants, consider what to do when the scheme ends on 30 April 2021.

If cost-saving measures are still required after the scheme closes, options include changing terms and conditions; restructuring; and redundancies. We do not yet know what will happen to the postponed Job Support Scheme. Any support available from May will be announced at the UK Budget on 3 March 2021.

Managing homeworking / supporting mental health & wellbeing

Keep up-to-date with the current guidance on working from home and business closures.

Regularly consider what action you need to take to satisfy your health and safety and data security obligations in relation to staff working from home.

Retain documentary evidence of how you manage homeworking, including policies and staff communications; completed home workstation assessments; and the support provided for employees' mental health and wellbeing.

Getting employees back to the workplace

When the time comes to move homeworking employees back to the workplace, you will need to (among other things):

- Carry out a workplace risk assessment and take steps to eliminate/reduce risks in line with government guidance;
 - Inform and consult with employees, or their representatives, on health and safety measures;
 - Consider potential discrimination risks and reasons why some employees might be reluctant to return to work (e.g. age/disability/pregnancy; health and safety concerns; childcare reasons);
 - Engage with employees about who will return first, and decide how to deal with individual concerns and objections;
- If testing is to be undertaken, introduce a process that takes account of data protection considerations; and
- Support managers, and provide training, on the return to work plan.

Thinking ahead to the implications of a vaccine

Some of the HR issues in connection with the roll-out of the COVID-19 vaccine include:

- Whether to promote / facilitate / require the taking of the vaccine (bearing in mind the risks associated with making it mandatory);
- Options if employees refuse to take the vaccine (which might be because they have a protected characteristic such as disability, pregnancy, age, religion or belief);
- The GDPR and privacy consequences of workers potentially being required to prove that they have been vaccinated.

Dealing with flexible working requests

Employees who have been able to work remotely and/or with adjusted working hours may well seek to make these arrangements permanent.

You can only refuse a request for flexible working if one of the statutory prescribed business reasons applies. Requests will need to be considered in light of the arrangements that have been in place during lockdown. Be clear in advance as to how multiple and competing requests will be dealt with.

Managing annual leave balances

Workers are entitled to carry forward up to four weeks of their statutory holiday entitlement into the next two holiday years if it was "not reasonably practicable" for them to take holidays "as a result of the effects of coronavirus including on the worker, the employer or the wider economy or society".

Consider carrying out an annual leave audit to ascertain the potential financial impact of holidays carried forward.

Reviewing contracts and policies

Do any contractual terms or policies need updated to reflect new working practices?

Dealing with tribunal claims

Health and safety and furlough related cases may start to come to tribunal.

Employment tribunals are currently being conducted virtually, using Cloud Video Platform.

IMMIGRATION

New immigration system

EEA & Swiss nationals can enter the UK under the new points-based immigration system from 1 January 2021. If you intend to recruit medium or highly skilled migrants from the EU or elsewhere, you require a sponsor licence.

There is a deadline of 30 June 2021 for EU nationals and their family members who were in the UK before 31 December 2020, to apply through the EU settlement scheme.

Business travel

From 1 January 2021 British nationals will only be able to stay within the EU area for a maximum of 90 days in any 180-day rolling period without a visa.

When carrying out business activities in the EU, employees may require a work visa even if staying for less than 90 days.

IR35 & EMPLOYMENT STATUS

IR35 in the private sector

On 6 April 2021 the off-payroll working rules will be extended to the private sector. End user clients will need to assess all off-payroll workers to determine:

- if they are operating through a personal service company (PSC); and
- if they are, whether they would be taxed as an employee for tax purposes, were it not for the PSC.

If you determine that the worker would be an employee for tax purposes, the entity that pays the PSC (which may be the end user client or a UK employment business in the chain) needs to account for PAYE income tax and employee and employer NICs.

Employment status

The UK Government intends to improve the clarity of employment status tests (i.e. who is an employee, worker or self-employed); and to align them for employment rights and tax purposes.

PAY

Increase in rates

Annual increases in the National Minimum Wage and statutory rates (such as statutory maternity and sick pay) will take effect from April 2021.

National living wage

From April 2021, the national living wage rate will apply to workers aged 23 and over. It currently applies to workers aged 25 and over.

WORKING PATTERNS

Proposed changes

Workers without a fixed working pattern will be given a right to request a more predictable work pattern after 26 weeks' service (e.g. a fixed number of hours or fixed working days).

There has been a consultation on providing workers with a right to reasonable notice of work schedules; and compensation for shifts cancelled without reasonable notice. Currently, a gap of one week in employment can break continuous service: this is to be increased to four weeks.

The UK Government proposed these changes in 2019; we don't yet know when they will happen.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment

A new statutory code of practice on sexual harassment at work is going to be introduced. The timescale is not yet known.

FLEXIBLE WORKING

Making flexible working the default

The UK Government intends to make flexible working the default position, unless an employer has a good reason not to allow it. It also wants to make it a requirement that job adverts say whether the role is open to flexible working.

HOLIDAYS

Holiday pay

The Supreme Court is due to hear several holiday pay cases in 2021, including an appeal against the decision that holiday pay must include regular voluntary overtime.

FAMILIES

Review of family-friendly leave

A consultation on some high-level options for reform of the current rights to maternity, paternity, parental and shared parental leave and pay closed in November 2019. One option is a single model for family-related leave, with set periods of non-transferable and transferable leave.

Carers' leave

A consultation on introducing a new right to a week's leave for unpaid carers' closed in August 2020.

Extending redundancy protection

The priority given to a pregnant employee or a woman on maternity leave for any suitable alternative vacancy in a redundancy situation is to be extended until six months after a new mother has returned to work; and to those taking adoption or shared parental leave. The timescale for the changes is not yet known.

WORKBOX

More information on these issues is available on Workbox by Brodies, Brodies' online HR and employment law platform. bresourcefull.brodies.com



MEMBER SERVICES LEGAL HELPLINE

The teams of lawyers who provide our helpline and assist the work of Confor are experienced in all legal issues that impact on forest owners or those involved in the forest industry, including employment law, health and safety law, planning law, tax and property law.

If you are in Scotland get in touch with:

Brodies Solicitors

Tel: 0131 656 3795

E: confor@brodies.com

If you are in England / Wales call:

Atkinson Ritson Solicitors

Tel: 01228 525221

E: info@atkinsonritson.co.uk

eco angus

simple solutions for greener heating
suppliers of MCS accredited wood burning boilers

- ✓ Offer the complete range of wood log boilers
- ✓ Two complete ranges Angus Super and Angus Origno 200
- ✓ Output range 18kW, 25kW, 40kW, 60kW, 80kW, 96kW and 130kW
- ✓ Products fully MCS certified
- ✓ Grants available under Renewable Heat Incentive
- ✓ 92% Heat Efficiency
- ✓ Significantly reduce heating costs
- ✓ Incorporate into existing heating system



www.ecoangus.co.uk 01934 862642



Loxston Groundcare Ltd are the sole UK distributor for Irus mowing machinery

The Irus range of remote controlled mowers are designed for mowing and maintenance of precipitous slopes, parks, roadside verges and railway embankments offering reduced risk of injury to operators. Irus remote control mowers will go where standard walk behind or ride on mowers cannot go safely being able to run on slopes of up to 50°.

Radio control ranges of up to 300m ensure that operators are always out of harm's way.

We will be able to supply new machinery, attachments and spare parts.

To make an enquiry please call us on 01460 242562 or email us info@loxston.co.uk
www.irus-mowers.co.uk

If the Fire Service Wildfire Teams trust the **iCut** for live firefighting You can trust it too!

**Performance
Strength
Reliability**

For more information and to book a demonstration
Tel: 01432 274361 sales@votex.co.uk
www.votex.co.uk

VOTEX

R-WORKS



Fast-tracking the path to a positive and inclusive workplace



Rachel Campbell,
Head of HR,
Lantra

At Lantra we had been making steady progress in developing a positive and inclusive workplace, working with staff to increase work life balance and minimise inequalities. However, once we were hit with the first Covid lockdown our approach automatically accelerated as we were thrown into unknown waters.

Our IT department had already been working hard to improve all staff accessibility, with everyone having access to laptops and data stored securely on the 'cloud'. We had Microsoft Teams already available on our laptops, but at this point, few had been brave enough or felt the need to try it... little did we know what was coming!

When the pandemic hit, with the IT work already undertaken, the majority of staff were able to work from home with full access to all applications through VPM and continue to communicate on Teams. Some teams were able to work on site on a rotating basis. These new enforced working arrangements brought different challenges for



It was important for the business to understand individual needs, retain the skills and knowledge in the business and keep staff engaged

different people and it was important for the business to understand individual needs, retain the skills and knowledge in the business and keep staff engaged.

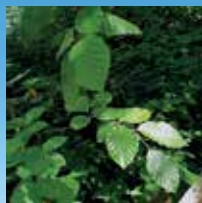
Staff were faced with a range of unexpected challenges which had not been on their radar a few weeks earlier, including caring for

Continued on p27

THE LANTRA INITIATIVE

The initiative included:

- Allowing staff to use Lantra equipment to stay in touch socially with colleagues via Teams or Zoom or WhatsApp
- Providing business updates twice a month from the CEO which were sent to both work and personal email accounts
- Regularly running a Wellbeing Survey to understand how staff felt about their wellbeing and how Lantra could provide further assistance
- Running short Staff Engagement pulse surveys
- Maintaining 'Shout outs' and thank you's for staff achievements
- Maintaining contact with our consultation forum representatives
- Introducing a 'buddy' system for those who were struggling
- Training to support managers who are managing remote teams.
- Posting lots of support and helpful information on a dedicated Intranet site and sending links or copies to work and personal email addresses



EXPERTS
The UK's Forestry & Hedging Experts



CHOICE
Wide range of Plant Protection & Accessories



SERVICE
Rapid nationwide delivery



UK grown bare root trees, shrubs & hedging

Landscape, Forestry & Planting Supplies



Trade website
Order online today

Call us for a competitive quote
01673 818443
Advice & Sales open Mon to Fri 8.30am - 5pm

www.britishhardwood.co.uk

British Hardwood Tree Nursery Ltd, Snitterby, Lincolnshire DN21 4TZ

100% Recycled Plastic Sapling Protection



SPIRAL
tree guard

- Protects saplings from Rabbits, Hares, and Systemic Herbicides
- Expands with the natural growth of the tree
- Can be supplied ventilated if required
- Available in clear, brown or green finishes
- 40mm and 50mm diameter tube sizes
- Order direct from the manufacturer

Ansini Limited, Mill 3, Pleasley Vale Business Park, Outgang Lane, Pleasley Vale, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG19 8RL

Tel: +44 (0) 1623 812333

Fax: +44 (0) 1623 812444 Email: info@ansini.co.uk

www.spiraltreeguard.com



Everything but the tree!

Green-tech is the largest supplier of tree planting materials in the UK

- Over 25 years' forestry industry experience
- Largest official distributor of Tubex shelters
- Millions of tree shelters and guards in stock and ready for dispatch
- Biodegradable tree guards available
- Flexible delivery options – next day or timed deliveries, remote deliveries, moffett offload
- Competitive pricing
- Excellent customer care record

Call us today on **01423 332100** and ask for a quote or email sales@green-tech.co.uk

www.green-tech.co.uk

[@greentechltd](https://twitter.com/greentechltd) [@greentechuk](https://facebook.com/greentechuk)
[green-tech-ltd](https://linkedin.com/company/green-tech-ltd)

Click or call to order our 2021 catalogue



Tree Shelters • Spirals • Stakes & Canes • Weld Mesh • Mesh Guards • Tree Ties • Rubber Block • Belting • Cross Bars

Continued from p25

young children, supporting elderly relatives, home schooling, finding their own spot to working in a full locked-down house, managing feelings of anxiety or isolation, worries about paying the bills and job security to mention a few.

For us, the key to supporting the wellbeing of our staff and keeping engagement levels high, was focussed around maintaining two-way communication and supporting flexible working arrangements. (See panel.)

We also ran a flexible working survey asking how staff would like to work in the short and longer term so we could revise our policies ... and our thinking accordingly. As a business we recognised that the world of work no longer operated in a 9-5 environment and if we wanted to retain and attract talent, we needed to broaden our thinking about how we work. There is much anecdotal evidence to suggest that staff who have more control over how and when they work are more productive and at Lantra we wanted to buy in to that premise.

Whilst home working has been imposed upon us at the moment, the majority of staff indicated that once 'normality' resumes they would prefer a mixture of office and home working. Other approaches we have implemented include:

Compressed hours – eg Full-time hours worked over 4 days rather than 5 days.

Annualised hours – with less hours worked during school holidays and more hours worked in term time, but with pay equalised over 12 months.

Split hours – eg working early in the morning and later in the evening to support childcare

Flexible work patterns across a week.

Range of part-time working patterns.

There was inevitably some resistance to increased flexible working and this has generally focussed on the premise "if I can't see someone how do I know that they are working their 9 to 5...how can I manage them". We have worked hard to shift the culture from when and

how individuals working to them achieving the outcomes set. This is not an easy transition and we are by no means there yet. Adopting increased flexibility requires a great deal of trust from both managers and their teams; giving staff more accountability about how they work comes increased responsibility to ensure performance is achieved.

Increased flexible working requires different input

If allowing part homeworking, for example, there are additional costs, such as for laptops, home office equipment and methods of managing data security. However, the benefits of increased work-life balance, positive employee engagement and reduction in carbon footprint (through our lack of commute) will in many cases outweigh cost.

With increased flexible working also comes the need for stricter policies and guidelines. Staff who take a flexible approach to work, can often find themselves working longer hours or blurring the lines between work and home life, with the laptop always switched on. As a part-time worker myself, I have certainly found this to be the case and often find myself working on my 'non-working days'. This is not expected by my manager and we have put clear guidelines in place. I recognised that I needed to impose some personal self-discipline to restore the balance. Yet, this is hard to do, particularly if staff want to prove that their preferred arrangement works, and they want to demonstrate their commitment to the organisation. It is therefore important that we help our staff to manage their time and their working patterns, developing new working habits.

More flexible working also requires a different approach to managing performance. Employees need to clearly understand the expectations on them and their objectives and managers need to understand how they manage and motivate their member of staff to deliver to plan.

At Lantra we have offered training in managing remote teams and are encouraging a move from a directive to a more coaching and supportive management style, more suited for individual needs. This is early days and part of our develop-

ment plan over the next 18 months.

The staff at Lantra have been fantastic throughout the Covid pandemic. We have communicated and involved staff as much as possible and they, in return have provided great contributions, embraced new ways of working and demonstrated their commitment to the organisation and our customers, despite all the personal challenges they have faced.

Creative workplace solutions for different kinds of businesses

I recognise that the nature of our business has made it easier to adopt home working and flexible work patterns and that this is not possible in many organisations. No one solution works and different organisations need to find what works for them. Not everyone can create opportunities for staff to work from home. But with some creative thinking and by involving staff, flexible arrangements can be possible. For example, developing alternative shift patterns such as twilight or early shifts for workers who have caring responsibilities or who simply would like to do something different during the core hours in their day! Annualised hours may also work well for industries that have increased workload during certain times of the year, they could be paid an equal monthly salary but recognise that they work a 48 hours week for the busy six months of the year and a 32 hour week in the quieter six months. Job sharing or part-time opportunities may also be possible in some roles. There is often a perception that part-time or flexible workers are not as productive or committed as traditional full time workers. In my personal experience, this is far from reality with increased effort and productivity being the case when individuals can balance all aspects of their life better.

For me the key is to understand your staff. Talk to them about what could improve their work-life balance and involve them in exploring how different options could work. Businesses need to be brave enough to give it a try. A happy and engaged workforce is a very productive workforce.

www.lantra.co.uk

“
More flexible working also requires a different approach to managing performance

Powells
FOREST & GARDEN EQUIPMENT



Powells Forest and Garden Equipment Ltd are UK importers for PALAX firewood processors and accessories.

