

FORESTRY & TIMBER NEWS

February 2022 Issue 109

IN THIS ISSUE:
FOREST
MANAGEMENT AND
DIVERSIFICATION

Human resources



Maelor
Forest Nurseries



Tilhill

A Unique Partnership

We grow the tree seed,
design the schemes,
plant the saplings,
manage the trees and
sell the carbon units.



CarbonStoreTM

tilhill.com

maelor.co.uk

carbonstoreuk.com

BSWGROUP member of **binderholz** ■

CONTENTS



EXTREME WEATHER

- 6** Storm Arwen - the aftermath

CONFOR NEWS

- 10** What's on the menu for 2022
12 England: year to deliver on plans?
12 2022 outlook for Wales
15 Confor Awards shortlists are out!
17 Jamie Farquhar retires
19 Farewell Stef Kaiser
24 APF 2022 and The Arb Show
25 New members

BIODIVERSITY

- 21** Curlew Action Recovery Plan

MEMBER PROFILE

- 22** A 'frankly' flexible family business



HUMAN RESOURCES

- 26** The fight for talent in a post-pandemic labour market
29 Can you help find a better fit for female PPE?
30 Workforce issues in the forestry sector - a Scottish perspective
33 Setting up and growing an effective, safe and compliant timber business
35 Lone working in winter: increased risks for employers

MARKET REPORT

- 36** New Year and a new dawn
39 Any way the wind blows

FOREST MANAGEMENT AND DIVERSIFICATION

- 40** Creating Tomorrow's Forests
42 Responsive Silviculture: The Future of UK Silviculture
44 Farm Forestry at Scotland's Finest Wood Awards
47 The role of multistrata agroforestry in the UK's agroecological transition
50 UK Eucalyptus silviculture in 2022

FORESTRY & TIMBER NEWS

February 2022 Issue 109



COVER IMAGE
 Finn hard working with the Tomorrow's Forests planting team on a restock site for Forestry England in Ringwood.
Photo: Tomorrow's Forests

MACHINERY

- 53** Forwarders - a market roundup

INSURANCE

- 58** Weathering the storms

NURSERIES

- 60** How alive is your soil?

SMALL WOODLAND OWNER

- 63** Litter and littering

TIMBER TRANSPORT

- 64** Timber Transport project officers - the Facilitators

MOTOR

- 65** Volvo XC90

Tustins

Mike Tustin, John Clegg and Marcus Winnall together have 70+ years of forestry specific experience. Using our knowledge, we are able to provide the most up to date and relevant advice in the business. If you have a forestry or land ownership challenge we are here to help advise you on the best path to optimise your investment whether you are selling, investing new money or just looking for advice on how best to maximise the return.

HOW WE CAN HELP YOU

WOODLAND SALES

Probably the most experienced woodland sales team in the UK. John Clegg, with nearly 40 years experience in forestry agency, has been involved in over 3000 UK woodland transactions. Mike Tustin has over 25 years' experience in the forestry sector with the last years being focused on woodland agency alongside John Clegg.

RICS VALUATIONS

With two highly experienced RICS Registered Valuers in our team we are able to offer a range of valuation services from desktop to full Red Book Valuations. It is important to engage a suitably qualified registered valuer who is experienced in the valuation of forestry and not just land. . We can also assist the client and his/her accountant with forestry tax calculations.

ASSET MANAGEMENT ADVICE

Tustins is uniquely positioned to offer forest owners advice on how best to manage their woodland or forestry asset. With a good working relationship with many forestry advisors we are able to offer an asset management service to look at how small adjustments to management approach and even further capital investment can improve cashflow and overall investment performance. If you are interested in exploring how we could help you with any management issues, please do not hesitate to contact us

TIMBER SALES

Timber values reached their highest level for over 20 years last year and experts are now predicting that we could see further rises in the future. With forest income related to the trees' rotation length, it is important to get the right advice to optimise the value of your timber sales. Mike Tustin has a wealth of experience on how to maximise your timber returns through adjustment of your timing and sales approach.

FORESTRY AND LAND ACQUISITION

With our extensive contacts within the UK Forest Industry we are able to offer a unique and bespoke forestry acquisition service tailored to your individual needs. We have been assisting investors with locating land and forestry assets for many decades. Whether you are an experienced investor or someone who is new to the forestry market we will be happy to discuss how we can help you.

FOREST ASSET OPTIMISATION ADVICE

We have extensive experience in helping people to make the right decisions when it comes to how best to manage their woodlands to maximise the return on their capital. If you are new to woodland ownership or are wondering how to move forward with your investment, please do not hesitate to give us a call to discuss your options. We can help you get the best from your capital invested, either through enhanced valuation, income from other sources or advice on how to best structure your timber harvesting and associated sales.



Mike Tustin
Forestry Investment Specialist



John Clegg
Forestry Expert & Agency Specialist



Marcus Winnall
Forestry Land Acquisition & Sales Advisor

miketustin@tustins.co.uk • johnclegg@tustins.co.uk • marcuswinnall@tustins.co.uk
Unit 2, Park Farm, Akeman Street, Kirtlington, Oxfordshire, OX5 3JQ

01869 254938

www.tustins.co.uk

Victims of our own success



STUART GOODALL
CHIEF EXECUTIVE,
CONFOR

For the sector, I hope that 2022 will bring another year of strong markets. For me, I hope to meet many more Members again in person. Meeting people, gaining an insight into their business and discussing how Confor can help them succeed is both motivating and hugely informative.

We have published our 2022 Business Plan online and there is a brief overview on p10 with a link to the document. Given the breadth of our activities, the hard work of our team, plus the valuable time that many Members give us, we can't capture everything we're doing in an article or even in the Plan itself. That said, throughout the year we will report on progress with the Plan and provide the usual diet of information and news.

Preparing the Plan, I found myself repeating the phrase 'victim of our own success'. By that I mean, as we gain more visibility and influence, as we see more new planting, harvesting and transport of wood, more people with concerns or worries make their views known.

Stepping up our media presence helps alleviate that, but ultimately even the best

resourced sectors struggle to communicate with more than a small proportion of the public at any one time. Therefore, we also need to be ready to respond to stories that appear and to give ourselves the best preparation we can for dealing with people who don't know why we plant to produce wood or cut down trees.

In response to that, 2022 will feature the next stage of our Changing Attitudes campaign and we will prepare more resources to support Members who deal with stakeholders or the wider public.

Setting out the case for planting and managing woodland benefits us all, and can even lay the groundwork for more challenging stories, eg the damage that grey squirrels do to woodland. Though more stories such as this one from the BBC "Squirrel injures 18 people in two days of attacks in Buckley" will always help!

The Plan contains an ambitious range of actions, but the Confor team is determined to keep stepping up its performance year on year, and with your support we are confident that 2022 will be another year where the sector grows.

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:
£65/(£70 overseas)
Contact FTN@confor.org.uk

Forestry and Timber News is published by Countrywide Publications on behalf of Confor.

For advertising, contact
Julia Curtis 01502 725857
julia.curtis@micropress.co.uk
Printed by Micropress Printers Ltd



Stuart Goodall
Chief Executive
T: 0131 240 1416
E: stuartg@confor.org.uk



Andy Leitch
Deputy Chief Executive
M: 07881 510171
E: Andy.leitch@confor.org.uk



Stefanie Kaiser
Communications and editor FTN
M: 07538 918834
E: stefanie.kaiser@confor.org.uk



Eliza Hibbins-Cline
Membership officer
M: 07918 880285
E: eliza@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

STORM ARWEN - THE AFTERMATH

Andy Leitch reflects on the aftermath of Storm Arwen and how the supply chain is collaborating across both the public and private sector to ensure the windblow is dealt with safely and effectively to minimise impact on growers and processors.