Circular saw and chainsaw machines available in a range of capacities.

New and used machines available from stock.

Nationwide delivery.

Please give us a call to discuss your requirements.



www.powellsfg.co.uk • counter@powellsfg.co.uk

01981 240 403

Reaching heights safely



■ Extensive range of compact tracked 'Spider' access platforms

■ Compact machines able to access difficult to reach areas

■ Manoeuvres through standard gateways and narrow paths

■ Track widening system and greater ground clearance

■ Established 1999

New Spider 20.95 ARB PRO

250kg cage capacity

20m working height

9.5m outreach

Separate cage control

One button auto-boom stow

GRP cage option



Promax Access Ltd

Unit 8, Acorn Phase 3,

High Street, Grimethorpe,

Bamsley, South Yorkshire S72 7BD

Email: sales@promaxaccess.com

Web: www.promaxaccess.com



Tel: 01226 716657

Fax: 01226 716658

Carbon Funding for Woodland Creation

Are you considering planting a wood?

Your project's carbon capture could generate you income.

Get in touch to understand the value of your carbon!

Our services include:

- Carbon calculation and additionality assessments
- Purchase of woodland carbon
- 'Woodland Carbon Code' validation and verification
- Information and advice about the 'Woodland Carbon Guarantee'

We have taken over 140 projects through the 'Woodland Carbon Code' – enabling the planting of more than 9.5 million trees – and partnered with hundreds of businesses to generate demand for carbon credits from UK woodlands.

0191 395 2956

info@forestcarbon.co.uk

**FOREST
CARBON**

www.forestcarbon.co.uk

Trackplot videos raise awareness of and mitigate lone worker risks

Health & Safety continues to be of particular importance to the forestry industry which was reported as having the highest rate of fatalities in HSE's 'Workplace fatal injuries in Great Britain, 2020' report published November 2020. Furthermore, in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector most fatal injuries are for self-employed workers (65%), which is higher than any other industry. To compound this, lone workers are exposed to significant risk simply because they work alone.

There has been and continues to be an increased (and welcomed) focus on Health & Safety issues since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, enabling wider discussions about all aspects of Health & Safety. To highlight to employers the specific risks lone workers face, how to reduce those risks and improve safety, Trackplot recently launched a series of three videos.

Creating a sensible approach to Health & Safety requires understanding all the risks facing your workers, to inform and develop sound policies supported by practical actions. As an employer you have responsibility and a duty of care for all your workers including employees, contractors and self-employed workers. Failure to

comply with the law can put employers themselves at risk, facing fines of up to £1m and custodial sentences in the worst-case scenario of a fatal incident. With this sombre thought in mind, it is important to review and update your Health & Safety policies to protect your lone workers and your business.

Employers and workers alike should be aware that lone workers behave differently compared to those working in teams; working unsupervised and without colleagues they inherently take more risks. As a result, injuries for lone workers seem to be worse than for those who work in teams.

Higher risks

Many lone workers operate in rural, isolated and hazardous locations. Exposed to environmental risks such as rough terrain and harsh weather conditions, this increases the chance of accidents such as slips, trips and falls. Often the tasks undertaken by such lone workers intrinsically carry higher risks due to the very nature of the work such as operating heavy machinery, working at height or inspecting/maintaining difficult to reach assets. An injury suddenly becomes serious and potentially

life threatening in an isolated place.

With over a decade of experience, Trackplot have developed a reputation as specialists in the outdoor lone worker market. Customers rely on the automatic escalation process which, if a lone worker is incapacitated or unconscious, provides alerts so that the incident can be escalated and appropriate action taken swiftly.

WATCH



Lone workers: Employer risk and responsibility

This video explains in detail the different types of risks faced by lone workers, the health and safety laws that need to be complied with and discusses how Trackplot's lone worker monitoring solution can help lone workers stay safe whilst working alone.

To watch the videos visit Trackplot's YouTube channel [@Trackplot](#), visit their website www.trackplot.com or contact them at sales@trackplot.com or 0131 513 9571.



Machine operators – how are you staying healthy and sane?

We've asked contractors about the tricks and tools they use to stay sane and healthy during their job, in particular during dark winter days and a lack of social interactions during Corona lockdowns.

A good attitude, positive social interactions, keeping the mind engaged, minding the diet and a healthy lifestyle outside of work are the key to being productive and happy on the job, contractors say.

Combating loneliness

Long days of isolated and repetitive working can be taxing for even the most resilient. Finding ways to stay in contact with their work mates is what keeps many contractors going. Taking a break to chat to other operators when phone signal is available helps reduce stress and boredom; meeting the mates before and after the shift, or for a lunch break does wonders for mental health.

Many contractors find that the company of a pet makes a real difference when it comes to feeling less isolated. Pets have a proven positive effect on people's mental health. Furthermore, dogs are great for staying active – and outdoor exercise is known for improving mood and concentration.

Keep your mind positively engaged

Contractors commented that podcasts and audiobooks are the best method of staying mentally active while engaged in a repetitive job; it even offers the opportunity for continued learning or personal growth. However, many

advise against listening to the news on a regular basis – in particular during the pandemic, as

this can result in anxiety and negative mood – something that can spiral out of control when working in isolation. Simply listening to music can also help keep the mood up.

Give importance to a healthy lifestyle

A healthy lifestyle might not always be possible 'on the job', but seasoned operators recommend getting physically active and eat clean as much as you can and when you can.

Get moving

For some, a realistic way to stay healthy might be to prioritise exercise and good food on the weekends or when not on an assignment. However, there are ways to build exercise into your working routine.

Operator Scott Cochrane recommends parking your car a distance away from the machine, to get a chance for a leg stretch before the start of the day. Mark Tibble stresses the importance of taking breaks and doing some stretches to avoid Repetitive Strain Injuries (RSI) and tight muscles from long hours of sitting. For those already experiencing postural problems or RSI, a health provider or physiotherapist can recommend tailored exercises to practice during the day.

Watch your diet

Working in remote areas means that healthy convenience food can be hard to come by. Planning ahead for grocery shopping and meal preparation means you can decide what you eat each day and won't have to rely on the limited selection of junk food sold

in that one petrol station that sells food near your harvesting site.



Staying fit, eating clean and staying off or easing off the booze are three things you need to do to be consistently productive.

SIMON FLACK

A topic that needs to be discussed more. Makes me realise I'm not the only one the job gets a bit much fowr sometimes. Find a job you enjoy for a company you're proud to be part of working with people you get on with. Cold shower in the morning, audio books/ music in a clean cab, put some effort into making a decent lunch, enjoy the view and being out in the woods, take pride in your work, few miles run at night two to three times a week, get out for a walk at the weekend.

GEORGE BOURNE

RESOURCES

FISA Mental Health resources

FISA has compiled a list of organisations and helplines that offer support for mental health and other wellbeing issues that people in our industry might face.

<https://ukfisa.com/Safety/Safety-Bulletins/mental-health>

FISA Guidance on lone working

<https://ukfisa.com/Safety/Safety-Library/lone-working-1>

FTN resources

On our website you can browse for past FTN articles. Choose "occupational health" from the topic list to re-read articles on how to stay mentally and physically healthy. With articles for hauliers, planters and chainsaw operators, and those suffering from low mood.

www.confor.org.uk/news/ftn-magazine/find-an-article/

You can rely on treated timber in the field



when you follow the simple Ground Rules

Preservative pressure treatment provides wood with added durability. However, it's a mistake to assume that all pressure treated wood is the same – treatment levels should be tailored to the desired end use (Use Classes).

When **ground contact timber** is treated correctly to Use Class 4, it is fit for purpose – evidence from **WPA field trials** supports this.

Several timber trade bodies are working together to help ensure that quality standards are assured across the timber supply chain – so whether you buy or sell treated timber you can rely on its performance, just follow the simple **Ground Rules**.

Typical Use Class 4 applications include:

Fence posts, retaining walls, landscaping timbers, playground equipment, decking posts, decking joists, boardwalk substructures and any external application where structural integrity is essential for user safety.

for ground contact treated timbers:



Specify Use Class 4

levels of **preservative treatment** – anything less and service life, structural safety and customer satisfaction will be compromised.



Use a trusted treater

who has **third party accreditation** of their operational quality management systems – such as the **WPA Benchmark Scheme**.



Be prepared to pay

for quality – premium products incur higher costs but their inherent value is priceless when **performance in the field** is paramount.

Benchmark

APPROVED **TREATER**



The Make Sure it's 4 campaign is supported by:



www.thewpa.org.uk

Find a WPA Benchmark Approved treater:

seppi m.

- Mulching mowers from 10HP-350HP
- Tough & versatile
- Many attachments available for every forestry job

Tough Tools for a Tough Job.

Purchase direct from the UK Importer:



LAMBERHURST ENGINEERING LIMITED

t: 01892 890364
e: info@lameng.com
Lamberhurst Engineering Ltd
Priory Farm • Parsonage Lane
Lamberhurst • Kent TN3 8DS
www.lameng.com

MASON WOODCHIPPERS



SERVICING



REFURBISHMENT



HIRE






RESALE & BUYING

Quality refurbished woodchippers and stump grinders
All makes and models of chipper and grinder
3" to 12" tracked, road tow and PTO
All refurbished machines sold with 30 day warranty

Call us on 01325 377 475 or 07484 081 795
Email john@masonwoodchippers.com
www.masonwoodchippers.com

JTE JOE TURNER EQUIPMENT

01789 763958  



Heavy Duty Excavator Flail Heads Available



Hakki Pilke Firewood Processors – Finland





Specialists in new, second-hand, reconditioned hedgecutters

PRODUCT RANGE


- Hedgecutters
- Firewood
- Log Splitters
- Agricultural
- Forestry
- Flails
- Excavator attachments
- Firewood grapple
- Saw attachments
- Remote control mowers

PLUS...

- Used machinery
- Rotor balancing
- Spares





NEW PRODUCTS



› Agriforest Log Grab



› Lipa HD Excavator Head

T 01789 763958 • F 01789 400330 • M 07836 589699 • E sales@joeturnerequipment.co.uk • www.joeturnerequipment.co.uk



Safe forestry

Toby Allen

(Say it with Wood) introduces the Chainsaw Competences System, developed by Calum Duffy.

Chainsaw work has changed since I started out. Machines are more capable, and because it's more efficient (and safe) to use mechanical assistance where possible, chainsaw work has been pushed to the margins. Anything a machine is incapable of cutting is the job of the handcutter. This can be steep slopes, big timber, valu-

able hardwoods, coppice, felling trees for the harvester to reach or presenting for the winch and so on. There is a shortage of labour in the industry, especially the awesome type with the skills to tackle these jobs. It is the landowner's or employer's responsibility to ensure the chaps on the hill are trained and competent for the work you are asking them to do, and the choice of operator has to be based on ability rather than price. Chainsaw tickets (nptc, lantra) have been the standard for a while, getting the training refreshed every three or five years, depending on how often they use the saw. While this is a really useful system, it fails to demonstrate the experience or skills of the peo-

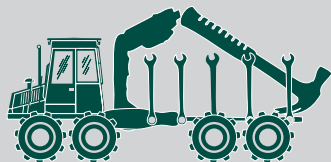
ple we employ. Someone fresh out of a five-day course, arb guys, and occasional users are in the same class as professional forest workers. We need a way to separate out the awesome.

This was a problem posed by HSE to Calum Duffy (duffyskylining.co.uk) during a site visit. If there was an incident how could he show to investigators that the chainsaw

Continued on p31



We need to separate out the awesome



RICHARD COURT
FORESTRY ENGINEERING

Specialising in excavator conversions for the forestry industry

Sales, Servicing
and Repairs of all
Forestry Machinery

Tel: 01483 208075

info@rcfengineering.co.uk
www.rcfengineering.co.uk



Peverstone
Cullompton,
Devon EX15 1RW



loglogic

loglogic.co.uk

Tel: +44 (0) 1884 839999

TOOLTRAK 75

The multi purpose compact tool carrier:



Front mounted, mowers, mulchers,
chippers, stump grinders, snowblowers,
snow ploughs, bulldozers.

UNBEATABLE QUALITY • EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE

Approved
HYDRAULICS



Rotators | Weigh Links | Log Grabs | Tree Shears | Flails

We supply some of the largest forestry
dealers, OEM's and maintenance firms
in the UK and our products are
considered to be some of
the best in the world.



SUPPLYING THE FORESTRY & TIMBER TRADE

sales@approvedhydraulics.co.uk

0161 480 0869

approvedhydraulics.co.uk

Continued from p29

operator was an appropriate choice for the task? Recording time spent on the saw, any training given and the time consolidating those skills seemed a logical step. As Calum explains, "The Chainsaw Competency System was created to answer a challenge from the HSE on how to prove the competence of chainsaw operators on site by not just certification, if the system is implemented and followed it answers a question that was previously very difficult to do so. It quantifies the skill level of the operator and provides a professionalism to this highly skilled occupation." As an active member of the Forestry Contracting Association, and member of the FISA Chainsaw Working Group, Calum and Stephen Hailes from H&W training brought others round to the idea. At the same time, they invested in developing a mobile app, Safe Forestry, to help with the practical management of risk on site, which also has the function to record skills and experience as part of a daily routine.

In my opinion there is a need for this system. It provides a framework for improvement, and a path to follow after completing the chainsaw ticket.

How does the competence system work?

The journey starts as a 'basic operator', as more training and skills are gained, the next level 'chainsaw technician' is achieved. With further training and working in more complex operations, operators can be further recognised as a 'specialist and leader'. At this level it is expected they will pass on their skills and help audit people on the way up.

Experienced chainsaw technicians will be able to enter the system at an equivalent to their current experience. Trainees would still take the existing initial training and certification route. Users of the system can either progress through the competency system; or remain established at a set competency dependant on their own requirements/work. The Chainsaw Competency System will gradually supersede the Chainsaw Refresher - so you would not need to do both."

Continuous career development (CPD) is built into the system, and people are expected to attend CPD events as part of their journey. These will be on topics such as felling on steep banks, cutting diseased ash, and using felling aids amongst other subjects. Forestry is a varied industry, and the outline on the FISA website can be used to create a system suitable for your business. To get started it's a simple case of carrying out a skills audit, which level would you and your staff fall into? Where are the gaps in the knowledge and how to fill them? If there isn't someone in the business with the skills to carry out an audit, you can request an external auditor to do so. Logging hours/experience can be done in a few ways, the SAFE FORESTRY app is a purpose-built tool to make the process easy, but alternatives are apps such as MYSAFETY, or it can be done on paper, while skinflints like me have been experimenting using social media such as Whatsapp to communicate with the forestry team at the same time recording what they are doing.

Is the system used industry-wide?

The FCA, FISA and HSE are backing the system and FISA are currently hosting the system for Safe Forestry. Gillian Clark, CEO of FISA describes how it works: "Traditionally,

chainsaw technician competence was mainly judged on a training ticket; the proposed chainsaw competency system offers a clear way to support the competence (and experience) of a technician and to demonstrate their ability to undertake particular types of chainsaw work.

Safe Forestry and the FISA Chainsaw Working Group drew up the Outline Chainsaw Competency System which is available on the FISA website. Successful pilots of the system are being run by Safe Forestry; considerable development will be required before the system can be rolled out industry-wide, we expect this development to take at least 18 months. FISA will of course keep you informed as this development progresses.