On 26/27 November 2021, Storm Arwen caused significant damage and disruption in many communities mainly along the east coast of Scotland and northeast England. Sadly, it even resulted in loss of life. Large numbers of homes were without power and water for many days, with utilities companies, first responders and many from the forest industry working tirelessly together to ensure these services were returned as soon as possible.

Once these issues had been resolved we could focus on the damage to forests and woodlands. The core areas that have been badly affected by the windblow are Aberdeen shire, Angus Glens and Scottish Borders, but also Perthshire, Dumfries,

Northumbria and Cumbria, with some estates reporting catastrophic losses of almost their entire forest holdings setting back generations of forest management.

Collaborative response in forestry and timber sector

Confor immediately engaged with its members and the relevant public sector agencies to assess the extent of the damage to the woodland estate, to bring together the wood supply chain to focus on ensuring that the affected woodlands can be harvested safely, efficiently, and expediently. This has resulted in two regional windblow meetings covering northeast Scotland and south Scotland/north England, comprising of representatives from across the supply chain and public sector agencies with the initial aim to:

- improve information on species, tree-size, proportion of snap and certification.
- share guidance and target clear messages to those outwith the mainstream forestry sector particularly farmers and estate woodland owners.
- encourage co-ordination throughout the sector including liaison with local authorities on scale and intensity of local transport issues.
- develop a national approach if necessary.

The northeast group met before Christmas and the south Scotland/north England group met on the 14 January. There are plans to hold a follow-up meeting on the 27 January to focus on priority issues.



PLANNING THE NEXT STEPS

Growers will be considering significant additional costs associated with restocking, including up righting root plates, repairing drainage systems and boundary fences. They will also be considering cultivation techniques and species choice taking into account site conditions, climate change predictions and any specific strategic goals for the site.

Scientists suggest that extreme weather events, such as Storm Arwen, will increase because of climate change, therefore it is important that foresters take this opportunity to learn lessons from the experience of managing the aftermath of this windblow, and where possible, implement measure to mitigate the impact of such future events.

Read more about future-proofing silviculture on page 52.



ASSESSING AND VALIDATING THE WINDBLOW

Utilising New Technologies for Damage Assessment

Fortunately, windblow of this scale doesn't happen very often; for those of us who have been involved previously will remember how difficult it is to get safe access to assess the scale of damage, even when we had armies of foresters, foremen and forestry squads to mobilise. Instead, we now have access to analysis of remote sensing data carried out by Forest Research which has provided an early estimate of the extent of the damage which can be mapped quickly.

The map is based on a mix of radar and optical satellite data and records the presence of windblow rather than a perfect boundary. The analysis improves with time as more satellite data becomes available and as weather conditions allow, optical imagery enhances the radar data.

The initial map was produced within two weeks of the storm and aimed to pick up on the epicentres of areas of windthrow. The map is being updated and each subsequent version will improve the boundaries



PHOTO CREDIT: DAVID WOODHOUSE

of windthrow and improve confidence.

Damage assessment

The early data presented just before Christmas to the Windblow Action Committee Regional Group for Northeast (and Angus Glens) Scotland suggests estimates of:

- 3500 ha total windthrow in Scotland - c. 902ha on FLS land (25%).
- 1700ha total in England - c. 701ha on FE land (43%).

It should be noted, these estimates are likely to rise and do not include standing volume that will require to be felled to establish windfirm edges.

It is currently estimated there could be 2-3 million cubic metres of timber in these areas which represents around 25% of the annual volume harvested in the UK in recent years and around 17% of the annual availability according to the 2016 production forecast.

Validating the damage assessment

We anticipate these estimates to increase in the coming weeks as Forest Research refines their data, and their maps are verified and updated from responses to the Citizen Science App and further satellite data.

Landowners are encouraged to help refine the map with their own data. This



Windblow Assessment Tool

To find out more use the QR code or visit www.windblow-assessment-forestergis.hub.arcgis.com

website contains the link to download the app along with complete instructions for its use (see QR Code and link above). The App collects several key pieces of information via tick boxes but also allows for unmapped windblown areas to be mapped by the user. It is possible to attach photos and additional comments such as whether the trees are snapped or uprooted. As well as giving us high quality data about

the damage by storm Arwen as the information is validated it allows the algorithm to learn more about windblow imagery so next time the information will be better.

England has access to LIDAR coverage which will provide more detail in due course on species, yield class, volumes and top height; in Scotland this will have to be established through local feedback.

Species breakdown and tree size

The indications are that a significant proportion of the windblow, mainly in the northeast of Scotland, contains species other than spruce, particularly Scots pine and larch. The immediate concern is over the shorter "shelf life" of the pine and how the market will be able to effectively and timeously deal with the windblown material to minimise losses - this is one of the key aims of the Windblow Action Group. Growers are asked to consider prioritising harvesting windblown pine in favour of spruce that is still on the stump as it is known not to deteriorate as quickly.

Initial reports suggest that the majority of the trees affected by the windblow are not surprisingly mature and/or over mature suggesting that there will be a very high percentage of sawlog available, although recovery rates and value will be affected by snap.

>>

HARVESTING AND MARKET CAPACITY

Harvesting Capacity

As mentioned earlier in the article, but worth repeating, the key message here is health and safety to ensure a safe working system. Harvesting windblow takes more time than normal operations therefore output is lower, as is product recovery due to snap and uprooted stems.

It is important where possible to balance harvesting with market demand and to ensure, wherever possible the priority will be pine and snap and spruce is left “on the root” to extend harvesting/processing timescales. It is assumed that some of the windblown volume will substitute existing volume.

The volume is only 25% of the annual cut and mills outwith the supply area need to be supplied continually – harvesters in windblow will produce less thus potentially impacting supply elsewhere!

Initial thoughts from some of the main harvesting companies is they have sufficient harvesting resources to deal with the windblow areas in good time, but that will be clarified only when a more accurate picture of the area to be felled (windblow and



felling to windfirm edge) is formed. It is recognised that there is a need to maintain existing commercial obligations and priorities such as *Phytophthora* fellings.

Scope to use on-site chipping for lower-grade material (and walking-floor trailer haulage) so information on tree size and areas of snap or degraded crops would be useful.

Timber Transport

The relevant timber transport regional groups will have an important part to play in providing a forum for the industry to li-

aise with roads authorities to identify and mitigate where unexpected high densities of timber will be extracted on fragile rural road networks over the coming months.

The haulage resource is relatively fixed in the short term, however there is some scope to increase the use of flatbed (non-crane) trucks using a separate loader in the forest and use of walking floor haulage resource for in-forest chip.

Wood Processing capacity and market conditions

The current market conditions are not particularly favourable with reduced mill production in response to falling demand for some wood products and very high sawnwood stocks. Options to move roundwood and sawnwood to distant markets will be impacted by logistical issues such as difficulty in recruiting haulage drivers. There may be opportunities for the wood energy sector and potentially the roundwood export market. The processing sector are already working closely together to assess, and where possible enhance, their processing capacity over the next few months.

PREPARING SITES FOR HARVESTING

Felling Permissions

Confor has also been working with the public sector, particularly Scottish Forestry, to introduce a fast-track felling permission process (see QR code right) to enable growers to plan for expedient clearance of the windblow in their management. Scottish Forestry and Forestry Commission have both reported they are prioritising resources for this work in the immediate future.

As of 11 January, Scottish Forestry had received 153 Felling Permission applications relating to Storm Arwen. So far 88 have been approved covering 1880 ha with an average turnaround of six days.

In England a Felling License is not required for fallen or snapped trees, but remaining standing trees do require a license and it is often easier to apply for the area as a whole. Forestry Commission has increased staff capacity and there has been

some streamlining of the process. FC are also, on a case by case basis, considering removing the requirement for felling licence applications to be placed on the public register for public notification, depending on the immediacy of the felling licence being required

Woodland owners are encouraged to engage with the Forest authorities as soon as possible if they require a felling permission and/or amendment to long-term plans.

Health and Safety

As has been mentioned in many reports on Storm Arwen, health and safety is a priority; working in and around windblown trees in all circumstances is extremely dangerous and only qualified and experienced operators should be used. FISA have been reiterating this message in their technical bulletins.

Crop information

One of the key steps that can be taken by growers to greatly improve the marketability of their timber is to provide as much details about their crop to potential buyers.

Certification

The processing sector has to maintain a certain level of certified timber in their production to ensure they get access to many of their markets, therefore they will be limited in the amount of uncertified wood that

they will be able to purchase and process in the immediate future, and of course this affects value. However, not all markets require certification, therefore, where appropriate woodland owners are encouraged to seek advice on certification as soon as possible.

Insurance

Some landowners will be engaging with their insurance companies now, Rory Gibson explains more on page 60. The importance of understanding the value of your crop has been highlighted as policies where the insured does not retain the salvage are coming into the spotlight with the potential for the policy holders to lose out significantly. Insurers will not suggest a value to insure against, instead leaving that to the experts, however, the effects of a ‘messy wind’ have highlighted that even modern harvesting techniques and machinery cannot make up for tangled or snapped timber. Additionally, property owners should look at their values on a location-by-location basis taking into account where fallen timber may not be recoverable.



Felling permission process

www.forestry.gov.scot/support-regulations/felling-permissions/felling-permission-for-wind-blow

**STIHL****NEW**

PRECISE CUTS. POWERFUL PRUNING. BATTERY POWERED.

APIII
SYSTEM

**PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE:
THE HTA 135 CORDLESS POLE PRUNER.**

AVAILABLE AT YOUR LOCAL STIHL DEALER. STIHL.CO.UK

The latest additions to the STIHL AP System are our most powerful yet. The HTA 135 telescopic pole pruner is perfect for removing dead wood, pruning branches and for cutting back fruit trees in noise sensitive areas. And thanks to its reinforced telescopic shaft, you'll be able to take on any challenge.

"No matter the height of the job, with the HTA 135 I know I can work safely from the ground and prune with precision in any environment. Plus the quiet motor, low-vibration and light weight of the tool makes it a pleasure to work with."

- Marcel Kickert, horticulturist and landscaper



**TELESCOPIC
SHAFT**



**LONG
SERVICE
LIFE**



**HIGH
POWER
OUTPUT**



What's on the menu for 2022

Our business plan for 2022 is developed with, and signed off by, the Board. The following is a summary of the priorities and key work areas.

Members engagement

Members are at the heart of everything Confor does and in 2022 Confor will review how it communicates with and provides services to Members. This will support improved performance on Member retention and aid with recruitment. I hope the Confor team will have more meetings with Members, including face-to-face visits and events, and I'm really pleased that we now have Eliza Hibbins-Cline on board to support us with that and more.

Carbon

As a low-carbon industry which plants trees that lock up carbon in wood products, the sector has a key role to play in helping governments meet 'net zero' targets. The opportunities and challenges that this throws up have been central to much of Confor's work in recent years. In 2022, Confor will prepare an industry road map for net zero that will help to pull the 'carbon' strands together and inform activity in future years.

Political engagement

Ambitious tree planting targets have become a must have accessory for every political party. On the positive side, this raises the profile of trees and forestry, but it doesn't always translate to trees in the ground and there is always a danger that a narrow focus on planting can distract from wider issues of management, controlling pests and diseases, and wood supply. While Scotland is still taking the lead, Wales is showing signs of a determination to catch up and Northern Ireland is focusing primarily on the public estate.

In England, money is being allocated and civil servants employed, but delivery still appears to ignore productive forestry.

Business plan 2022 priorities

Led by the Board, Confor has identified the following priorities:

- Expand future wood fibre availability
- Promote positive attitudes towards sustainable productive forestry and wood-based products
- Aid the economic development of the industry
- Develop a low-carbon road map
- Grow and promote markets for timber
- Improve Member retention and increase recruitment

There is a growing sense that biodiversity and access boxes will be ticked but decarbonising the economy and rural green jobs will be ignored. The much vaunted 'levelling up' agenda promoted by Boris Johnson doesn't appear to be taking root in the mind of Lord Goldsmith, though that hasn't stopped the Johnsons from vacationing in the peer's Spanish villa. While we can't offer sun, sand and sangria, our new policy and public affairs officer Maria Bellissimo will be working hard to widen and deepen our political contacts in Westminster and the devolved parliament/assemblies and press home the message that trees and timber can play a key role in a green recovery from Covid.

UK Forestry Standard

The review of the UK Forestry Standard in 2022 will be a potentially important process. The UKFS has helped position the forestry and wood processing sector as a sustainable and responsible industry, far ahead of most other sectors in the UK in defining sustainability and measur-

ing it 'on the ground'. Unfortunately, some organisations don't appear to understand what the purpose of the UKFS is and what management against the UKFS already delivers. It's important that any proposed changes are evidence based, relevant and start from a solid understanding of what UKFs already delivers in terms of economic, environmental and social benefits.

Changing Attitudes campaign

I expect media interest in the sector to remain high in 2022 and perhaps even increase, meaning that more than ever we need to 'get our message out there'. We're finalising our latest 'changing attitudes' campaign and developing resources to support Members in local stakeholder engagement.

Industry development

In 2022, Confor will seek to step up work alongside Members on industry development. Industry partnerships with government are developing in England and Wales, in addition to the existing group in Scotland, and this provides real opportunity to tackle issues such as skills and new recruits to the sector, as well as research and innovation. Confor has an internal group on statistics and as with our work on changing attitudes, we'll be looking to resource its future work.

This is only a taster of what the 2022 Business Plan contains. If you would like to know more, do please visit...



Confor business plan To read the full document, use the QR code or visit this page www.confor.org.uk/about-us/this-is-confor

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 covered by Hampton Steel's **30 year guarantee**, with any woven wire fencing pattern. Choose from Class A galvanise **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®

England: will 2022 be the year to deliver on plans?



National manager **Caroline Ayre** reflects on what lies ahead this year for her work on behalf of Confor.

With 2021 behind us I'm approaching 2022 with the usual verve and optimism that you will have come to recognise from me. But, even more so! Although 2021 had its challenges I witnessed our industry continue to show its extraordinary resilience and professionalism to adapt and overcome.

2021 was a 'year of launches' with a flurry of Action Plans and activity that promises 2022 to be a 'year of delivery'. The UK Government committed to plant 30,000ha/year across the UK by 2024 and allocated significant funding (£640m+) to achieve England's share of this target.

There is a good amount of work ahead of us in 2022 in defining and promoting the reason and purposes for establishing and managing productive trees. We still experience the bluster of the anti-conifer lobby's continued use of out-dated misrepresentations. Reasoned information and robust evidence presented on the need for, and multiple benefits of, modern mixed productive forestry, is re-buffed.

Perversely, the forestry minister appears to be more focused on the type of trees that are planted than on achieving the target, and we will have to continue to challenge this institutional issue.

It is disappointing that this puts the focus, temporarily, on the broadleaved resource to lead the way in low-carbon wood production, but with limited quality, extended time horizons and the obstacle of grey squirrels and deer it's clear that policy isn't joined up.

The two words 'information' and 'communication' are often used interchangeably, but they signify quite different things. Information is giving out; communication is getting through. I expect media interest in the sector to remain high and perhaps even increase, meaning that more than ever we need to 'get through'. We're finalising our latest 'Changing Attitudes' campaign and developing resources to support members in local stakeholder engagement. The Forestry Commission has developed a suite of communications to

promote the multiple benefits of woodland and Defra plans to launch a communication campaign early in 2022 to encourage woodland creation on farms.