Why we need this system

The beauty of the Chainsaw Competency is that it is voluntary and seen as an aspiration for those wanting to stand out as professional handcutters working to be at the top of their game. The system is designed by chainsaw users for the benefit of chainsaw users. I feel this system has the potential to make a real difference to the safety of those working on the ground by raising the status of the handcutting trade. A site visit by a high level-technician will help landowners understand which are the complex tasks needing very experienced operators and which can be done by less experienced guys. I'll finish with an extract from a message I received from a chap starting a forest career. He recently finished his small tree felling course and is gradually building up a portfolio of experience. "I'm up to 83 hours now and I do feel there is an improvement. Today I helped with crown breakdown, clearing small birch and chomping down brush. With some coaching I'm more proficient at tension and compression cuts, just got to remember sideways tension! There's still a way to go and I can see why 500 hours is a suggested milestone". Awesome!

For more information with updates and app release details please contact Safe Forestry LTD on info@safeforestry.co.uk



For more information on the Chainsaw Competency System please email info@safeforestry.co.uk or the website is safeforestry.co.uk

Collins Farming & Forestry Services Ltd



TURN POPLAR AND ASH INTO CASH

Don't let timber quality deteriorate - Safely harvest while it has value!

- ash and poplar dismantling and purchase
- hedge and woodland coppicing
- site clearance
- felling licence applications
- contract chipping
- supplier of dried and screened woodchip



m: **07850 988808**
 e: **info@collinsfarmingandforestry.co.uk**
 w: **www.collinsfarmingandforestry.co.uk**



The site clearance and biomass specialists

Tel: **01376 550989**
www.kingwell-holdings.co.uk
 enquiries@kingwell-holdings.co.uk

KINGWELL HOLDINGS LIMITED



Rabaud industry leading fence post and rail equipment



Let's get to the point

T. 01746 718456 M. 07966 365157 www.homeforestry.co.uk E. nathan@homeforestry.co.uk
 Home Forestry llp, Willowdene Farm, Chorley, Bridgnorth, Shropshire WV16 6PP

THE FOREST PLASTIC GROUP

Avoiding a ‘knee jerk’ reaction

by **Nicola Abbatt**,
CMIOSH, CEnv, MIEM

One of the key aims of the Forest Plastic Group is to ensure adverse environmental impacts are reduced and that balanced and sustainable solutions are found when looking at alternative tree protection products.

A recent press release from the Green Alliance, Plastic is just the tip of the ‘single use’ iceberg* highlights how public pressure on plastic pollution has meant that many companies are swapping plastic for other materials with new and sometimes greater environmental impacts, such as higher carbon emissions. Likewise, replacing single-use material for another single-use option doesn’t address the need for care with our non-renewable resources, and reuse and recycling should always be to mind in the search for alternatives.

We should also consider the toxicity of alternative materials both in production and disposal. For example, some of the alternatives to polymer tubes on offer include cashew nut products but in recent years there has been news coverage about the workers in the cashew nut industry suffering health effects from the caustic substances in the hard shell of the cashew nut. We must think carefully and fully assess all these aspects and impacts, alongside putting into perspective the relatively low level of plastic waste generated by the forest industry through tree tubes in comparison to the 31kg of plastic packaging waste produced by each person annually**.

Recycling

Some suppliers such as Berry with Tubex are offering recycling of redundant tubes to produce more tubes at factories based in the UK. This circular approach provides an excellent solution to the legacy of old tubes we have to dispose of, of course the transportation of tubes to recycling plants must also be



assessed and perhaps energy recovery is the better option where waste has to be transported any great distance.

As both an environment and health and safety professional all these aspects are forefront in my mind when we are looking at many of the alternatives being developed and presented to the Forest Plastics Group.

The Green Alliance also highlight that “Consumers ... are hugely confused about what bio-based, compostable and biodegradable mean”.

This issue has similarly come up within the Forest Plastics Group where we’ve had some interesting discussions on biodegradable plastic and the use of the term composting, what this actually means and whether a biodegradable alternative is really of any benefit if that doesn’t mean it will biodegrade in the open environment.

It is really good to be working alongside others in the forestry industry in such a collaborative way within the Forest Plastics Group to make sure that we have a joined up approach and find a sustainable

solution in the use of resource and management of waste for tree protection.

* www.green-alliance.org.uk/plastic_promises_press_release

** European Commission Eurostats 2018

See overleaf for Forest Plastic Group update



The Forestry Plastic Group: an update

The Forestry Plastic Group, formed in early 2020, has continued to welcome members from across the forestry industry as it shares initiatives and good practice of managing plastic waste alongside researching the environmental impact and performance of alternatives on offer.

The Forestry Plastic Group is formed with Confor's support and includes members from Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust (YDMT), Tilhill, the National Parks, Forestry England, Forestry Commission, Natural Resources Wales, Coillte - Ireland, Forestry and Land Scotland and the Woodland Trust.

Initial meetings framed terms of reference for the group that is currently focusing actively on researching new products, with the plan to analyse their effectiveness in field trials led by Forest Research.

A public vote helped Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust (YDMT) secure funding

from the European Outdoor Conservation Association (EOCA) to begin trialing new products whilst progressing action in the short term to encourage a change in attitude towards tree protection and provide opportunities to recycle redundant plastic guards.

Single use plastic

"As woodland creation in the UK gathers momentum we are very keen to reduce the reliance on single use plastic. Manufacturers are now responding to demand for sustainable solutions and several new products are under development", said Carol Douglas, Woodland Development Officer at YDMT.

"YDMT plans on trialing some of the new products over the next couple of winters and will feed into a national research project being developed by the Forestry Plastic Group. However, it will obviously be a several years before we

have conclusive results and so in the short term it is essential that appropriate management and disposal options are provided."

The Forestry Plastic Group is working in collaboration, and aims to improve communication, understanding and share expertise and experience within the forestry industry and to interested parties.

It wants to use a collaborative approach to look at concerns and problems with the use and management of plastic and therefore has welcomed several industry leading experts and companies to present at the meetings.

These include alternative tree guard manufacturers, and organisations like Tubex and Resource Futures - and one of the early conclusions is the real cost of removal and disposal needs to be considered from the start of any woodland creation scheme.

- Biomass
- Wood Chippers
- Crane Mounts
- Tractor Guarding
- Forestry Mulchers
- Forestry Winches
- Firewood Processors
- Portable Sawmills
- Grapple Saws
- Tree Shears
- Cone Splitters
- Sawdust Extractors
- Woodchip Blowers
- Timber Trailers
- Forestry Cranes
- Log Splitters
- Wood Saws
- Billet Bundlers
- And Much More



FUELWOOD
Forestry & Firewood Machinery Specialists
Sales Service Support

www.fuelwood.co.uk
01926 484673
sales@fuelwood.co.uk
Beausale : Warwick : CV35 7AF





LANDFOR
CHARTERED LAND & FORESTRY AGENCY

Land & Forestry
Marketing Specialist

Forestry Sales
Investment Appraisals

Contact: Patrick Porteous
☎ 07444 559510
✉ patrick@landfor.co.uk



To view the current range of properties please visit

www.landfor.co.uk

Heathwood Nurseries Ltd

CELL GROWN TREES.CO.UK

Buy the best of British

Growers of quality
trees, shrubs and
hedging plants.

Producers of British
trees and shrubs
from British seed
origins in cells,
containers and field
grown for hedges,
gardens, landscaping
and woodlands.



www.heathwood.co.uk

01948 840 120 | sales@heathwood.co.uk
The Meadows, Higher Heath, Whitchurch, SY13 2JA

- Hire Purchase ■ Lease Purchase
- Contract Hire ■ Loans



Asset finance and loan solutions for the
agricultural, forestry & construction industry



01455 635 677
info@businessfinancebrokers.co.uk
businessfinancebrokers.co.uk

Authorised & regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority

**BUSINESS
FINANCE
BROKERS LTD**

financing
your
business...



MARSHALL

AGRICULTURAL ENGINEERING



Quality Machinery Speaks for itself



KR PAN	Binderberger
Lennartsfors	DALEN
KONEOSAPALVELU	TMC CANCELA MULCHING SOLUTIONS
VAHVA Jussi	SERRA
DinaSaw	GMT EQUIPMENT
Echlbück BROS wood chippers by echlbueck.at	WESTTECH

www.marshalllogging.co.uk

UK tel: 01892 770788 | mob 07836 274164
email: sales@marshalllogging.co.uk

seko Composting Equipment



Harry West (Prees) Limited
• office 01948 840465
• email sales@harrywest.co.uk
• web www.harrywest.co.uk



B. Price

MUS-MAX[®]

Specialist Ltd.

Tel: 01584 891 307
Mobile: 07518 810 269
Email: ben@mus-max.net
Web: www.mus-max.net

The rise and rise of timber



TIMBER MARKET
REPORT
Harry Stevens,
BSW Timber

As I reach the end of another working week not having set one foot out of the house for several days, realisation has dawned that life has become one long Teams or Zoom meeting. So, as I write this, I am dressed in my running kit that all looks a bit old and faded (but not much worn) and I have every intention that when I have finished off what I am currently doing, I shall go and run (slowly) round the block. It's not meant to be a spectator sport but does at least have the bonus of embarrassing my teenage daughters. On a serious note, however, it also allows me time to reflect on what strange old times we are currently living in.

If ever there was an industry that was counter-cyclical it must be forestry. The worse things seem to get at home and abroad with the economy, the better we as an industry seem to do, and things don't get much more difficult to deal with than Brexit and Covid do they? Not that I am expressing a view on Brexit I hasten to add. And yet the forestry sector continues to thrive. Strong standing timber prices, record prices for forest properties and as much new planting as we had at the very beginning of my career (a long time ago). All of it brings its own challenges but it is exciting to be part of an expanding and

increasingly successful sector.

As described above the market for most forest products remains buoyant. Sawn timber in particular. Construction timber is more and more an internationally traded product and we are increasingly being affected by these international trends. The incoming Biden administration has announced that there will be a \$1.9Tn stimulus into the US economy to mitigate the effects of Covid-19. This will certainly keep things buzzing along in America!

The US demand for sawn timber has already been pulling strong volumes of product from Scandinavia. Indeed, there are tales of cargos destined for Britain that have instead ended up across the other side of the Atlantic as boats have literally been rerouted in transit with gazumping on price to attract them.

Panel products

Similarly, panel products, particularly OSB, are in strong demand across the pond too. If you have ever seen a picture of a US house being built, they are often timber framed with OSB. Back in Europe, Chipboard is also experiencing very strong demand and all plants report impressive order books. Even MDF, traditionally something of a Cinderella product, is seeing improving demand.

The biofuel sector is not having such a good spell and is showing patchy demand. The recent cold spell has meant that demand from the domestic biomass sector has been strong but industrial use is less consistent.

The paper sector is still weak, and

plants continue to take production outages. It will take us all to be going on holiday and travelling through airports and buying magazines for the sector to really to improve.

So, what of the next few months? Demand for standing timber will remain. Levels of finished goods within the supply chain for the spring rush are low and, as described earlier, there is strong demand elsewhere in the world that will impede imports.

It is almost inevitable that we will continue to see shortages of finished material through the first quarter of the year. Even if increasingly tighter measures to suppress Covid-19 resulted in a reduction in demand, this would only defer the demand to later in the year.

The market for standing timber will remain buoyant particularly for quality parcels with high sawlog content. Sawmills are increasingly flexing their specification to secure more timber from standing parcels.

Inevitably, this reduces the amount of small roundwood produced from a stand but also increases the co-products on the market. Small roundwood stocks are now close to normal levels and there is some evidence of the larger users re-entering into the standing market.

So, expect demand for standing timber to remain strong for the first part of 2021, oh and happy New Year by the way, as I finally escape from behind my home office desk in anticipation of my jog round the block, much to my collective family's horror!



New record highs



TIMBER AUCTIONS
MARKET REPORT
Oliver Combe
Timber Auctions

Global outlook

After a brief market correction in October 2020 the US market raced ahead in November and December 2020 and now, in mid-January 2021, is sitting at new record levels. Strong demand and shortage of supply have emptied yards and led to four to six weeks lead times in at present and, although prices appear to have now plateaued, there remains optimism that prices will remain strong.

Supply and demand now appear to be in balance as the purchasers come to terms with the producers' asking prices and moderate their demand accordingly. With empty stock yards and strong order books the producers are in a strong position to hold onto their hard won gains as we head towards the spring upsurge in demand!

The scale of the upsurge seen in the second half of 2020 is unprecedented and has seen prices of some products virtually treble in a year.

June 2018 was seen as the peak of the last US price surge and the table below shows the scale of the increase seen now and the last market peak in June 2018.

With both China and the US drawing in

large amounts of prime softwood lumber from elsewhere, the forecast oversupply of sawn whitewood in Europe has not yet materialised. Whilst the Czech Republic is forecasting another 30m m³ of damaged timber to be harvested in 2021, German forest production has dipped due to the Forest Damage Compensation Law, whilst at the same time sawmill demand has increased putting upwards pressure on sawlog prices. Scandinavian producers are also seeing strong demand and asking for 18-20 Euros per m³ price increases for Quarter 1 2021 orders.

January 2021 has seen reports of a sudden fall in softwood sawlog stocks in China with reports of a 30% reduction in stock over the last two months as incoming shipments have not kept up with increasing demand. This has led to a sudden surge in softwood sawlog prices for import to China as well as increased demand for sawn timber which should continue to draw large amounts of both raw material and finished product away from Central Europe and Scandinavia.

In summary, this is a truly unique situation with unprecedented price levels in the key global softwood markets and abnormally low stock levels in the supply chain for the time of year.

They key question is to what extent will the high price levels regulate demand and to what extent can the producers increase demand as a change in either of these could upset the new equilibrium!

UK softwood market

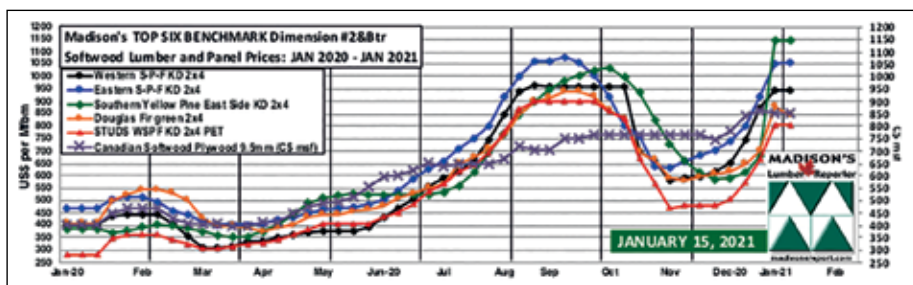
Since my last market report in December 2020 the UK market has strengthened further as the global increases in softwood timber prices and shortages of supply continue to impact positively on the UK market.

The UK market has been driven by softwood sawlog prices and demand. The UK market is still predominantly an import driven market and even modest changes in import volumes and prices have a significant impact on UK producers.

In January 2021 we are seeing reduced availability of imported timber and significant price increases for what is available. The net effect is that enquiries to UK mills have increased substantially and this has translated into increased sales at increased prices on the back of strong sales for the last six months.

With very low yard stocks of sawn timber the producers have been able to take a bullish view on pricing new enquiries and have consistently achieved price increases on new orders.

So, whilst the demand side remains very positive, the supply of timber to the market appears to have been reduced especially in the south of England and Wales and the north of Scotland. Whilst in the Borders and northern England the supply has been slightly higher but standing timber prices have still surged over the last



Benchmark 2x4 Dimension Lumber Prices: Current Compared to Recent and Historical Highs, and to Recent Lows							
2015 to 2021							
R/L in US\$ per thousand board feet (net FOB sawmill)	Current: 1/15/2021	Recent High: Sept 2020	% Change	Previous High: June 2018	% Change: Current vs. Previous	Previous Low: Sept 2015	% Change
SYP East Side KD #2 & Btr	\$ 1,145	\$ 985	16.2%	\$ 460	148.9%	\$ 311	268.2%
WSPF KD #2 & Btr	\$ 944	\$ 960	-1.7%	\$ 443	113.1%	\$ 249	279.1%
ESPF KD #2 & Btr	\$ 1,055	\$ 1,080	-2.3%	\$ 529	99.4%	\$ 350	201.4%
Douglas fir Green	\$ 845	\$ 940	-10.1%	\$ 500	69.0%	\$ 302	179.8%
WSPF 2x4 STUDS (PET)	\$ 806	\$ 900	-10.4%	\$ 445	81.1%	\$ 230	250.4%

Tips for marketing timber in the current market situation

- Understand that the market demand is for 'sawlog' crops so market these, it can be from clear fells or thinning.
- Understand that the demand is for spruce, Douglas fir, pine and larch in the next six months.
- Make sure the parcel is ready to go: this means licences and approvals in place, infrastructure in place, third party agreements sorted out, crop measured and maps complete.
- Go to the open market: the situation is very volatile, different processors are looking for different products and have different pricing strategies, local shortages are forcing buyers to purchase off their home patch.
- Get professional advice to prepare and manage the sale: this will reduce the risk to both the buyer and seller.

three months.

Competition to buy standing timber with a high sawlog content is intense and prices reflect the strong demand and high ability to pay of the sawmills. Prices for crops with a high small round wood content have not

Prices are now at or above the peaks seen in late 2018, which is fantastic for the grower, however, it is a very volatile market and in the past these price spikes have been followed by market corrections.

Buyers are focusing on strategic parcels which they can buy, harvest and deliver to the yard with minimum risk and varying the prices offered to suit their own particular requirements and markets.

UK hardwood market

The UK hardwood market remains much quieter than the softwood market. Although the sawmills are busy they currently seem to have supplies, and the supply and demand situation remains very much in balance.

Since Christmas there has been a noticeable increase in demand for firewood in the north of England and stretching down into the Midlands, with little stock at roadside in the north. This will hopefully start to pull material from the south midlands and central England where there appears to be plenty of roadside stock at the moment.

The main hardwood activity this year appears to be felling of diseased ash, the export market for this product remains good and there are some domestic markets for the very best quality.



Ash felling

Now that the felling of diseased ash has been underway for a few years it is worth highlighting a few of the key lessons learned so far:

- Plan your forestry operations to include removal of diseased ash: be pro-active and think through how you can heavily thin or fell all your ash woodlands.
- Prioritise your felling to manage risk: identify roadside ash trees as a priority, high access woodlands, and mature crops and stressed crops as medium risk and then younger trees as a lower risk except where there is high public access.
- Act quickly: it is now evident that crops degrade significantly from three years after first signs of infection and after five years you will get significant degrade of both sawlogs and firewood. Fell whilst there is still value in the trees.
- Think safety: as the trees decline through ash dieback they become much more dangerous to fell as the branches become brittle and there is evidence that the felling hinge weakens when chainsaw felling. Plan for mechanised harvesting.
- Delaying costs money and increases risk!

£ per tonne delivered to customers in Wales, central and south England (Jan 2021)

Product	Lower price	Upper price	Trend
Log 18	£90.00	£105.00	▲
Bar 14	£70.00	£80.00	▲
SRW	£50.00	£55.00	=
Fencing	£65.00	£75.00	=▲
H Wood firewood	£55.00	£60.00	=

£ per tonne delivered to customers in north England and Scotland (Jan 2021)

Product	Lower price	Upper price	Trend
Log 16	£90.00	£100.00	=▲
Bar / pallet 14	£65.00	£75.00	=▲
SRW	£45.00	£55.00	=
Fencing	£60.00	£65.00	=▲
H Wood firewood	£50.00	£65.00	=

Roadside hardwood prices (£ hft) January 2021

	Oak planking	Oak beam	Oak fencing	Export ash & beech	White ash sawlogs	Export sycamore	Large Douglas fir and Larch
High price	£12.00	£9.00	£5.00	£3.25	£4.00	£5.00	£4.00
Mid price	£10.00	£7.50	£4.00	£2.75	£3.50	£4.00	£3.00
Low price	£8.00	£6.00	£3.00	£2.00	£3.25	£3.00	£2.50

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

TIMBER AUCTIONS



If you wish to discuss parcels of timber you would like to market, please contact Oliver Combe on 07771 958975, oliver.combe@timberauctions.co.uk for free independent marketing advice.

How to make your online event work



Professional events host **David Lee** reflects on what he learned about online events in 2020.

When lockdown No 1 arrived, I'd chaired about 250 events - none of them online. I wasn't exactly well-qualified for the virtual event world, but after a short period of terror about the future, I got stuck in and tried to learn. I applied what I thought was common to live and online events, and sought to identify major differences. I thought about how the audience would see the event, and how to make their

experience better.

Between April and December 2020, I hosted 35 online events, including four Confor webinars, and four meetings of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Forestry and Tree Planting.

As we adjust our thinking (again) about 2021 and accept online events are very much here to stay, I've scribbled down a few thoughts on what makes an event work (see *panel*). Some might fall

into the very obvious category, and apologies if so - but I have certainly found online posts, blogs and chats useful in mapping my way through the maelstrom of 2020 and beyond.

Staying online?

So what does 2021 hold? Plenty more online events, for sure - with those events that focus on preparation, high quality and pace emerging successfully from the pack while others fade away. By the time we can hold in-person events in a meaningful way again (probably not before the summer), many organisations will have concluded some events will stay online for



10 tips for better online events

1 Be clear why you are doing an event

There are far too many online events. If you are just doing it to replicate what you did in person before - and struggling to find an audience - think again. Either your events are rubbish or you need to engage with people differently.

2 Appreciate that drop-off rates will be high

We all sign up for events we have little intention of attending, especially free ones. As an event organiser/host, it can be soul-destroying when 500+ people (or 100 people, or 50 people) sign up and only half actually tune in. Drop-off is inevitable, but help yourself by engaging with delegates who sign up early by offering relevant, quality content and blogs by speakers at regular intervals in the run-up to the event. Don't just bombard them with constant reminders and nothing else. Add value.

3 Think about what happens when someone signs in on the day

When attending an event, you need to know you've got the right link and haven't clicked into another event on next week. Ensure your event home screen has clear information, including the start time. Unless you have a good reason for doing so, don't have participants chatting idly as people join. Too often, smaller events are messy at the start and this is a real turn-off (literally).

4 Online events are much harder to get right

Lots of people thought they would be easier; they are actually much more difficult. Advance briefings and technical run-throughs are vital. We've all seen examples of avoidable tech-fail; the worst I saw (forestry event) was a guy who took about five minutes to share his screen of dreary slides. For at least two minutes, we saw his home screen with a picture of him and his kids on top of a hill. I didn't stick around.

5 Keep the pace fast and the contributions short and sharp

If an event lasts an hour or so, ensure the voices change regularly and maintain a fast pace. Long presentations with complex, tedious slides are as awful (and often far worse) online as they are in person. However, some presenters can hold an audience's attention



Online events are much harder to get right

good - because it makes no sense in terms of cost or time to drag people from multiple locations when the tech is good enough to hold the event virtually. We'll probably see more hybrid events, where some people gather together (when allowed) and others join virtually.

A final word; it seems obvious, but always see the event - at every stage - through your audience's eyes. Too many people forget that.

David Lee is an adviser to Confor on events and communications. He is an experienced host who has chaired dozens of in-person and on-line events for Confor.

for much longer. I shuddered when I saw one guy was down to present for 45 minutes, but he was brilliant – engaging, funny, and full of short and interesting points.

6 Your attendance is not limited by geography

I've been involved for several years with the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Forestry and Tree Planting. It has been challenging to engage with politicians, civil servants and key audiences when meeting in Westminster committee rooms that needed a map and compass to find. Online has been much better; in general, we've had higher-quality speakers, larger audiences and more of the people we want to be there.

7 Longer events benefit from professional help

Complex agendas which move between presentations and panel discussions benefit from a professional company doing the tech briefings, and ensuring all speakers and panellists are briefed and ready to come in at the right points. As a host, speaker or delegate, a seamless event experience really matters.

8 Be clear about the chat function

I've hosted events on many platforms, all perfectly decent. However, one challenge in hosting is ensuring questions about the tech or

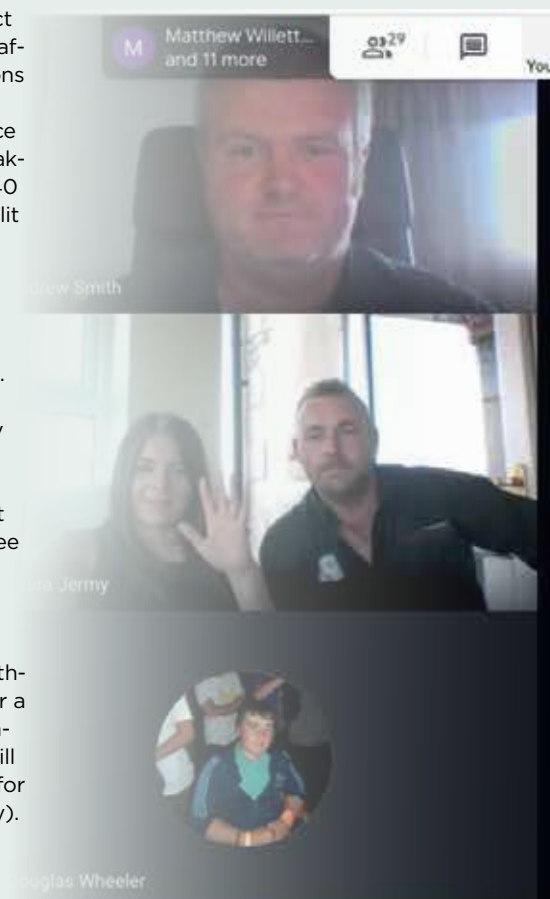
running order don't get mixed in with subject matter questions for panellists. At one rural affairs event, we agreed to split admin questions (chat box) and questions for speakers (Q&A box). I explained this clearly, but the audience did what they pleased. The first session speaker was excellent and there were more than 40 questions and comments posted - evenly split between the chat and the Q&A box!

9 Online networking is more difficult

Small-talk chat or hard-edged business conversations are a big part of in-person events. Online, I've not seen anyone really crack it. Break-out rooms can work very well (or very badly) and there has certainly been more sharing of business cards, links and information online as the months have ticked by. Yet it's just not quite the same and I expect to see more creative solutions in this area in 2021.

10 A bad virtual backdrop is worse than no backdrop

We all had fun with backdrops in 2020, whether standard templates (of a tropical beach or a snowy peak) or our own images. But remember, if you are using a virtual backdrop, sit still and make sure the wall behind you is plain (for me, this meant rearranging my office slightly). If you don't do this, your ears and hair WILL disappear and being scalped or ear-less on screen is not a professional look.



BAG Supplies Ltd.

Packaging suppliers covering the UK and Europe

We specialise in the supply of all types of firewood and kindling net bags, ventilated bulk bags, cubic nets and frames, bag loading trays, polypropylene sacks, standard bulk bags, LDPE sacks and storage tarpaulins.

We carry a large range of stock in various sizes at our warehouse for delivery within 48 hours of your order.

We even offer a free personalised print and design service so your nets/bags can be ordered with your logo or design.

We've got it in the bag!



t 01768 862157 m 07798 723040

e info@bagsupplies.com www.bagsupplies.com

MP&KM GOLDING LTD

ROAD RECLAMATION SERVICES



Time to give your potholed and rutted track a new lease of life.

MP & KM Golding Ltd are qualified operators that work to a high standard of finish from forest to farm roads nation wide.

It is an eco-friendly and cost effect concept in road, track and yard maintenance. Specialist machinery allows for processing on-site stone.

- ✓ SPECIALIST EQUIPMENT
- ✓ SHAPING AND GRADING
- ✓ CRUSHING AND SCREENING
- ✓ DRAINAGE WORK
- ✓ CEMENT STABILISATION
- ✓ GRANT APPLICABLE

0845 094 3818

info@roadreclamation.co.uk

www.roadreclamation.co.uk

Woodland Carbon Guarantee in England



In this five-part series, **Matt Hay** explains the basic concepts of woodland carbon and carbon markets.

Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish land managers look away. This article, the third in my series for *Forestry and Timber News*, is all about a source of carbon funding that exists only for woodland creation schemes in England: the 'Woodland Carbon Guarantee'.

Conceived of by the previous administration, this Government launched the Woodland Carbon Guarantee (WCaG) in November 2019. Its purpose is simple: to incentivise woodland creation in England. By committing £50m to the purchase of Woodland Carbon Units (WCUs) between now and 2055, the government can act as the 'buyer of last resort' for a project's carbon, thereby guaranteeing a minimum future income for landowners and tenants who invest in woodland creation.

With knowledge of the value of their WCUs, land managers are able to make informed decisions about the economic viability of woodland creation versus other land uses. Importantly, their contract to sell to the government does not preclude them from selling their carbon on the open market, if the timing or price is more advantageous. However, they will always have that government contract as a backstop, providing a level of security.

One common misconception about the Woodland Carbon Guarantee is that it is in some way separate from or an alternative to the Woodland Carbon Code (WCC). This is incorrect. The guarantee sits within the Woodland Carbon Code's framework and is one route to market for WCC projects in England. Indeed, for landowners and tenants to enter the guaran-

tee, their project must first be registered with the code. Throughout its lifetime, it will be subject to the same validation and verification processes that WCC projects across the UK undergo. It is these processes that generate the credits, which the government is buying.

How does it work?

A project must first be registered with the Woodland Carbon Code, with a sound additionality case and detailed woodland creation plan. Only then can the project's developer apply to one of the Woodland Carbon Guarantee auction rounds, which take place two to three times a year. Contracts are awarded via a sealed bid reverse auction, so land managers put forward the WCU price they need in the hope that their bid will be competitive.

If successful, a project is then able to sell its WCUs to the government every five or 10 years. The frequency of this income is determined by how many verifications a land manager wishes to pay for. For unsuccessful bidders, there is always the option of entering the next guarantee auction or selling their carbon to someone else.

Woodland Carbon Guarantee vs Open Market

Even for successful bids, the Woodland Carbon Guarantee may not always be the best option for a land manager with carbon to sell. Although the recent WCU prices of £17 - £20 compare favourably to the going rate for most PIUs, the government only ever agrees to buy 35 years worth of

carbon. However, projects registering with the WCC can generate carbon credits for up to 100 years, which potentially gives them a lot more carbon to sell if they explore other routes to market. Of course, there is no harm in these longer duration projects securing a guarantee contract as a failsafe. But they might be able to sell (up to 50%) more carbon if they look beyond the Woodland Carbon Guarantee, possibly generating more income even if they sell the carbon as PIUs.

Similarly, the guarantee is of limited use for landowners or tenants who need the money upfront, to bridge a funding gap for instance. Little or no income will be generated from WCUs until year 15, due to the non-linear rates of carbon sequestration by trees. If a project host needs to see a return on their investment before 2035, then the guarantee is not for them.

The fourth Woodland Carbon Guarantee auction will be happening in the coming months. It is worth keeping an eye on the Woodland Carbon Code's website if you are interested in entering, or want to stay abreast of the prices being achieved for WCUs.

I'll be back with another article in the next edition of *Forestry and Timber News*, when I examine the potential for integration of the woodland carbon market with some of the emerging ecosystem markets that are starting to generate income for land managers across the country.