For now, it will certainly place a drag on efforts to achieve the increases required in England to contribute our share to the 30,000ha target, but we must acknowledge that there is more funding available than ever before.

Looking forward, I expect to see a revised England Woodland Creation Offer this year, and the transition to a post-CAP farming policy will impact on forestry through the three components of the Environmental Land Management Scheme; The Sustainable Farming Incentive, Landscape Recovery and Local Nature Recovery, which have trees and woodland embedded throughout them.

This landmark scheme is a real opportunity to reset the approach to land management in England and deliver benefits for the environment whilst also promoting a sustainable and productive farming sector, that includes timber and fibre alongside food. There is a surprising and potentially misguided trend amongst farmers who see tree planting as 're-wilding', with

2022 outlook for Wales



National manager for Wales **Anthony Geddes** offers his perspective of what to expect this year in the Welsh forestry and wood sector.

As 2021 rolled out the door I remarked to a colleague: "do you think 2022 will be the year that Covid-19 finally gives up? It's been dragging on longer than a briefing update from Rural Payments Wales!

Writing this column has, however, been rather cathartic. Reflecting on how the difficulties of 2021 were often steam rolled by the enthusiasm, professionalism and sheer ability of those working in the industry never fails to impress me. We have

seen countless examples of businesses adapting to meet challenging supply chain demands, whilst keeping employees and customers safe and for many of those business hitting record production volumes. This capacity to adapt and innovate is quite frankly brilliant and an innate quality that we will need to amplify going into 2022.

2021 has been a landmark year for forestry in Wales. The appointment of the Climate Change and Deputy Climate Change

Minister moved forestry significantly up the political agenda. Within weeks of his appointment, Deputy Climate Change Minister Lee Waters, embarked on a Deep Dive into Forestry with the target of fixing Wales's failing performance on tree planting. The government's historically disparate year-to-year commitment to supporting tree planting, was highlighted as a major factor in a lack of industry confidence and tree supply.

As one of the final actions for 2021 the Welsh Government budget was published on the 20 December. Forestry has received a funding commitment of £57million for the next three years. This is in addition to the other spending on biodiversity, natural resources, and plant health. This is the strongest indication we have had in years that our political leaders are listening and delivering what is needed to kick start planting.

Opportunities in 2022

2022 will be as important a year for forestry as any we've experienced since Welsh Devolution. The combination of meeting



little understanding of the alternative income that timber production can bring to their farm accounts. A more joined-up approach, working with the farming unions to promote production per se, could form more of my work in 2022.

As part of the 2021 England Trees Ac-

tion Plan we will work with Defra to take forward work on a Timber Policy Roadmap and an England Forest and Wood-based Industries Leadership Group and Industry Strategy. This provides a real opportunity to tackle issues such as skills and new recruits to the sector, as well as

research and innovation.

I also keenly anticipate the final report of the EFRA committee on Tree Planting and Woodlands this year to which I gave evidence alongside industry colleagues. Teamed with the recent, scathing, review of the Environmental Land Management Scheme co-design process by the House of Commons, Public Accounts Committee, to which we also gave evidence, there is a mounting body of evidence to suggest that Government will have to make some difficult decisions on land use if we are to meet our planting and net zero targets.

There are still obstacles to overcome if we are to meet our targets and allow members to do what they do best, establish, manage and use trees, not least in terms of application approval rates and the introduction of costly new guidance. I remain confident that 2022 will be a good year for forestry precisely because we have such committed members.

I urge you all to keep sharing your experiences and keep in contact. It's important that we share information and tackle the challenges as they arise. In 2022 I hope I'll have more meetings with members, including face-to-face visits and events.

All that remains is to say thank you for your support in 2021, forestry is as much about the passion and people that inhabit our wonderful industry, as the trees we nurture. It makes my job all the more enjoyable. Good luck for 2022. I hope it will be a successful and prosperous one.

Contact caroline@confor.org.uk

the Woodland Creation target for the first time since its creation, and the raft of new schemes and legislation for future planting and grants are opportunities we must capitalise on:

Design of the new forestry grant scheme. Having successfully persuaded Welsh Government to de-linked planning and planting grants, the design of the new scheme is now underway with delivery expected in autumn 2022. The news of a three-year funding settlement is very positive but other private funds are essential to deliver the scale of planting required. We must ensure that innovative funding and new grants can be deployed in sync to accelerate woodland creation.

Delivery of the Timber and Forestry Industrial strategy. We have campaigned for several years to get Ministers to acknowledge the value of the Forestry Industry. Through the development of this Industrial Strategy, we can prime innovation and investment, skills support and delivery and link to other ministerial portfolios to create cohesive policies.

Development of the Sustainable Farm-

ing Scheme and agricultural white paper. The embedded link between farming and forestry whilst obvious to practitioners is still occasionally side-lined within the political environment. Farming and Rural Affairs still reside with Lesley Griffiths MS and to ensure equity for farmers and other land managers it is essential the new farming scheme dovetails with the new forestry scheme.

Reform of the Forestry Act. Following the consultation of the draft agricultural white paper and the recent debate in the Senedd on felling licencing it is certain there will be changes to the Forestry Act for Wales during 2022. It is essential these changes deliver powers that cannot be misused by Natural Resources Wales or malicious other parties as seen in Republic of Ireland during 2020.

There is an essential role for Confor Members in responding to consultations and engaging with their local MSs, MPs and communities. The wakeup call was listening to MSs discussing forestry and red squirrels, not one of them

understood how vital productive forestry was to delivering the building they stood in to make those arguments. We need a louder voice and that is only going to come through engagement. 2022 needs to be the year forestry finds its voice.

I am confident that we are starting to make a real change to the future success of forestry in Wales. There are still sizable hurdles in the form of woodland approval rates, negative coverage about external forestry investors and diminishing production volumes from the Public Estate. There is no quick fix for these either, but there is a desire to turn these failures around. I urge members to keep sharing their experiences, sending me emails and making those phone calls. It's important that we share information and tackle the challenges as they come up.

All that remains is to say thank you for your support in 2021, and good luck for 2022. I hope it will be a successful and prosperous one. I hope to see as many of you as possible at the Royal Welsh Show 2022 if not before.

Contact anthony@confor.org.uk



Invest in natural capital

Create beautiful woodland
Offset carbon
Increase biodiversity
Restore habits
Prioritise sustainability
Achieve biodiversity net gain
Align with SDGs
Engage your client base



Creating Tomorrow's Forests for
wildlife, people and the planet

WWW.CREATINGTOMORROWSFORESTS.CO.UK



KINGWELL

**LEADING SERVICE PROVIDER
IN FORESTRY & VEGETATION
MANAGEMENT, MULCHING
& BIOMASS SOLUTIONS**

- ✓ HARVESTING & BIOMASS
- ✓ ECOLOGICAL SERVICES
- ✓ STUMP REMOVAL ✓ SITE CLEARANCE
- ✓ TREE CLEARANCE ✓ DEEP ROTIVATING
- ✓ DEEP PLOUGH CONTRACTING
- ✓ MACHINERY HIRE

Kingwell Holdings Ltd

HEAD OFFICE

Cordons Farm Depot, Long Green, Cressing,
Braintree, Essex CM77 8DL

✉ enquiries@kingwell-holdings.co.uk

☎ 01376 550989

www.kingwell-holdings.co.uk



The Exeter Retort is available to order.
Produces high quality barbeque
charcoal/biochar in a fraction of the
time taken by traditional ring kilns.

07515 683908

www.carboncompost.co.uk
admin@carboncompost.co.uk

Confor Awards shortlists are out!