Matthew Hay is a project manager at Forest Carbon (www.forestcarbon.co.uk)

WCU PRICES AT WCaG AUCTIONS

Auction date	Total bids	Successful bids	Total area of contracts awarded	Average WCU price achieved
February 2020	31	18	182ha	£24.11
June 2020	77	27	1,517ha	£19.71
October 2020	46	31	620ha	£17.31

Source: Woodland Carbon Code (<https://woodlandcarboncode.org.uk/woodland-carbon-guarantee>)

SAF WOODLAND MANAGEMENT

CELL GROWN STOCK FOR SALE

Conifer - Improved Sitka Spruce, Queen Charlotte Island and Washington Sitka Spruce and Douglas fir

Broadleaves - Crab Apple, Sessile Oak, Alder, Hawthorn, Silver Birch

We grow our tree saplings in paper cells to reduce single use plastics and waste onsite.

We use reduced peat and peat free medium to help the environment.

Enviro-mounders available for ground preparation.

Chartered Foresters here to help.



SAF Woodland Management is a FRM registered nursery and seed collectors, UKISG (Woodland Trust scheme for bio security and plant health) assured. We are a family run business bringing together foresters and a specialist cell nursery to ensure the right trees for your environment are available at the right time. We have Enviro-mounders available to provide ground preparation support prior to planting.



www.safwoodland.management | mobile: 07703493773
email: daniel@safwoodland.management

Marsh Road Nursery | Marsh Road | Hesketh Bank | Preston | Lancashire PR4 6XT



CLASSIC EDGE
TITANIUM HDX

The Next Generation Of Wood Gasification Boiler

- Easy installation into existing heating systems
- Heat multiple buildings; single phase electric supply
- Includes built-in buffer tank
- Outputs from 30kW-100kW. Over 90% A+ rated for efficiency
- 30kW Edge 300 eligible for the Green Homes Grant of up to £5,000
- Large capacity stainless steel firebox for easy loading & less wood cutting
- FireStar controller provides remote monitoring capability – it even tells you when to load your wood!



01206 252275 / 251118

www.central-boiler.co.uk | info@cbbiomass.com



Offering a comprehensive range of professional log & woodchip drying kilns for the timber industry. Log, woodchip, sawn timber, pallets & fencing.

The drying programs used on our multiple air pass kilns are designed to give optimum efficiency and quality drying freshly split logs in just 5 days down to average moisture contents of 15%.
A reversing air flow every 2 hours ensures uniform drying.

Please note that those companies that have installed inefficient single air pass shipping containers and have existing R.H.I. contracts can now replace these keeping their existing boiler and R.H.I. contract, this gives increased production and drying quality whilst reducing fuel consumption by 50% per cubic metre of logs dried.

Manufacturers of Timber Drying Kilns for over 38 years

Please visit our website for more information www.kilnservices.co.uk

t: 01621 785 935 e: kilnservices@btconnect.com

Kiln Services Ltd, Essex, CMO 8TE

Scotland's Finest Wood Awards to honour Climate Change Champions in 2021

Confor members committed to tackling the damaging impacts of climate change have been encouraged to enter a new industry award designed to recognise those making a positive environmental impact.

The 2021 Scotland's Finest Woods Awards programme has introduced a Climate Change Champion Award to mark the growing importance of forestry and wood use in Scotland's efforts to reach net zero by 2045 - five years ahead of the rest of the UK.

Stuart Goodall, CEO of Confor, which is a supporter of the Awards, said: "Our core message for many years has been that modern forestry and wood use can deliver huge environmental and economic benefits simultaneously - and that is really starting to cut through. Respected, independent bodies like the Climate Change Committee are producing report after report showing how vital our industry is to hitting net zero.

"This award means Confor members who are doing so much to combat climate change can be recognised for their efforts - in a year when COP26 will shine an environmental light on Scotland, where 80% of the UK's trees are being planted."

The Climate Change Champion

Award is sponsored by Carbon-Store, a collaboration between Confor members Tilhill and Maelor Forest Nurseries, which links up landowners keen to plant trees with companies wanting to offset carbon emissions.

The Award, developed with specialist independent guidance from Forest Research, will be chosen by expert judges from entries to all 2021 Awards categories.

Chris Quine, Chief Scientist at Forest Research, said: "Forest Research is delighted that the Awards programme is shining a specific light on the contribution of forests and woods to tackling the threat of climate change.

"We know there is excellent practice developing across Scotland's forests and woodlands - in terms of mitigation, adapting to the changing climate and sharing information and knowledge about the subject."

All other categories return in the annual Awards programme, with three awards for Quality Timber, two each for Farm Woodland and



Community Woods and one each for New Native Woods and Schools.

Angela Douglas, Executive Director of Scotland's Finest Woods, said: "We were very sad to have to cancel the 2020 awards, but the pandemic lockdown just before our entry deadline meant judges couldn't visit sites, while the annual awards ceremony couldn't be held as planned at the Royal Highland Show. In 2021, the health and safety of judges and entrants is our top priority, and we are working towards a virtual awards ceremony which captures the feel-good factor of the awards."

sfwa.co.uk

Angela Douglas (and dog!), Executive Director of Scotland's Finest Woods, at Glen Affric, Highlands

The path to net zero is paved with wood

The UK Climate Change Committee have published the Sixth Carbon Budget: detailed advice on practical policies to meet interim targets on the pathway to net zero by 2050. Westminster will bring forward policies in the coming months based on this advice.

Trees have always played a key role in carbon budgets as the only carbon capture technology which is already deployable at scale, and which can therefore 'offset' hard-to-reduce emissions. However, there is growing recognition that trees play a more fundamental role in the

core business of emissions reduction itself.

Wood-fibre insulation reduces carbon emissions from energy in homes. Engineered timber construction materials such as panelboard and CLT reduce the need for production of big industrial carbon emitters, concrete and steel. Switching plastic products such as packaging to paper and board alternatives tackles a key and often forgotten climate problem: hard-to-recycle waste. All these uses of wood extend its carbon-storing life beyond the forest.

Finally, at end-of-life, all these products can be used for biomass in a renewable energy mix. With optimism about the development of Biomass with Carbon Capture and Storage (BECCS), wood could

ultimately deliver a final carbon bonus: instead of being released back into the atmosphere, its captured carbon is locked up for the long term.

For the first time, the Climate Change Committee have explored different scenarios for afforestation comparing high-yielding conifer and broadleaf. This clearly shows that even fast-growing sycamore and birch, intensively grown, will require a far higher land area than high-yielding conifer. Planting enough of the latter to supply the wood we need for decarbonisation, will provide more space for other land uses, including nature conservation.

Confor's full briefing on the budget and its implications for members is available on the 'Latest News' page of our website.

Shaping a balanced perception of forestry from a young age

Becky Wilkinson
RFS Teaching Trees

Ask any class of children “Should we cut down trees?” and you’ll get the same answers. “No, cutting down trees is bad. We need trees to breathe”, or “Deforestation is wrong, we need homes for the animals”,

But dig a little deeper and you’ll discover that the nearest that most classes have come to learning about forestry is when they learned about the destruction of the Amazon. Children are passionate about the environment and climate change, they want to do the right thing, most have just never considered the contribution that sustainable forestry and woodland management makes to our economy and to tackling climate change rather than exacerbating the problem.

Teaching Trees Programme

The Royal Forestry Society’s Teaching Trees programme has been working with schools across England and Wales for over 20 years. Our team of Education Officers teach children about the value of well managed woodlands and, increasingly, the contribution that sustainable forestry can make to tackling the climate emergency.

In an average year, we welcome around 10,000 children on a visit to a local woodland. They take part in a wide variety of activities and games which introduce them to woodlands



We encourage the children to perceive foresters as ‘tree farmers’.

and woodland management. For a surprising number it may be the first time that they’ve ever been in a real woodland and they expect to see bears, wolves and even monkeys as their ideas are based on stories and films, not real-life experience. Thanks to a number of grants and generous donors, we keep our visits entirely free and even offer travel bursaries to schools from the most disadvantaged communities who may not be able to afford the cost of coach travel to a woodland.

Getting the message across

One of the simplest ways for us to communicate the importance of sustainable forestry is to take a basket of objects with us that are made from wood or wood products. Once the children have been welcomed to the forest with a few warm-up and exploration games, we’ll ask them to see if they can find some objects that we’ve hidden in the learning area and which shouldn’t normally be in a woodland. As they spread out, they’ll find things such as a wooden spoon, some children’s toys, a piece of timber for building and some curtain rings. We’ll ask them what they think the items are for (never assume they know!) and then what they would be made from if they weren’t made from wood.

We talk about the importance of wood as one of the lowest carbon options for building new homes and the way in which carbon can be locked up for hundreds of years with items made from sustainable timber. Not only a low carbon option, we also talk about which would last longest in landfill and the harm that microplastics can cause to our ecosystems. Sustainable forestry might not be something that children knew about but low carbon and biodegradable solutions are things they have heard about at school.

As well as talking about timber in general, we also talk about the importance of locally grown, ethical timber providing jobs in the local area and having a smaller carbon footprint than wood that has been shipped from thousands of miles away. In our “Forester’s Challenge” we work with the children to calculate the volume of timber being grown in the woodland that they are visiting and how much they might be able to harvest from a thinning operation. In this way, we encourage the children to perceive foresters as ‘tree farmers’. They understand the ethics of growing wheat or oats to eat, they might have visited a local farm shop or have parents who seek out independent suppliers for other household items. We talk about why it’s important that forestry happens in their local area and that the timber they need isn’t just shipped in from thousands of miles away. Foresters as tree farmers then cease to be part of the problem of deforestation and part of the solution to sustainable production tackling the climate emergency.



TEACHING TREES

Teaching Trees is paid for by generous donations from our supporters. You can help to keep Teaching Trees free for the schools who need it the most by making a donation or purchasing one of our gifts for a friend or loved one. To support our work and help children understand the importance of forestry, please visit www.rfs.org.uk/support-us/donate



People working in a forest (Illustration by Annie, 6)

GET INVOLVED

How can the industry communicate this message to more schools?

On a weekly basis, we'll see messages in social media asking if anyone knows how they can find a woodland local to them to use for education. If you have a woodland that you would welcome visitors to, try emailing local schools or post through community social media groups to see if anyone is interested in visiting your woodland with their own staff and children. You'll need to have public liability insurance in place and conduct a site survey to check that there

aren't any dangerous trees before the children arrive but the rest can be up to the school. Many schools now have trained forest school leaders on their staff and would love the opportunity to explore somewhere beyond their school grounds with their children. Alternatively, if you're in one of the areas of England and Wales where we have an Education Officer, do get in touch if you'd like to offer your woodland for use.

www.rfs.org.uk/learning/teaching-trees-age-3-14/where-are-we/meet-the-team/

If you'd like to diversify your business and lead educational groups in a woodland yourself then there are a range of training courses to choose from to

equip you. We offer accredited Outdoor Learning Practitioner training courses where you can learn how to teach all ages in a woodland environment and with activities as diverse as maths, art and even philosophy. This course also covers how to risk assess a woodland for use by school groups and the steps you'll need to take to make it safe and enjoyable for all. If you'd like to lead activities including tools or fire then we'd recommend choosing a trainer approved by the Forest School Association to deliver Level 3 Forest School training. Details are available here:

www.forestschoollassociation.org/find-a-forest-school-trainer/#!directory/map

Farming houses



Eleanor Harris talks to Confor member William Theed, owner of Combe Sydenham Country Park, Taunton, about why farmers should think timber.

I'm not growing trees, I'm growing houses," says William Theed. "The big mistake is planting trees without knowing what you're going to use them for."

With UK rural policy facing a generational shift - leaving the Common Agricultural Policy, setting targets for net-zero, and rising global demand for renewable commodities - William is passionate about getting farmers interested in growing timber. With sixty years of experience in timber growing on his historic estate on Exmoor, his experiences are gold.

"I've been passionate about trees since I was 13. I've tried all kinds of enterprises, made many mistakes and had my fingers burnt on many occasions - but I've never burnt my fingers on my trees.

"In the last few years I've been cutting down conifers I planted myself which are now 150 feet tall - seven sixteen-foot lengths sent to the mill from every tree. They covered the six-figure sum of re-roofing my historic house, and I'm now replacing my daughter's roof which was last done over a century ago by her family.

"I planted these trees around 1960. We had at that time a new CLAAS combine (one of the first in Britain!) and it made no sense to be running it up and down to the arable ground at 1100 feet. People said I was mad to plant Sitka spruce thereon, because it would devalue the land - but I had no intention of selling the land. It has proved very profitable. We have more to harvest

next year and will immediately re-plant with the best improved stock.

"Forestry can be profitable - but it must be approached properly, with a clear purpose, a clear management plan, and professional skill. I've employed two professional forest managers in the course of my career, my present one has worked with me for thirty years. It is investment which repays - although it does require patience."

William emphasises that thinning is essential for making forestry profitable, by providing ongoing cash flow in the south west. "My trees are at 1100 feet and it is essential to thin early to create wind resilience - around one row in five from around 12 years. We could supply far more sustainable biomass in this country if we thinned our woods frequently, and it is thinning that results in woods full of bluebells, bats and lovely to walk in."

His Douglas fir thinnings (see box) have generated over 700 tonnes of woodchip used in the estate RHI biomass boilers and sold to Exmoor Woodfuel Ltd.

Certificate of Merit

I was keen to hear more about this Douglas fir (*pictured*), which won a Certificate of Merit in the 2018 Royal Forestry Society Excellence in Forestry Silviculture Awards. It is planted on former horse fields high in Exmoor National Park, and William believes it could serve as a model for far more afforestation on marginal arable land.

"In the 1980s I was involved in



William Theed showing his Douglas fir to judges in the Royal Forestry Society Excellence in Forestry Silviculture Awards"

THE INGREDIENTS OF AWARD-WINNING DOUGLAS FIR

6.8 hectares

Deep mineral soil overlying sandstone

Yield class from 20-30.

Acoustic grading shows the trees are likely to produce high volumes of strong (C24) construction timber.

TIMELINE

1988 planting

1998 brashing

2007 first thinning (one row in 9)

2012 second thinning

2017 third thinning

2018 awarded a Certificate of Merit in the RFS Excellence in Forestry Silviculture Awards

2020s-40s - further thinnings

2050-60 harvest

an initiative to use historic properties as opportunities to educate children, and I went to York Minster to receive an award for my work in this. It was soon after the refurbishment of York Minster after the fire. I learned that, while hundreds of oak trees had been received from all over the country to refurbish the roof, they were short of one beam 90 foot long. They scoured England for a suitable tree, but none was tall enough, so they used Douglas fir as an alternative. That one Douglas fir timber in York Minster roof gave me the idea of growing Douglas fir for construction timber myself."

Affordable housing

William Theed's plans for his Douglas fir were not for cathedral beams. He had recently been involved in the foundation of West Somerset Rural Housing Association, now Falcon Rural Housing. This tackles the lack of affordable housing which threatens the viability of rural communities. Since its inception in 1985 it has built 292 homes in over 43 villages in Somerset and Devon. William's plan for his Douglas fir was to supply material to build and maintain these rural communities in future.

"Farmers are having to rethink how they farm: government is taking subsidies away from 'out of the bag' agriculture in favour of farmers who invest in their land. They are having to rediscover old techniques such as rotations, reducing tillage, and using animals to fertilize the soil. Forestry is the same: after decades of government policy incentivising trees and disincentivising proper silviculture, we are realising how important these techniques are. Farmers are having to work in new ways and try new things if they want to stay in business, so it is the perfect time for them to find out about growing timber.

"Trees on farms are essential for sustainable agriculture: Carthage was the bread-basket of the ancient world until it was deforested and the soil eroded and the Sahara encroached. The same could happen here. Forestry requires the kind of understanding of soil and nature which government is promoting. Meanwhile we are the biggest importer of timber in the world after China - a country as small as ours,

raping the world for timber which we could grow! The COP26 conference in Glasgow in November must be the point at which we acknowledge this and turn this situation around. Foresters need to make a nuisance of themselves!!"