Confor dinner and awards is back – with strong shortlists in all categories as the industry prepares to celebrate leaders, communicators and innovators.

The Confor dinner and awards in February 2020 was a hugely enjoyable and positive celebration of all that is good about the forestry and wood sector. Two years later, after an enforced absence in 2021, the awards dinner is back. In addition to the well-established Dedicated Service to Forestry Award, the three new awards handed out for the first time in 2020 return for 2022.

There are very strong shortlists for all three awards - Changing Attitudes (sponsored by Scottish Woodlands), Innovation & Research (sponsored by Forestry &

Land Scotland and Forestry Commission) and Future Forestry Leader (sponsored by James Jones & Sons).

Four entries have been shortlisted in each category as entry numbers were up on 2020, with judges facing a challenging task to whittle down a number of quality entries in each of the three categories.

Stuart Goodall, Chief Executive of Confor, said: "Leadership, innovation and communication are all absolutely vital to the future success of our industry - and I'm very pleased to see the number of entries

is up from 2020 – and to see a really high quality of entries too.

"It's also great to see the variety of businesses shortlisted – from both small and large businesses, from the private and public sectors and from all along the supply chain.

"I really look forward to announcing winners at the dinner on 1 March and celebrating the achievements of our growing industry. We will also unveil the latest hero of our industry who will pick up the prestigious Dedicated Service to Forestry Award."

SHORTLISTED NOMINATIONS

CHANGING ATTITUDES AWARD



Drew Easton
*Learning & Development
Manager at Jas P Wilson*



Laura Jermy
*Harvesting Manager and Timber
Buyer at TG Norman*



Vicky West
*Woodland Carbon Code Manager
at Scottish Forestry*



**Tom Kemp and
Nick Jarvis**
*Working Woodlands
Cornwall CIC*

Judges: David Lee, Public Affairs Cooperative; Ian Robinson, Scottish Woodlands; Stefanie Kaiser, Confor

Other nominated entries

Jez Ralph Timber Design Strategies
Forestry England North Forest District
Lee Waters
Welsh Labour Member of Senedd
Tim Kirk Kirk Valuations
Jamie Farquhar Confor
Peter Topham Savills

INNOVATION & RESEARCH AWARD



Jamie Dewhurst
*Managing Director
at JA Growers*



Eilidh Forster
*Consultant and Bangor University
researcher*



Josh Roberts
*Innovations manager with Forestry
and Land Scotland*



Matt Stevenson
*Founder & Managing Director,
ECOSystems Technologies Limited*

Judges: Jo Ellis*, Forestry and Land Scotland; Ian Tubby, Forestry Commission, Andy Leitch, Confor

*has not participated in shortlisting of Josh Roberts, due to a conflict of interest

Other nominated entries

Matthew Brown and Rafi Cohen
Forest Creation Partners
Neil Stoddart Creel Consulting
Bryan Elliot Eucalyptus Renewables Ltd
Franziska Goeckavitz Tilhill
Daniel Iddon SAF Woodland Management
Prof. Jo Bradwell Norbury Park
Brian Keen B W Keen Forestry

FUTURE FORESTRY LEADER AWARD



Michael Cresswell
*Forest Operations Team Leader
at Natural Resources Wales*



Alexander Lambton
*Mill Manager for James Jones
& Sons at Lockerbie*



Shona Smyth
*Forest Manager
at Pryor & Rickett*



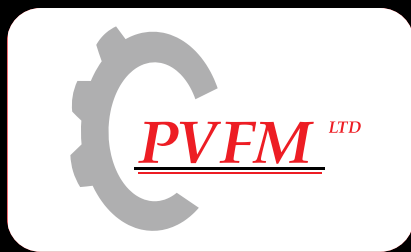
Mike Yerbury
Director, EGGER Forestry

Judges: Stuart Goodall, Confor; Shireen Chambers, ICF; David Leslie, James Jones and Sons*

*withdrawn from panel due to conflict of interest

Other nominated entries

Andy Maclachlan Scottish Woodlands
Tom Croy Par Equity
Cora Pfarre Forestry Commission
Sam Brown Tilhill
Sam Bristow Tilhill
Ben Crisford Tilhill
Luke Hemmings (ex) Forestry Commission



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.**

The end of an era

Confor's National manager for Scotland, Jamie Farquhar, retires after 19 years of promoting the benefits of trees and forests. **Stuart Goodall** reports

In March, Jamie Farquhar will retire after a career in land management, forestry and timber that spans six decades. When Jamie completed his service as a commissioned officer in The Black Watch in 1973, he was employed by Smiths Gore, Chartered Surveyors until joining the Forestry and Timber Association as Director for Scotland in April 2002. In 2006 the role transferred to the successor organisation, Confor and Jamie has continued representing the sector in Scotland to this day.

When it began to filter out that Jamie may actually contemplate a life after talking trees and timber, many people got in touch to say how much they have valued his many years of service. For 19 years he has been explaining and promoting the benefits of forests and trees to everyone who will listen in multiple ways. Jamie presents to organisations and audiences across Scotland, drafts and consults the industry on numerous government consultations, writes updates and articles for the trade and public publications and often provides the links between forestry and other sectors and rural industries.



cessing sector Jamie has been instrumental in working with government to help develop a practical and effective regulatory and policy framework that has seen the sector flourish and grow delivering multiple benefits for the economy, society and the environment.

Over the years, Jamie has represented the voice of forest-

the variously changing forestry grants regime, and the many stakeholder groups engaging with government agencies.

In his role, Jamie has been the conduit to Government and has secured the respect of successive Ministers with his knowledge and passion for the industry. Jamie is always thoroughly informed, both of the views of the people and businesses he represents and the detail of policy and the wider context within which he is working. His contributions are always practical and constructive, his explanations well-argued and concise. He is often working in groups with people who far less experienced in these matters and he takes the time to work with others developing their understanding of the world of Scottish forestry so that good decisions are made.

Jamie has worked, most recently with the Scottish Forestry and Timber Technologies Industry Leadership Group, to prepare and deliver biannual regional events that always

draw in numerous forestry and timber folk from across rural Scotland for informative and enjoyable talks and events. Jamie is there explaining what is important for them to know and how they can engage to influence and develop the industry.

Underneath it all Jamie is a modest, unassuming man, always working for the benefit of others. He does not put himself forward for recognition or position, which makes the following small selection of praise that people have sent to me all the more poignant.

James Hepburne Scott former Scottish chair said "His dedication to this role has been immense from the start. He would travel to meetings all over Scotland, often in the worst weather, to make sure he really got to know and understand all the different elements and principal people in the forestry and timber sector. I can honestly say I have never met anyone who worked harder to master a new role".

Norman O'Neill MD at RTS Forestry added, "Jamie has perfected the art of combining the delivery of important industry facts and figures with a determined and dogged commitment to getting the issues resolved. In so doing he has the ability to target the right message at the right audience, and not take no for the answer!".

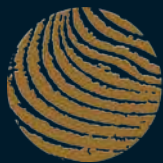
Jamie's role has also been recognised by the public sector. Dave Signorini, Chief Executive of Scottish Forestry reflected "That the Scottish forestry industry is in such a strong position, and with a bright future, is on no small part due to Jamie's contribution".

I, we will be sorry to see Jamie go, but at least he has the time now to spend with his wife Pauline, their three daughters and burgeoning collection of grandchildren. He leaves with our best wishes and our deepest thanks and gratitude.

"JAMIE HAS BEEN CENTRAL TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF FORESTRY AND FOREST POLICY IN SCOTLAND FOR TWO DECADES, A PERIOD THAT HAS SEEN A LARGE INCREASE IN THE ROLE OF PRIVATE FORESTRY, NOT LEAST IN WOOD PRODUCTION."

Jamie has been central to the development of forestry and forest policy in Scotland for two decades, a period that has seen a large increase in the role of private forestry, not least in wood production. As the representative of the private forestry and wood pro-

ry on almost all of the various groups that have helped shape the industry deom national strategy forums to timber transport groups. Jamie's voice is well known (and often heard) on the Customer Representatives Group which provides feedback to government on



LANDFOR
CHARTERED LAND & FORESTRY AGENCY

Land & Forestry Marketing Specialist

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

For further information and to sign up, please visit
www.landfor.co.uk



Superior planting stock for commercial forestry.
Specialist grower of northern UK and Scottish seed zone
provenances to suit all planting requirements

We are situated in the beautiful county of Northumberland and supply around 15 million bareroot conifer and broadleaf trees per year to a wide customer base. A Plant Healthy accredited grower of major native timber and woodland species including improved Sitka Spruce. Trees can be pre-treated against Pine Weevil if required.

Our team have over 200 collective years experience in growing and nursery production as well as a firm understanding of the forestry industry. Our cold storage facilities ensure our trees are stored at the optimum temperature until you need them. Please get in touch today. No query is too big or small.

TreesPlease Ltd, Dilston Haugh Farm, Corbridge,
Northumberland NE45 5QY 01434 633049
sales@treesplease.co.uk www.treesplease.co.uk



Plant
Healthy

PHCS - 0017 - UK



We're here for the Next Chapter

For over 50 years, John Clegg & Co has been the leading UK forestry and woodland adviser.

Specialising in:

- Forest sales
- Acquisitions
- Valuations

How can we help you?

JOHN CLEGG & CO
Forestry | Investment | Sales | Management

Part of



Simon Hart - Sales and Valuations
07788 763055
simon.hart@johnclegg.co.uk

Harry Graham - Sales
07787 221422
harry.graham@johnclegg.co.uk
johnclegg.co.uk

Farewell Stef

After over eight years of working with Confor members to promote the sector, it is time for Confor Communications Manager and FTN Editor **Stef Kaiser** to move on.

It was September 2013, when I got offered the job as Confor's communications manager and FTN editor. It was a part-time role and my appointment came as a surprise. At the time, I had completed my Msc in Environment and Development and had just finalised a longer contract with an impact investing start-up, sourcing carbon forestry projects and developing green due diligence screenings. I hadn't been looking for a job in communications but was thrilled to work in forestry! As a communicative person, I counted myself extremely lucky to enter a job where I could engage with an entire sector – a sector characterised by its passionate and down-to-earth people.

After learning the trade of editing and curating a magazine, I got excited about the possibilities of modernising the publication and making it stand out among its fellow trade publications. Coming from outside of the sector – and the country – I wanted to get my teeth stuck into my mission of modernise the look-and-feel of the forestry and timber brand in the UK.

In 2017, together with the designers at Countrywide Publications, we rebranded FTN (*see below*). It has been a pleasure to work with Simon Tooth and Mark Shreeve for over eight years – I will miss them dearly.

Another key moment of the early days that comes to mind is my first Confor Woodland Show in 2013; I was only a few weeks into the job and it was a truly immersive experience! I still remember the welcoming attitude of the people I met that week and the warmth and passion they radiated.

Over the few last years, communicating a positive and contemporary image of the forestry and timber sector has become an increasingly important part of my role. "Changing Attitudes" involves both branding and messaging. The right brand aims to elicit a positive emotional response and first impression, making audiences receptive to the messages we want to communicate. I enjoyed working with media production companies Heehaw and Cravens to produce our sector video in 2017 and our 'Animating Forestry' animation in 2018. Since then, sector branding has been part of my thinking when working across Confor's different communications platforms. Or simply when talking to friends and strangers in the pub.

I am happy to have had the chance to



FTN Covers 2017-21

Use the QR code or visit www.confor.org.uk/news/ftn-magazine/ftn-covers-2017-2021/ to watch our slide show.



project manage the design of a Changing Attitudes media engagement strategy for 2022 before my departure. It has been very enriching and insightful to work with consultants David Glaze and Susan Brownlow on this.

The Confor dinner on 1 March will be my last day working for Confor – an excellent opportunity for a last catch-up with cherished Members. From March onwards, I will be working for Naturemetrics – a company offering eDNA-based biodiversity monitoring and assessments. This is a great opportunity for me to continue working with the forestry sector and the people in my network, whilst recovering my long-forgotten background in ecology and genetics. Naturemetrics will be a member of Confor, so I will remain in touch – now taking on a member's perspective!



Please stay in touch.
www.linkedin.com/in/stefaniekaiser/



What next for FTN?

FTN will continue to be published to the same high quality.

Contact FTN@confor.org.uk



How Stef should be remembered

Communication, Communication, Communication

My idea of a Changing Attitudes workstream really took off when Stef joined our team and combined an over-haul of FTN with the preparation of new industry messaging.

Messaging and branding unites us a sector and is the basis of what we communicate, and communication will only become more and more important, both at a local and a national level.

Stef and I have worked together for over eight years, and I have huge respect for how she has transformed our magazine and brought her eye for detail to our visual communication. We are stepping up our communication this year, both to Members and externally, and while Stef won't be part of that exciting next step I'm really glad that she will have the opportunity to take on a new challenge going back to her roots. Stef departs with my thanks and the best wishes of everyone in the Confor team. You will be a hard (balancing) to follow...



British Hardwood
TREE NURSERY



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

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 Orligno 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



Mounted Cranes



**BOOK A
DEMO
TODAY!**

AVAILABLE
NATIONWIDE

Timber Trailers

SPECIALISTS IN ROBUST, INDUSTRY LEADING, USER-FRIENDLY MATERIAL HANDLING SOLUTIONS.

Chandlers

**Farm
Equipment**

www.chandlers.co.uk

FOR MORE INFO CONTACT SIMON RUDYARD ON 07585 118136
OR EMAIL simon.rudyard@chandlersfe.co.uk

Curlew Action Recovery Plan

During Wales Climate Week, Climate Change Minister Julie James MS announced that she was launching a Wales Action Plan for the Recovery of Curlew.

The action plan proposes some significant and wide-ranging policies on land use and area protections including creating 10 Important Curlew Areas (ICA's). Few of these areas are of interest for larger scale woodland creation however, they include all of Montgomeryshire and, overall, about 10% of the potentially plantable land in Wales.

The key phrase relating to forestry is: "Review land management sensitivity maps in Wales and adopt the principle that future sites for forest expansion and renewable energy should avoid areas that hold >5 pairs."

The group responsible for the plan Curlew Wales have unfortunately failed to seek engagement with Confor, the ICF or the RFS whilst gaining support from the NFU for what they describe as sustainable land management or high nature value farming.

Confor has written to both the Curlew Wales group and the Climate Change Minister for clarity on stakeholder consultation and how they propose afforestation can be delivered in Wales with any of the productive elements that are so strongly desirable for Wales Zero Carbon homes, Decarbonisation and other environmental benefits.



In a response from the Welsh Government, civil servants state: "The plan doesn't introduce any new restrictions on where new trees can be planted but highlights specific actions that will benefit a whole range of habitats and species including Curlew. It does raise the risk of new tree

planting in relation to potential loss of habitats suitable for Curlew and the associated risks with increased predation through inappropriate tree planting however these are factors which should already be considered in any new tree planting on or near to Curlew breeding sites."

National manager Anthony Geddes has responded by highlighting the Action Plans statements on ICA's say they are areas where forest expansion should be avoided, and that they are proposed to cover very significant areas of Wales (>10%) that are also key in terms of the production of timber for decarbonisation. The public message that comes out of the plan is don't plant trees here.