Like Greta Thunberg? I suggested. 'Yes, exactly - it's wonderful what that girl has accomplished.

"We have to convince the farming landowners of England that they need to plant trees - and know what they're planting them for. In Scotland, farmers don't have any hesitation planting trees as an investment for forty or fifty years, but in England the idea of planting trees to make money rarely enters people's heads. We have the finest tree country in the world, with a maritime climate. There are too many tree planting schemes in England where the wrong trees have been planted because nobody thought about what they would be used for - landowners were confused by the generous grants. That doesn't mean we can't experiment: given our changing climate and ecosystems we must diversify. I have two experimental woods of tulip trees, and am planting Cedar of Lebanon. Cedars naturally grow well in drought and up to 7000 feet, so might be a good choice for 1000ft on Exmoor in a future climate - and their timber is highly valuable and rare. I'm also trying black walnut as a replacement for ash, and mixing it with alder as an experiment in fixing nitrogen.

Pine marten

"I do plant oaks and I love my oak trees, but we can't grow hardwood here because of grey squirrel. I'm very keen on the potential of pine marten which can control grey squirrel over wide areas while allowing red squirrel to escape. I'm also working with Vincent Wildlife Trust on the nationally-important bat colonies which inhabit our forestry thanks to its regular thinning. Pine marten could be our secret weapon to enable us to grow oak again.

"Meanwhile, I'm planning additional plantings of Douglas fir. Forestry is something I'd recommend to any farmer considering how to ensure their business is still here sixty years from now. But don't just grow trees - grow houses."



**SOUTH EAST
FORESTRY**

**WANTED: TO PURCHASE
LARGE QUANTITIES OF
ROUND TIMBER STANDING
FELLED OR AT STUMP –
OAK, ASH,
SWEET CHESTNUT,
DOUGLAS FIR,
WESTERN RED CEDAR.
ALL ROUND TIMBER
BOUGHT AND SOLD.**

**Call Jonathan 01580 819179
or 07759 567801
or contact David 07769 354118**

www.southeastforestry.co.uk

All of our forestry products are harvested sustainably from managed woodlands and forests

**Local Sustainable Renewable - South East Forestry Group
WE BUY WE FELL WE SELL TIMBER**

Working forests

A home for all creatures great and small – and me!

John Little

BSc (Hon), MICFor. 2021

My career really dates from a family holiday in 1970, travelling aged eight from a Wimpy estate near Edinburgh to Forestry Commission's Dalavich Village, deep in Inverliever Forest, Argyll. One of the first extensive spruce upland forests, planted in 1912 by the Department of Woods, parts were already into their second rotation.

I saw swathes of dark Sitka, peppered with larch, ribbons of broadleaves around lochs and rivers, open hills of grass and heather, rocky peaks. I saw the variety of flowers where roadsides provided disturbance and less competition; a fascinating array of ferns, lichens, mosses and fungi, even under the densest conifers, where invariably a robin would boldly appear. Rhododendron in oak and birch was great for secret dens – I didn't know about its negative impact then. I saw buzzards, a fox, a roe doe and its calf, red squirrel; heard tawny owls at night. Argyll had wet days and midges, but also rainbows, and bats.

I saw people working in the for-

est, felling and replanting; people fishing; small farms grazing beasts in the wooded landscape – many owned by Forestry Commission and tenanted by forest workers. I did not separate conifers, native woodland, open ground, rural economy, biodiversity: I saw a complete wonderful world that triggered a desire to be part of it.

I now know about issues around forestry practice. Our control of pesticides is much improved. In the drive to redress negligible forest cover, Forestry Commission planted right to streams and fences. Significant draining of deep peat and wetlands sometimes resulted in high yield crops that are still net carbon sinks, but others, still waterlogged, failed. Areas recognised today as of high environmental and historic value were damaged then. Learning to meet a wider range of management objectives has been a vital lesson.

But as an eight-year-old, 'flaws' were not what I saw: rather the huge variety of life within this man-made, nature shaped, environment. I now have huge respect for the people that achieved so much so quickly, creating a legacy from which we, and wildlife, reap the benefits. I've learned that most mistakes can be

Continued on p55



Above: Fox cub
Top: Melfort Lochan

Tilhill has over 70 years of specialist woodland creation and management expertise.

- We employ more professional chartered foresters than any other forestry company.
- We have planted over 1 billion trees and counting.
- We are skilled in all aspects of woodland management.

Our skills include:

- Woodland improvement & restoration.
- Planting design.
- Planting.
- Ride creation.
- Forest roading.
- Sporting infrastructure.
- Grant advice.
- Environmental improvements.
- Ecological surveys.
- Sporting licence management.
- Timber harvesting.

For further information email us on: enquiries@tilhill.com or visit our website: www.tilhill.com

www.tilhill.com



King Feeders UK

**Eco Green
Composting Equipment**
T: 01260 223 273
E: info@kingfeeders.co.uk



Why buy Eco Green?

- ✓ Range from 5 cubic metre to 30
- ✓ Durable and robust construction
- ✓ Heavy duty 4 auger machine
- ✓ Alternative more economical 2 auger model
- ✓ Heavy duty boron blades with 2 bolt fixing
- ✓ Outlet discharge elevators built with heavy duty stainless steel chain
- ✓ Emergency stop buttons on all models as standard
- ✓ PTO / diesel / electric drives
- ✓ Rear loading hopper as standard
- ✓ Large comprehensive range of spares with next day delivery
- ✓ Nationwide in-house support team
- ✓ User safety training on all machines
- ✓ Flexible payment plans with guaranteed buy back

www.ecogreencomposting.co.uk

FOREST MANAGEMENT AND RURAL DIVERSIFICATION

Continued from p53

rectified and sometimes turned into a positive. I am certain the benefits from those old forests are much more significant than any mistakes made when they were created.

By 1986 I had a degree in Ecology with Honours in Forestry, spent a year measuring and mapping in Kielder (No GPS then!), and was a year into employment helping create 1000 hectares of tax-driven conifer in degraded, deer-infested Stirlingshire moorland. I was asked if I would move to Oban, creating new privately-owned forests around Inverliever. My childhood holiday destination became the place I would earn my living and raise my family. Although investors' objectives were predominantly economic, for us foresters the rewards were always wider: earning a living, contributing to the local economy, providing access for walkers and cyclists, spending time in beautiful places, seeing incredible wildlife.

I was not consciously managing for biodiversity. I was watching hen harriers and short-eared owls hunt voles amongst establishing crops; being stalked by a barn owl hoping I would flush prey; encountering black and red grouse stocking gizzards with gravel on forest roads. I was lucky enough to see a wild cat on a planting site, at full stretch getting from me and my dog. I almost stood on sunning adders. I helped count Lapland Marsh Orchids, a profusion in a new location after the ground was ploughed – perhaps benefiting from the disturbance.

Felling increase

Following a long lull, there was a big increase in felling and restocking from 2000. A messier business than woodland creation, but restructuring employed growing numbers of contractors, managers and hauliers. I always get a kick from seeing roundwood heading to the sawmill and sawn timber heading south to be used in construction and much more. Being part of sustainable primary production, which sequesters carbon and substitutes for other less sustainable materials is satisfying.

Those years were characterised by grant-driven upland native woodland creation, with varying

success. I like mixed forest and was encouraged by the native growth on forest roadsides, riparian areas and around restocks, benefiting from deer control to protect the commercial crop. However, most of the native woodlands created in Argyll are remote, lacking access, and will never provide significant employment. Creating these woodlands, there was no visibly greater benefit for wildlife than I saw when planting conifer in the 1980s. They may develop – the Glen Nant Oak woods are lovely – but of course those were the managed produc-



Pine marten glimpsed on a forest track

tive woodlands of their day fuelling the iron smelter in Taynuilt around 1753-1873.

The 2010's boosted my belief in the worth of my career, creating and managing forests enjoyed by humans and wildlife alike. The forester might feel increasing guidance and red tape creates a disproportionate constraint, or that detractors are amplifying their messages too easily through the power of the internet. Yet to see the industry's benefits being more widely recognised is a huge boost to morale. There will be species that do not thrive in forest and that is an issue for expansion but protecting individual species may not necessarily be best for biodiversity and resilience in a natural world shaped by bigger influences such as climate change.

I am sure I see more wildlife than in the 1980s. Predators are everywhere. Osprey and reintroduced Sea eagles thrive, nesting in conifer. I see more Golden eagle, and buzzards (mini-eagles for tourists) are common. I see ravens, merlin, peregrine, tawny and barn owl, the occasional kestrel. Through the 90's I

worried forests had displaced my beloved hen harriers, but they are back: they seem to thrive in 30-50 hectare clearfells. It's a greater thrill than ever to see them displaying, nesting, roosting and hunting, because restocks are habitat we will perpetually create. I see signs, and the occasional glimpse, of foxes, pine marten, badgers, otters, stoats, weasels and adders.

Predators are there because forests are full of prey: a myriad of small birds, mammals and amphibians. Insects abound: last summer I saw swifts and martins feasting



Although investors' objectives were predominantly economic, for us foresters the rewards were always wider: earning a living, contributing to the local economy, providing access for walkers and cyclists, spending time in beautiful places, seeing incredible wildlife.

over an active harvesting site. Venturing through the restocks I encounter voles, insects, frogs, toads and newts. Under a closed canopy, birdsong overhead indicates food: insects, seeds and buds. I have not started on the ferns, grasses, flowers (Primrose is a favourite), mosses, lichens or fungi I see. The diverse site types and crop ages are all important to so many of these creatures.

I hope I have stimulated memories of your own experiences of forests and wildlife, and encouraged you to talk about them outside the industry. My love of forests, what lives in them (including us) and what we produce from them predated my understanding: 50 years ago I just liked what I saw. Now I believe more than ever that over just 100 years we have achieved something fantastic. We have created a dynamic, diverse habitat of incalculable value to society, the economy – and biodiversity. Stop reading this, get out there yourselves and see what you can see. Keep managing these forests as we do, and the wildlife will take advantage of it.

CAMBUSMORE

Farmer creates large-scale woodland for biodiversity and timber production

Sarah Toulson
(Cawdor Forestry)
and **Helen Webb**
(Scottish Forestry)

Ken Greenland, owner of the Cambusmore Estate near Dornoch, is to plant the largest woodland to be approved by Scottish Forestry under the Forestry Grant Scheme (FGS). Scottish Forestry has awarded £3.2m for the 933ha scheme, which will be planted over a three-year period starting this winter.

From end-to-end, the new woodland at Cambusmore will stretch over 12km along Strath Carnaig, strengthening the current native woodland networks on a landscape scale.

Nearly all the new trees - 1.4 million in total - will be native species, mostly Scots pine and birch with rowan, oak, aspen and alder. The plan also includes planting 58ha of diverse conifer for future timber production and 77ha of natural regeneration which will protect and add diversity to the existing native woodlands.

The new woodlands will sequester nearly 50,000 tonnes of CO₂ by 2045, contributing towards the Scottish Government's climate change commitment to reach net zero emissions.

Farmer uses third of his land for woodland creation

The planting and natural regeneration will expand woodland onto about one third of Ken Greenland's land, enabling a rationalisation and improvement of his hill grazing.

Mr Greenland farms sheep and cattle and is passionate about the wide range of habitats and variety of wildlife which are present on the estate. Increasing biodiversity and integrating the new woodland with his farming business were key objectives. "I want to focus my hill grazing on the better land and introduce more cattle, whilst actively

farming the land which has Special Protection Area status."

"The planting is nearly all native species as I really want to increase the habitat for the amazing range of wildlife species we have on the ground. I believe that the Highlands can offer both quality food production and a top quality environment."

"My agents have taken great care in developing the plans to ensure that we can accommodate wildlife species that need open areas such as black grouse. I also wanted to provide a long-term habitat for a wide range of species whilst also connecting up the fragments of native woodland. It has been a long time in the planning but now I cannot wait to get started with fencing and planting".

Innovative forest design reconciling biodiversity and timber production

The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) consent for the woodland creation scheme was granted in early 2020 following nearly three years of very detailed evaluation and consultation involving SNH (NatureScot), RSPB, Historic Environment Scotland and other consultees. Much of the area proposed for planting is within a designated hen harrier SPA/SSSI and other protected bird species such as Black grouse are also present. There are also scheduled ancient monuments, a SSSI oak wood and a SAC/SSSI alder woodland plus existing fragments of native woodland in the

strath, which will be integrated to the scheme.

Sarah Toulson, Forest Manager, Cawdor Forestry who developed the FGS application on behalf of Ken Greenland, acknowledged that the multiple designations and high sensitivity of certain areas meant that an innovative and flexible approach was needed.



The new woodlands will sequester nearly 50,000 tonnes of CO₂ by 2045

"Cawdor Forestry's driving principle in designing planting schemes is 'the right tree in the right place' and this was especially important for Cambusmore. National Vegetation Classification (NVC), soil and peat depth surveys were carried out to match the most suitable woodland type to different areas of the scheme.

"We recognised from an early stage that a predominantly native woodland would be most suitable and this supported the owner's aim to increase biodiversity. We have managed to identify an area for more productive forestry, which will be planted with diverse conifers - Scots pine and Norway Spruce. This, together with restocking previously felled commercial plantations elsewhere on the estate and





replacing poor quality Lodgepole pine with more appropriate commercial species, will generate future income for the owner. “

The 58ha of productive diverse conifers are at the eastern end of the scheme, outside the boundary of the SPA. This area has direct access onto the public road network which makes it more accessible for the initial establishment and importantly for future timber transport. It also had some of the better soils, making it more suitable for the productive elements of the scheme and allowing a diverse range of species to be planted.

Good collaboration and quality design work key for smooth application process

Ken Greenland and Cawdor Forestry worked very closely with Scottish Forestry’s Highland and Islands Conservancy team to gain approval for the ambitious plan. Helen Webb, Woodland Officer for Scottish Forestry’s Highland and Islands Con-

Ken Greenland with Helen Webb and Sarah Toulson

servancy said:

“Working with Sarah and the team at Cawdor really helped to make the FGS application process run smoothly. Sarah’s knowledge and experience of large-scale woodland establishment enabled us to discuss the design of the scheme and modifications which were required, while producing a practical and well-designed scheme. This ensured all of the constraints on site were fully addressed and that the scheme met the various grant option requirements. Sarah’s experience was also beneficial during stakeholder engagement to clearly explain the plans and the practicalities of woodland establishment. “

The quality of application was vital to the application’s success, and approval being achieved within nine months of the EIA consent. In particular:

- Detailed and appropriate survey, in particular soils & current ground vegetation.
- Continual stakeholder consultation and collaboration.
- High quality GIS, data management and cartography, to present the plans in a comprehensive and clear way.
- Pragmatic fine tuning of the plans to fit with the numerous sensitivities, whilst not losing sight of the owners objectives.
- 3d visualisation to ensure and demonstrate that the new woodland will be a good fit with the landscape.

www.cawdorforestry.com

What are the barriers to other farmers making similar applications?

The scale of the woodland creation scheme along with the site sensitivities might have deterred most landowners from embarking on a scheme that was likely to take years to achieve. Ken Greenland believes that the biggest barrier for many farmers is the initial outlay which is required to submit the application. On his scheme multiple surveys had to be undertaken before the application could be made which was a significant upfront investment, with no guarantee of success. The upfront cost of the fencing and planting operations is also a consideration as the FGS grant will be paid in arrears.

How does the scheme reflect other new woodlands in the region?

John Risby, Conservator for Highland and Islands Conservancy said: “To date, H&I Conservancy have approved 13,500ha of woodland creation under FGS, over 80% of which is broadleaves or Caledonian Scots pine. This reflects the site types, accessibility and sensitivities across the Conservancy as well as owners objectives. The Conservancy promotes well designed mixed woodlands with appropriate parts of sites being planted to enable future timber production. Native species such as Scots pine and birch can produce good quality timber and at Cambusmore this has been achieved by planting 58ha of diverse conifer (SP/NS/SBi) on an accessible area to tie in with a conifer restock.”

Other woodland creation schemes that Cawdor Forestry are working on are more like 60% productive conifer 40% native broadleaves/Caledonian scots pine.



Left: Visualisation of part of the Cambusmore scheme

Kilworth

TP
RELIABLE CHIPPING

FARMA forestry equipment now in stock



Forestry machinery specialists

We offer chippers from 4" to 10" capacity and firewood processors from 13" to 20" capacity

sales@kilworthmachinery.co.uk
www.kilworthmachinery.co.uk
01530 412 690

VECTOR
POWERDRIVE

For the professional contract fencer



Model 4
Agri 120°

Lightweight machine with rock spike. Will work well in all weather conditions.

Davies
Implements Limited

Distributor: Davies Implements Ltd
Tel: 01267 237726
Email: sales@daviesimplements.co.uk
www.vectorpowerdrive.com

KWR
PLANT HIRE



Upto 15m reach with a selection of attachments the Sennebogen 718 is ideal for ash dieback on tracks and highways

Chipping - Forestry - Site/Scrub Clearance
Mulcher, harvester, forwarder hire

E: alec@kwrplanthire.co.uk
T: 07903 463743 or
E: kate@kwrplanthire.co.uk
T: 07775 770454
Office: 01476 861342

www.kwrplanthire.co.uk
@kwrforestry
www.kwrplanthire.co.uk



TreesPlease
Bio Spiral Tree Guards

Tree Protection that genuinely bio-degrades

Taking plastics out of the countryside

- ✔ Made from plant based raw materials.
- ✔ Certified biodegradable when composting.
- ✔ Designed to start breaking down after 4 years.
- ✔ Ultimately breaks down into organic materials.
- ✔ Expands as the tree grows.
- ✔ Will not damage environment during or after use.
- ✔ NO OIL BASED PLASTICS.



Trees Please Ltd, Dilston Haugh Farm, Corbridge, Northumberland, NE45 5QY
Tel: 01434 633049 Email: sales@treesplease.co.uk Website: www.treesplease.co.uk

In a new series of machinery articles, we speak to recipients of financial support from the devolved support schemes (see p10) about their newly acquired machinery and how it can help build their business.

The Peterson WPF saw Resizing timber for low-impact extraction

Trevor Griffiths runs a small-scale timber processing business in rural Monmouthshire. **Anthony Geddes** meets him as his new Peterson WPF Flip Saw arrives.

The bespoke nature of the business and the technical challenges of harvesting and extraction in some of the inaccessible Wye Valley woods drove Trevor Griffiths to think about his business in a different way. "There is a need for a specialist service to operate in difficult-to-access woodlands", says Trevor. "My Forest Industry Recovery Scheme (FIRS) application was to help our business invest in equipment that complements our existing service. By enabling us to machine-process timber in the wood, we can access and process valuable timber in woodlands that are hard to exploit by other means."

Trevor's application was for support to buy a Botex forwarding trailer and a Peterson Winch Production Frame (WPF) - Flip Saw. These two pieces of equipment are intended to help resize timber to aid extraction using low impact forwarding equipment.

wheeled to the log, useful when you could be looking at something weighing over three tons.

As the saw arrives in the timber yard, and looking at the pile of parts on the bed of the Ifor William trailer, it looks like a mash up of a climbing frame, bicycle, scaffold and a circular saw. This particular model is powered by a 24hp Honda engine with electric start which showed little sign of labouring even on a deeper 8" cut.

For those not familiar with it, the principle is simple: two eight-metre beams sit on the floor and a carriage mounted saw runs back and forth along the beams cutting in either a horizontal or vertical plane. One of the floor beams can be raised on a secondary frame (Hi-Lo System) to approximately 1.8m high so that logs may be rolled in from the side, not carried or placed by human or machine.

The machine comes preassembled

from the stockist so the process of setting the machine up, even for a first-time user, takes less than 30 minutes on a relatively flat site. Perhaps a little longer using the Hi-Lo rail system. The level and squareness of the beams' assembly and placement is important but does not need to be millimetre perfect.

The maximum single cut is to a depth of 200mm but by double cutting on a return sweep it is possible to produce a 200 x 400mm beam. The cutting speed appears faster than that of a band saw mill and the petrol engine is inobtrusive and its emissions appear minimal.

Due to the way the saw requires the subject log to be sectioned, the phasing of the cuts can leave small steps in the sawn face of the finished product, combined with rotational scoring from the blade. It is probable that the experienced user can minimise these through speed and dexterity of operation. The finished cut cannot match that of Wood-Mizer but sufficiently outperforms most chain mills whilst allowing quarter sawing. Whilst covering off the cut it is important to consider the waste generated. The blade is 6mm thick and the pile of sawdust left on the floor rapidly increases. Great if you need hamster bedding but a significant enough disadvantage when considering productive output!

The literature for the WPF states that a bar and chain attachment can be added

Continued overleaf

Reviewing the Peterson WPF saw

The Peterson Portable Swing Blade mills were sold 30 years ago and the WPF design is an evolution of this. They're marketed as simple, accurate and cost-effective alternative to a bandsaw. Their lightweight components and modular construction mean they can literally be carried and

STATS	
Blade	8"
Motor	Petrol 22, 25, 27hp (Diesel and electric not available)
Maximum cut	8" x 8" (203mm x 203mm)
Double cut	8" x 16" (203mm x 406mm)
Log diameter (standard)	6' (1.8m)
Log length (standard)	20' (6m)
Average production	Aprox 1200-3500bft (3-8m ³) per day



Continued from previous page

for slabbing timber. The advice from the supplier of this machine was that it is not an ideal adaptation. Whilst the accuracy is reasonable the chain speed is low and as a result the cutting process is slow.

The better question is - what its competition is? The Lucas Mill is a near identical product, being another portable swing blade mill and on price they are very similar, with only the quality of the materials and the Kohler engine being the significant factors. In this instance the Honda engines reputation for reliability and was the deal clincher for the Peterson offering.

It would be unfair to compare this against the Wood-Mizer mobile offerings in the same price range. The WPF will accommodate a much larger range of log sizes with no need for handling after the initial placement and trueing. The option to build the mill around the chosen log was upmost in the reasons for purchase and it remains one of its key selling points.

For Trevor and his business this machine forms part of a package of tools. The flexibility the WPF creates for him



to source timber from difficult or more remote woods, complements his existing milling capacity. The ability to recover then reprocess the wood on another more accurate and efficient machine ensures that the quality of the final product remains

high but opens up the store cupboard of potential material.

Trevor sums it up well, "it's the worst looking, best built thing I've seen. You just don't expect it to work at all and then it does, really well!"



Survey to shed light on timber haulage fleet

The GB Timber Transport Forum is calling on timber hauliers to get involved in a new baseline survey to help plan for the sector's future business opportunities. The survey, which is to begin early in 2021, aims to identify the scale, parameters and key attributes of the UK timber haulage fleet.

Over the past ten years, the volume of timber being hauled from forests has been increasing substantially and now stands at around 11m m³/yr, an increase of 20% from 2010 figures. Although the timber haulage sector has expanded to meet this demand, more information is now needed to help plan for the sectors future in terms of truck type, fuel type and driver training requirements.

Alistair Speedie Chair of the Timber Transport Forum said: "We have a thriving industry which has grown to meet the demand, we must prepare for future years. Volumes of timber are set to increase as more timber becomes availa-

ble, so we need to ensure, as an industry, that we are ready for this in a sustainable way.

"We are keen to involve as many timber hauliers as possible so at this stage we are asking GB timber hauliers to register with us for future participation. It is easy to do and will only take a minute so please get involved."

Timber hauliers across the UK can register their business email address at www.timbertransportsurvey.com and they will be contacted with further details.



TIMBER TRANSPORT FORUM

The GB Timber Transport Forum (TTF) is primarily concerned with the impact of timber transport on rural infrastructure and the environment. The Forum also aims to maintain awareness within the wider forestry sector, so that it can respond constructively and adapt efficiently to de-carbonisation issues and other future challenges. Creel Consulting Ltd is project managing the 2021 survey for the TTF. www.timbertransportforum.org.uk

SPECIAL OFFER €220

€10 off includes free hat and free delivery. Discount code **STAYSAFE**



TIMBER CROC

TIMBER CROC LOG HOLDER

- ✓ Designed in Ireland
- ✓ Manufactured in Ireland
- ✓ Holds logs from 1" to 11"
- ✓ Holds pallets
- ✓ Holds planks
- ✓ Holds posts
- ✓ Easy to assemble
- ✓ Heavy duty
- ✓ Designed & built to last



TIMBER CROC LOG HOLDER

- ✓ Work taller & prevent backache
- ✓ Work faster
- ✓ Work safer
- ✓ One person operation
- ✓ Supporting Irish and UK jobs
- ✓ Delivery anywhere in the UK



Timber Croc Log Holder

Purchase one now by visiting www.timbercroc.com
Or phone +353 (0)469549033 and +353 (0) 868756102



New vehicles complete with bodywork for the arb & landscaping industry. Nationwide delivery.



TOW BARS | FULLY WELDED ALUMINIUM BODIES | SIGN WRITING | TOOL BOXES | LED LIGHTING
BODIES FOR NEW AND USED VEHICLES
CUSTOMER SUPPORT | CONVERSION TO FACTORY TIPPER
FINANCE AVAILABLE ON NEW VEHICLES

Tipping Body Manufacturer & Specialist Body Builder



Find us on:
facebook®

020 8539 0611 | www.tipmaster.co.uk

Reduce, reuse, recycle

Wooden pallets are a central part of the economy's green recovery

A feature in US Smithsonian magazine refers to pallets as 'perhaps the most important thing in our global economy'; while economists often highlight pallets as a cornerstone for the smooth international movement of goods. This is because, for 70 years, they have enabled suppliers to batch up, load and transport goods; maximising space, saving time and money and making supply chains vastly more efficient.

Wood, of course, is the material of choice for around 90 per cent of pallets, because of the low cost, versatility, hygiene properties, and the fact it is widely available. But it is also most importantly the most sustainable option.

The government recognised the fact that wooden packaging lends itself to reuse and the unique status of wood in November when it released its interim packaging recycling targets for business. Wood was the only material for which targets were decreased - moving from 48 per cent to 35 per cent; all other materials were given an increase in their figures. Meanwhile, with most pallet manufacturers and repairs sourcing wood from PEFC or FSC certified sources - and the President of FEFPEB Rob van Hoesel recently calling for the industry to aim for compliancy wherever possible - the circular credentials of the

industry look set to increase further.

The critical role of wooden pallets and packaging was brought to the fore in the lead up to Brexit, when supply chains and government began to understand that supply chains simply cannot function without them. This understanding was consolidated further during the first COVID-19 lockdown last year, when the sector was designated essential by government in the UK and other parts of Europe for its role in keeping vital supply chains, particularly of food, drink and medicines, moving.

COVID aftermath

Pallets and packaging have a key role to play, too, in the aftermath of COVID-19. As governments around the world seek to rebuild their economies, sustainability is about to move out of the wings and into centre stage of business in the new world.

With circular economy principles already guiding EU legislation, the UK government's own £350 million drive towards a 'Green Recovery' from the pandemic should double down on this, elevating values of 'reduce', 'reuse', and then 'recycle', while cutting emissions and eschewing non-sustainable materials as a priority now stated as an integral part of the country's economic renewal.



At a glance: key figures (for the UK)

27kg

Amount of carbon stored by a typical wooden pallet (0.9kg in every kg of wood)

48.3m

Number of wooden pallets repaired in 2019, a 5% rise on 2018

44.9m

Number of pallets manufactured in 2019

2tonnes

Amount by which that every cubic metre of wood reduces the carbon footprint of your business

REDUCE

Pallets and packaging made from wood measure up impressively against these revised standards. When it comes to reduce, being manufactured from small logs and falling boards and taking almost a third of the UK's timber output, they are a key part - alongside the likes of construction and fencing - of an economic model that sees every part of a sustainably

harvested tree used. Meanwhile, pallet software used by modern businesses - such as the US pallet association NWPCA Pallet Design Software (PDS) - facilitate eco-design and manufacture of highly effective products, complying to environmental standards, and using an optimal amount of timber for maximum strength and efficiency.

REUSE

Pallets made from timber are naturally repairable, and the replacement of damaged boards or blocks is a straightforward and cost-effective means of extending their lifespan, sometimes for decades, and enables regular reuse. The Timber Packaging & Pallet Confederation (TIMCON) is now regularly highlighting the fact that reuse of wooden packaging material (WPM) is a vital step in a truly sustainable economy and one that industry must optimise before moving to the recycling stage (see *TIMCON interview, right*). The figures certainly suggest a move in the right direction, with pallet repairs overtaking manufacture of new pallets for the first time in

TIMCON's annual wood packaging market survey last year (for 2018). Its most recent study estimates that 48.3m wooden pallets were repaired in 2019, up 5% on the previous year, compared with 44.9m pallets manufactured.

Repair is increasing the life and reuse opportunities for both 'white pallets', which are usually owned by the user, and pooled pallets, popular with volume users in the fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) sectors. Modern businesses handling both these categories have developed to provide full logistics 'systems', which will focus as much on efficiency and environmental credentials as the pallets themselves.

RECYCLE

When recovery and repair is no longer a viable option and WPM reaches the absolute end of its useful life, then it is right time to recycle. This involves processing for supply to industries including panels, composite block, or animal bedding, or sent on to biomass for renewable energy, completing the cycle.

The circular process begins again with the manufacture of new pallets from sustainably sourced wood.

Using certified wood in any business reduces its overall carbon footprint and, in Europe, the packaging and pallet industry utilises approximately 20m m³ of this every year. There are an

estimated three billion wooden pallets in circulation in the UK and EU region combined - with an annual production of around 500m - and approximately 27kg of carbon stored in each one.

Aside from this comprehensive spread of benefits there is one economic reality that will be decisive for many businesses recovering from the impact of the pandemic. Wood remains the cheapest raw material (despite recent upwards fluctuations in price), so is in pole position as the material of choice for pallets and packaging, even before we look at their substantial other credentials to become a keystone of the Green Recovery.

Pallets' green credentials

Why reuse is a viable business model

According to John Dye, President of the Timber Packaging & Pallet Confederation (TIMCON), with proper handling and repair a wooden pallet can last for anything from five years to 30 years. He has even seen pallets in the whisky industry that were manufactured in the 1970s that are still in circulation today.

"The fact that the government has stated it wants a Green Recovery to the economic challenges brought about by the pandemic and the UK's existing commitment to being carbon neutral by 2050 are key," he says. "Both of these can be helped by using - and reusing - wooden pallets and packaging."

On TIMCON's drive towards encouraging reuse before recycling, Dye says that increasing the former is a sensible business objective for manufacturers. "The users of wooden packaging are now more than ever aware of the environmental and commercial benefits of reuse and, as we are currently seeing with the unprecedented rise in supply issues and accompanying price rises; the commercials are hugely important," he says. "We are seeing increasing activity in this area, with pallet repairs having increased by approximately 20% over the last five years." He adds that while wooden packaging products are often bespoke, there is still plenty of scope for reuse of the materials.

Recycling targets

With targets already in place for recycling materials, TIMCON is seeking to encourage reuse, whenever possible, before recycling. Currently, says Dye, tens of thousands of viable pallets and other wood packaging material (WPM) are unnecessarily removed from supply chains for recycling, when they should be reused.

"TIMCON is looking to work with other wood organisations such as the Wood Recyclers Association (WRA) to educate WPM users when pallets and packaging can and should be reused," he says, adding that TIMCON will build on its strong alliances with bodies including FEFPEB, NWPCA and the Global Wood Packaging Forum to develop a coordinated international approach, too.