Whilst there may be unpublished details that nuance this, there has been no engagement with foresters, forestry or the potential opportunities for developing other more impactful programs such as managing predators within the UKFS and UKWAS. Curlew Wales are yet to respond to all requests to engage with us. This is a lost opportunity and one that isn't making planting any easier in the face of huge targets.

Contact anthony@confor.org.uk

Senedd Red Squirrel Debate

Following a successful petition launched by Dr Craig Shuttleworth of Bangor University, the Senedd held a debate in early December to discuss the introduction of new laws to amend the Forestry Act 1967.

The debate sought that habitat loss be included in the consideration of felling licences, and that state-owned forests, which don't require a licence, should have to annually assess the cumulative impact of felling on the red squirrel population. This is a change that has already been seen in Scottish legislation.

The proposal to amend the Forestry Act has been on the Welsh Government agenda since the introduction of the draft Agricultural White Paper in 2020. As a result, it is unsurprising that the briefing documentation and recommendations that Red Squirrel protection and illegal felling control

could be dealt with by other means has been broadly ignored.

Confor, the ICF and other land-based organisations have already been invited to engage with the consultation for these amendments to the Forestry Act and that process will start early in the New Year. We made strong representations within the consultation for the draft agricultural white paper in 2020 and will seek to build on these to ensure that any changes are proportionate and reasonable for the outcomes being sought by Welsh Government and other NGOs.

Whilst Confor supports the evolution and development of appropriate legislation to support positive environmental, ecological and habitat outcomes through good forestry management practices. We have highlighted to the Climate Change Minister the need for a licencing system that supports land managers to improve their management interventions and programming, especially in a volatile timber market.

Of greater concern is the level of misunderstanding and detachment that the role of professional forestry management plays in improving biodiversity and habitat creation throughout Wales. With the ap-

pointment of Maria Bellissimo as Confor's new Policy Officer, we will be working with members to engage local MSs and MPs throughout 2022. The aim is to help them understand the importance of the forest industry, and why, if we are to succeed in meeting housing, decarbonisation, ecological & habitat demands as well as timber requirements we need support across the Senedd.





A 'FRANKLY' FLEXIBLE FAMILY BUSINESS

At Ridings Sawmills, sisters Lindsay McKechnie and Amanda Bradley are committed to keeping their father's legacy alive – while adding their own touch of leadership in line with the modern *zeitgeist*.

Stef Kaiser visits them on the Scottish West Coast.

Ridings Sawmills, based in the coastal village of Cardross, almost touches the water when the tide is high. Annually bringing in around 70,000 tonnes of softwood logs from West Argyll and Cowal forest districts, the mill aims to cut around 6000 tonnes per month, sometimes more, with an average production of 4000m³ per month. The products range from fencing products and slats for garden sheds, to ungraded carcassing, aris rails, pallet boards, blocks and bearers. Co-products (woodchips; bark; shavings; sawdust) go into chipboard manufacture and biomass.

Since Frank Riding – the 'heart and the soul' of the sawmill – passed away in 2018, daughters Amanda and Lindsay have been running the family business as man-

aging directors.

An evolving family business

Amanda and Lindsay were born in Wigan, Lancashire, where their grandfather, Fred Riding, had been running a sawmill since the 1950s, specialising on pit props for the coal industry. Their father Frank and his brother Alfred worked at the mill. After a windblow incident in the North, Fred capitalised on an opportunity to invest in the Cardross mill, taking over fully in 1976. After the decline of the mining industry, Frank and his family moved to Scotland in 1981 when the Cardross Mill became the sole focus.

From the onset, Frank poured his heart and soul into building and modernising the new sawmill. The business initially continued catering for the mining sec-

tor, however, having learned the lesson in Wigan, diversification became a strategic priority.

Relentlessly, Frank continued modernising the mill and striving for efficiency until his untimely death in 2018. He was very hands-on both with machinery and in building relationships with staff, customers and suppliers.

The late Frank Riding is still at the very core of Ridings Sawmills. The new directors Amanda and Lindsay are surely adding their own, progressive touch to the business, but the original spirit and direction of the family remains unaltered.

What matters is people

After Frank's passing, Lindsay was already a company director and decided to take the lead in the business. Amanda was

working as a HR Business Partner at Scottish Power but decided to leave her HR career and join Lindsay to run the family business.

Ridings Sawmills is more than a family business. Many staff members have grown up with the business and have, the same as Amanda and Lindsay, 'inherited' Frank's passion and devotion for the company mission. "We are not the most modern sawmill out there, it is remaining a true family business that takes care of our machinery and our people that matters most to us", explains Amanda.

As an HR professional, Amanda has brought a different perspective on recruitment and staff development. "To increase efficiency, a business must focus not only on optimising machines and processes, but also on allowing staff to reach their potential." A satisfied workforce can greatly contribute to the progress and resilience of a business. Staff will not only give their time but their discretionary effort and contribute their ideas freely.

Lindsay remembers that in her childhood days, a sawmill was a workplace for men. But times have changed. Later in life, their father Frank surrounded himself with strong women both at and outwith work. He liked to surround himself with people who challenged and pushed him – and females entering a male dominated sector are likely to display this personality trait, as they have to be very motivated and strong minded to pursue their chosen career.

"TO US, THIS BUSINESS IS OUR FATHER'S LEGACY AND OUR MISSION IS TO CARRY IT ON FOR HIM. FRANK LIVES ON IN EVERY ASPECT OF THE FAMILY BUSINESS, IN THE MACHINES, AND IN THE PEOPLE."

LINDSAY MCKECHNIE

Gender assignment of roles feels alien to Amanda and Lindsay; it is also something that doesn't exist in the private lives of the two directors. And it is a culture the women bring into the workplace. "We don't allow anybody to assume that a role is either female or male, it never occurs to us to categorise a role in that way. It is just not the way we were brought up. We see this as a strength."

Flexibility is part of the family brand

Another strength of the Ridings business is their flexibility. It is a trait that goes right back to the time when Frank moved the family to Scotland. "We were like – 'what is Scotland?'," Amanda remembers the extreme example of the family's resilience when dealing with sudden change.

Amanda and Lindsay laugh when

being asked if they are not afraid of change. "No, not at all", they say in unison. "And we are not rigid in the way we do things. For example, we actively try not to fill our order book too far ahead so we can respond to sudden change in customer demand."

"We are very flexible in the way we do our business. As a true family-business, we are accountable only to ourselves and we are the perfect size for fast-tracking decision-making. This is an advantage we never want to lose – it helps us with our pricing and purchasing strategy and our customer relations. We can very swiftly react to sudden market changes", Amanda explains.

The Ridings log yard looks full but stores less than a month's worth of supply. Their turnaround is very quick. "It means we can quickly turn around an order for a customer, or we can buy standing timber and get it processed without any delays, which can avoid issues such as the much-feared dry-out on roadside".

The mill is also flexible when it comes to tree sizes. "We can currently process 16 different diameter classes ranging from 550 to 140mm. That gives us the flexibility we value so much, which is important when it comes to getting the most out of a tree, in particular when we buy standing timber", says Lindsay.

Moving forward, the main focus is on investment. "Our Dad's ethos was to look after the machinery, he got the most out of every part of the mill. We are continuing this legacy whilst also focussing equally on the people."



Above: Despite being a small business, the mill runs its own saw shop, staffed by a full-time saw doctor and two staff both trained in-house.

Right: In 2016 Ridings Sawmills was the first mill in the UK to use a portal crane to service both their log yard and mill.



APF 2022 and The Arb Show

APF 2022 is delighted to announce that we are teaming up with The Arb Show to stage the largest forestry and Arb show ever held in the UK at Ragley Estate, 22-24 September 2022.