To further encourage reuse, Dye says temporary 'easement' measures allowing ISPM15 marked pallets to be repaired with ISPM15-treated parts - brought in last year to shore up stocks of compliant WPM in the lead up to Brexit - could help encourage reuse into the future. "Currently, we will revert back to having to fully re-treat a repaired pallet in August. However, if no issues have been raised before then I am sure the subject of continuing will be discussed with the Forestry Commission," he says.

<https://timcon.org>

FORESTRY CONTRACTORS

SHROPSHIRE FORESTRY CONTRACTORS

WANTED

STANDING TIMBER ALL SPECIES INCLUDING SOFT WOOD
ALL SPECIES AND GRADES OF TIMBER AVAILABLE FOR DELIVERY
**ALSO OAK, ELM (PLAIN AND BURRS), BIG
ASH AND FIGURED SYCAMORE**
TOP PRICES AND PROMPT PAYMENT

CONTACT: JOHN HALL, FAIRACRES, COUNDMOOR,
CRESSAGE, SHREWSBURY SY5 6AY

Telephone: 01694 731621
Fax: 01694 731624 Mobile: 07802 366653

BIO-OILS

Plantoil
cares for the
environment

plantoil ...pure green
BIO-LUBRICANTS

CHAIN SAW OIL • 2-STROKE OIL • SAW BLADE OIL

FREephone 0800 013 7363 www.plantoil.co.uk

WANTED

**QUALITY OAK
REQUIRED**

**Standing
or felled**

**Good price paid
for large clean
planking logs**

**Also interested
in other grades**

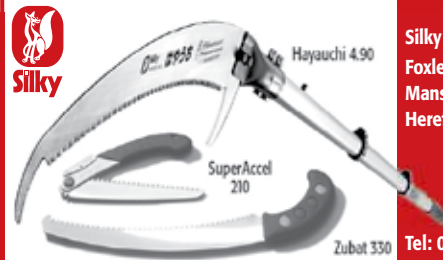
Whippletree

Tel: 01763 208966
Fax: 01763 208977

*Would
you like to
advertise
in F&TN?*

MACHINERY EQUIPMENT

PRUNING MADE EASY



The world's finest pruning saws

Silky Fox Saws
Foxley Estate Office,
Mansel Lacy,
Hereford HR4 7HQ

Tel: 01981 590224
Fax: 01981 590355
www.silkyfox.co.uk

WOODLAND MANAGEMENT

ABBNEY FORESTRY
WOODLAND MANAGEMENT BY QUALIFIED SPECIALISTS

- ▶ All aspects of woodland management and design
- ▶ Woodland creation, establishment and maintenance
- ▶ Timber harvesting and marketing
- ▶ Arboricultural surveys and assessments

Contact us today: 01386 554 027
office@abbneyforestry.co.uk
www.AbbneyForestry.co.uk

NET PRODUCTS

**NET BAGS &
BULK BAGS**

for logs & kindling.
Plain or with printed band.
1 - 3 day delivery anywhere
in the UK. For the best
quality, service and prices!

Contact Ian or Robert.
Medallion Net Co Ltd,
Franciscan House,
Grove Lane, Elmsswell,
Suffolk IP30 9HN

Freephone 0800 7834018
Telephone 01359 242910
Fax 01359 245264
www.medallionnet.co.uk
Email bsmith4uk@aol.com

CERTIFICATION

An independent FSC® &
PEFC Certified Forestry
Group Scheme

Providing UKWAS
certification to forest
owners throughout
the UK

The cost effective route to make certification work for you
Support, training, technical industry updates, trademark use



UKFCG
Forest Certification
Group

Paul Sandys: 07803 619249
Phil Webb: 07970 388940
ukfcg@hotmail.com
forestcertification.org.uk

*Make this
space work
for your
forestry
business*

Call Laura on
**01502
725 866**

unfogable mesh eye protection

www.meshsafetyglasses.co.uk
01254 377 467

FORESTRY & TIMBER

FORESTRY&TIMBER LIMITED

INDEPENDANT ADVICE

Purchasing | Selling | Managing | Investing?

- Woodland
- Round & sawn timber
- Enterprise
- Products

Director Mike Mann provides a one-to-one service:
based on 40 years experience across the industry.

Free initial telephone consultancy

Required now by client: 10,000ft³ good quality homegrown Oak sawlog

Contact: Mike Mann T: 01579 350 096 / 07436 282 700 E: mike.mann@crocodan.co.uk

Motorsport comes to aid of gravel road maintenance

Managers of a 130ha forest in north east Wales faced a conundrum – after three harvesting coupes, two miles of road required re-grading and drain maintenance work. Cost initially exceeded budget, but a novel solution with motorsport helping to bridge the gap was found.

Since COVID-19 lockdown was applied in Wales on 23 March 2020, restrictions on all activities were imposed. National forests and other public places were closed to sports including gravel rallying. The Welsh Government extended restrictions on gatherings and events to private as well as public land, which led to cancellation of rallying, including the 2020 Wales Rally GB. Not only was Wales' world-class sporting event lost, but the £15m that rallying annually contributes to its economy. The governing body Motorsport UK withdrew rally permits until 30 June.

Frustrated, Malcolm Wilson's leading WRC Manufacturer team, M-Sport, responded by co-developing their COVID-safe rally procedures and guidance. These were showcased on 24 August in their Greystoke forest at a 36-mile rally for 45 cars. Welsh forest landowner and rally driver, Richard Ceen competed and, after a chat with Malcolm, met with four local motor club officials to explore whether a viable rally could be run on the 6.2 miles of roads at Coedwig Pencelyn's Gorsedd Bran and neighbouring Pant-y-Maen block

in Denbighshire. The joint clubs' rally organising team proposed four stage layouts of almost four miles, each starting and finishing near a 3500m² disused slate quarry on site as base.

Firebreak lockdown

Welsh Government's Events-Wales Team were consulted but the Welsh Ministers would not authorise the event under a provision for higher attendee numbers. Then local and 'firebreak' lockdown stopped any sports until 9 November. New regulations allowed 30 participant events plus volunteer officials and marshals. Days later, the rally team kicked off with less than four weeks to the 12 December date. Before the vital permit, risk-assessments and specific procedures needed for a normal 130-car National rally, as well as the COVID-safe extras procedures using new contactless timing technology had to be approved. Motorsport UK fast-tracked everything and waived permit fees – essential help when all the costs were met from only 15 entry fees, sponsorship and volunteer support.

To minimise the biggest single cost, venue access, Richard Ceen's Rally4Wales'

motorsport self-repair scheme grader and roller repaired the entire mileage used after the rally, in the same way these machines had maintained NRW rally routes since 2017. Tilhill Forestry's Simon Miller was pleased that the full road maintenance task-list was completed within budget as agreed with his client.

The 'MSL Motorsport Rali Adfer Coedwigoedd Cymru' (Welsh Forest Revival Rally) finally came together the Thursday before, with route signage, barriers and sanitising stations being set up. Spectators were prohibited by the restrictions and had been asked to keep away; difficult for Welsh enthusiasts who had seen no forest action since February. On the day, which was un-seasonally bright and sunny, few actually accessed the site. The 15 cars plus three safety cars completed the eight stages in front of officials and marshals who had volunteered to train in the new COVID-safe procedures as well as observers from NRW, Anglesey Circuit, Motorsport UK etc. Attendees were enthusiastic, looking forward to when motorsport might be allowed to return. Crucially, NHS track and trace confirmed no-one attending later tested COVID positive.

This 30-mile limited number single venue format event offers competitors a lower cost rung on the ladder than National forest events and, going forwards, more than one forest venue in Wales is interested to see how this style of co-operation might be able to benefit both sides.



Evolving The Forest

Reviewed by Adam Cormack, Head of Campaigning, Woodland Trust

If you're reading this, chances are you probably think about trees a lot. If so, this book is a feast for your mind. Taking in forestry, history, art and ecology, *Evolving The Forest* is a book about all sorts of trees, but it's reference point is the centenary of the Forestry Commission. This is a book about the future as much as it is about the past though.

There are 440 pages of contributions from writers, foresters, poets, artists and photographers from around the globe. What unites them is a questioning interest and passion for trees, and the skill to communicate this in a multitude of ways. Highlights for me are Roderick Leslie's tour through the history of the Forestry Commission, Cherie Sampson's artwork inspired by a cottonwood tree and her recovery from cancer, Keith Kirby

asking some big awkward questions about future of the UK's woods and trees, oak gall illustrations of lockdown trees drawn by Petra Regent, Jason Griffiths perspective on the public forest sell-off protests in the Forest of Dean, Robin Walter's tree poetry, Stacey Righton's writing on mulberry trees complete with photos of her berry-bloodied hands. The book is beautifully presented, printed on thick matt paper with hundreds of razor-sharp reproductions of photographs and artwork. It is a joy to hold - and to behold.

Several of the contributions reflect on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. It will be interesting to revisit these in a few years, right now they give the book a deep sense of timeliness and a reminder, if any were needed, about how trees can help us get through this tough time. If the positive and horizon-widening spirit of *Evolving the*



Forest can pervade, then the UK's forests, woods and trees will be better off for it. And so will we all.

Paperback

442 pages with 231 colour illustrations

ISBN: 978-0-9957196-3-7

Price: £27.95

Where to buy it: <https://artdotearth.org/product/evolving-the-forest/>



**MOBILE CHIPPING SERVICES
ACROSS SCOTLAND**

**TOP PRICES PAID FOR STANDING OR
WINDBLOWN TIMBER DIRECT TO YOU**

THINNING & CLEAR FELLING

FREE NO OBLIGATION SURVEY



T: 01307 466699 Steve Watson: 07716 245299

Email: steve@angusbiofuels.co.uk | Unit 1, Eco Park, Forfar DD8 3BS



SMALL WOODLAND OWNER
PROFESSOR JULIAN EVANS OBE FICFor

The unappreciated understorey

In last June's FTN I mentioned in the Woodland Owner piece that on our regular lockdown walk we passed a sycamore dominated wood that displayed a carpet of violets throughout. It was remarkable and we are eagerly looking forward to seeing them again this March. As I write, however, I want to share with you a late autumn joy no less striking than the violets - the abundant fruits of the spindle tree.

The spindle is an inconspicuous shrub rarely managing 20 feet tall and with equally inconspicuous white flowers in May. It thrives on the more chalky and limestone soils of our country where it appears just another member of the woodland understorey, rideside or hedgerow. But all that changes come the autumn. In the picture the leaves are on the turn while the fruits cluster brightly with their pinkish to scarlet four-lobed capsule containing two or three bright orange seeds. We were following a long footpath in early November and rounding a bend were suddenly and unexpectedly arrested by the display. It was a real 'wow' moment.

Why mention this in our Woodland Owner piece? Well I think one joy the owners of small woodlands have in contrast to the Sitka farmers or big estates and landowners, is getting to know their patch really intimately. And if there is a component that is often overlooked or even neglected it is the understorey shrubs which are neither part of the timber crop nor of a flower rich assemblage on the woodland floor

or in a glade. We look up, we look down but perhaps we don't look so much on the level at head height and observe what's right before our eyes - the dogwood, the elder, the thorns, the spindle, even the gorse and broom - you can add your own examples.

Some of these shrubs and small trees have had traditional uses in the past. Dogwood, probably derived from 'dagwood' from which we get 'dagger', and refers to the hard almost horn-like wood once used for butcher's skewers. The spindle tree gets its name because the hard white wood was used for spindles before spinning wheels were invented. It was also turned for knitting needles, pegs, toothpicks and similar small products and even now provides high-quality artist's charcoal.

Today our focus on such shrubs is what they add to woodland structure as we commented in last August's FTN on the basics of enhancing bio-

diversity. The unpleasant smelling flowers of dogwood attract many insects and the colourful fruits of spindle attract wildlife as well as our attention. They and many similar understorey shrubs embellish and enrich our woodlands. You can even entertain 21st children by taking a dogwood leaf and gently pulling it apart along a tear and the veins will remain holding the two pieces together which you can see through like a prison cell window with its bars.

Of course, there are understoreys most woodland owners want rid of from their stands such as rhododendrons in many western oakwoods and elsewhere and the challenge these tough, persistent if colourful, woody exotics from the Himalayas presents. There are, too, understoreys which fulfil a silvicultural role such as helping suppress epicormics by shading oak trunks or providing 'woody growth' to shelter newly planted broadleaves now that 10,000+/ha planting densities of old have long gone other than in natural regeneration. Using woody growth this way does require weeding and cleaning of the planted trees to stop them being swamped and smothered. Some understoreys are managed in their own right such as hazel and mixed coppices, with or without standards, producing many rustic products. They are enjoying something of a resurgence.


In 2021 let's celebrate not only, I hope, the passing of Covid but also the more humble and often overlooked shrubs in our woodlands and forests.

Understorey shrubs embellish and enrich our woodlands



COPPICE.CO.UK

Stephen Cull
BLADEMASTER
"giving you the edge"



- Premium Quality Sawmill Blades for Lumbermate, Wood-Mizer, TimberKing and most makes of mobile sawmill
- Technical Advice
- Blade Sharpening
- Sawmill Training

T: 01348 873179
M: 07887 544333
E: sales@stephencullblademaster.com

buy blades online at www.stephencullblademaster.com



Caledonian Air Surveys Limited
Air survey photography and photogrammetry for forestry and land management



New Horizons Centre, Kintail House, Beechwood Business Park, Inverness IV2 3BW
Tel: 01463 732566
email: info@caledonianairsurveys.co.uk
www.caledonianairsurveys.co.uk



The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

I recently had to value a North Wales woodland. Good access, some nice timber, lovely area, but...

The Good: Money from Paintball Games – approx £5000 pa.

The Bad: The impact of these ‘defences’ on capital value. 20ha covered in such structures.

The Ugly: What a mess, and the bill for cleaning up would go into £000s. Burning not an encouraged option !

Photo and Text: Tim Kirk

Want to see your picture here?

Forestry in Pictures is a regular feature in FTN. For every issue, we 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. 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.

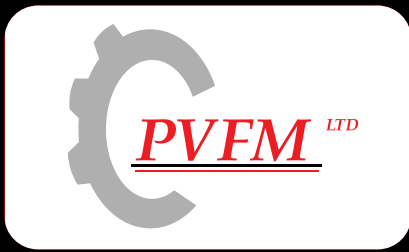
COMING UP IN APRIL 2021 – GET INVOLVED

In April, we will run our annual features on Skills and Career, and on Timber in Construction.

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

Confor members, send us your company’s news updates or pitches for feature articles.

Note that our general editorial deadline for April is 10 March 2021. If you would like to pitch an article idea, please do so by the end of February 2021.



Paul Vidgen

Forest Machines Ltd



Forest Keep, Watersplash Lane, Ascot, Berkshire, SL5 7QP

Tel: 01344 873499 Email: info@pvfm.co.uk Web: www.pvfm.co.uk



Sole UK importers and dealers for; AHWI/Prinoth, Naturatec, Bruks Chippers, Trevi Benne Forestry Attachments, UOT Scarifiers & Mounders, King Kong Carbide Tools

Dealers for; BerCon Log Splitters, FTG Baltic Trailers and Cranes.

JAS P WILSON

FOREST MACHINES

The one stop forestry shop!



Posch AutoLogger 420,
Posch HydroCombi 16 &
Botex 570 Roof Mount

Processing oversized timber into firewood logs

Excavator Attachments and Forestry Guarding



QUALITY MACHINES, QUALITY SUPPORT.

Tractor Based Machinery and Forestry Guarding



www.jaspwilson.co.uk

Tel: 01556 612233 Email: info@jaspwilson.co.uk