The two largest arboricultural shows in the UK are joining forces to deliver one incredible event over the three day show. All the usual features of each show will come together to provide the ultimate one-stop shop for the forestry, arboricultural, woodland and fencing industries.

Arb Show favourites such as the UK Open Tree Climbing championships will be featured with lots of new and exciting competitions for all abilities.

One of the highlights will be a brand new Arb Worker Zone. This will be a key interactive area giving arborists the chance to see demos of new climbing equipment and techniques, a technical area to learn direct from the manufacturer about equipment maintenance and repair and the very popular Arborist's workshop with a daily timetable of topical subjects given by industry experts.

All this will be in addition to the World 25m pole climbing competition, the European Chainsaw Carving Championships, woodland crafts area, the British Open Fencing championships, the Fencing Village, 320 exhibitors, 2½ miles and over

£60 million pounds of working machinery on show.

APF Exhibition Secretary Ian Millward said "We're thrilled to announce this new partnership; we're excited to have the AA on board and are committed to making this a fantastic industry event. The Arboricultural Association is one of the leading organisations in the Arb world, so we are pleased to have this opportunity to build a stronger partnership and see it as part of the natural evolution of the APF Exhibition. Exhibitors will now benefit by have a very targeted audience at one venue"

Arboricultural Association CEO John Parker echoed those sentiments "this is fantastic news for arborists. ARB Show has been a highlight of the event calendar for more than twenty years, and after two years of virtual events we are delighted to be able to announce this collaboration with APF 2022, bringing the show to a greater audience than ever before. Attendees and exhibitors will benefit from this change and we feel certain that the whole arboricultural profession will be out in force to celebrate the return of ARB Show in 2022."

APF SHOW

The biannual APF exhibition, a subsidiary of Confor, is the leading exhibition for the forestry, woodland, arboriculture, wood fuel and utility sectors in the UK. It is returning to Ragley Estate after being staged there in 2004, 2006, 2012, 2014, 2016 and 2018. Over 320 Exhibitors and 22 000 visitors are expected over the three days of the show. 90% of visitors are trade professionals working in the industry.

APF 2022 and The Arb Show is going to be an unmissable event. Stay tuned to get show updates and learn more about Confor's present at the event over the next issues of Forestry and Timber News.

You can book your place as an exhibitor or visitor right now at <https://www.apfexhibition.co.uk/>



22-24
September,
Ragley
Estate



APF 2022 EVENTS AND COMPETITIONS

- The Husqvarna World 25m Pole Climbing Championships
- The Tilhill Forestry and A W Jenkinson European Chainsaw Carving Competition
- UK Forwarder Driving Competition sponsored by Komatsu
- Horse Logging
- Bio Security, Bio energy, wood fuel and tree health seminars
- Seminars and advice on forestry education, training and careers
- The Forest Worker Zone with drop-in sessions on subjects affecting the forest worker
- The Arb Worker Zone with daily drop-in sessions and demonstrations of the latest equipment, techniques and safety issues
- The UK Open Tree Climbing competition
- On site training courses
- The Fencing Village
- The UK Open Fencing Championships
- Extensive traditional woodland crafts area with many have-a-go opportunities
- The World 'Log to leg' pole lathe turning championships

NEW MEMBERS

A big welcome to our newest Confor members: **Edinburgh University; Tustins Group Ltd; A Holman-Baird; Kath McNulty; Capricorn Eco Timber; Jo George; Robert Grant; George Milne and Dr Liz Barron-Majerik.**



Confor membership officer

Eliza Hibbins-Cline

E: eliza@confor.org.uk

T: 07918880285

Timber Transport Forum Conference 25 March 2022

The Timber Transport Forum conference will be held on the 25th of March 2022. There will be a range of presentations and a buffet lunch, and an optional three-course dinner the evening before. Free attendance to the conference and evening dinner is available to a limited number of timber hauliers (one per company). Book now to avoid disappointment!

The event will be held at the Northern Lakes Hotel and Spa, Penrith, CA11 8QT. To reserve a ticket and for information on accommodation, contact Timber Transport Forum Project Officer Paul Boobyer paul.boobyer@confor.org.uk 07918 875 229.

Conference attendance £100

Conference and evening dinner £130

Prices include VAT.

The conference is proudly sponsored by Volvo Trucks UK.



TIMBER TRANSPORT CONFERENCE 2022

24th and 25th March 2022 at North Lakes Hotel & Spa, Penrith

Presentations will include these topics:

- Decarbonisation and Innovation
- Effective Consultation
- Forest Road Infrastructure/ Low Ground Pressure
- Road Haulage Association update
- Great Northumberland Forest
- STTS update

TO RESERVE A TICKET CONTACT:

Paul Boobyer, Timber Transport Forum Project Officer

E: paul.boobyer@confor.org.uk T: 07918 875 229

TimberTransportForum

delivering solutions for a growing UK harvest



Volvo Trucks. Driving Progress

The fight for talent in a post-pandemic labour market



Forestry recruitment specialist **Katy Davies** (Agrecruiting Staff) looks at recent trends in the labour market – and what it means for both employers and those looking to enter our sector.

The skills and labour shortage in the UK has dominated the headlines recently and some industries are seeing higher rates of resignation than others – leisure and hospitality, retail and healthcare being among the most affected.

Is the sector losing talent to the 'Great Resignation'?

The Forestry and Land sectors were not immune to some of those statistics with some mid-level management professionals leaving the sector for several reasons including moving abroad, early retirement, and a desire to prioritise spending more time with loved ones.

Further reasons for leaving the employment workforce include self-employment, with the benefits of being able to have the flexibility that self-employment often brings whilst staying within an industry they are familiar, with additional government funding and specialist business support having been made available for start-up businesses in 2021 some employees took the risk after a shift in priorities during the pandemic.

FIGHT OVER TALENT IN LATE 2021

The current difficulties facing the sectors were also a well-documented topic in 2021 with October, November and December seeing the most jobs advertised than at the same time in previous years and vacancies remaining open for considerably longer periods of time than usual.

What is driving the skills shortage?

Skills shortages within the Forestry and Land sectors have been attributed to several factors including its continued and rapid growth. Last year saw a large increase of new roles being created within the Forestry and Land sectors to keep up with demand throughout the industry including ecologists, tree Officers, tree nursery managers, science research and developers, carbon advisors and forestry investment advisors.

In addition to the newly created roles, Ash dieback, HS2, storm damage and diversification opportunities including tree nurseries opened for landowners all requiring skilled candidates from throughout the sector.

Shift in attitude towards work-life balance

The COVID-19 pandemic has created an unusual and unpredictable movement within the jobs market with employees now reporting to want to spend more time with family and loved ones.

At the height of the pandemic in April 2021 a shift in attitude towards work saw more Forestry and Land professionals keen to move to businesses that aligned better with their new priorities with some taking salary cuts in order to obtain a healthier work life balance.

Some businesses were quick to adapt and change to meet the demands of candidates with some companies offering continued or permanent working from home contracts, additional holiday entitlement and flexible working hours, with some businesses opening satellite offices in order to

“LAST YEAR SAW A LARGE INCREASE OF NEW ROLES BEING CREATED WITHIN THE FORESTRY AND LAND SECTORS TO KEEP UP WITH DEMAND THROUGHOUT THE INDUSTRY.”

attract and retain the best candidates in the sector. A recent study showed that 89% of organisations are now offering flexible working arrangements. That compares to 58% before March 2020.

Throughout the pandemic, some companies quickly adapted the recruitment process and Teams interviews and online applications became the norm, allowing those businesses to continue to successfully recruit throughout the stay local restrictions had a positive impact on business development.

However, as the Covid restrictions continued to ease in the last quarter of 2021 attitudes once again shifted and returned to the pre-pandemic mindset with salary and location now becoming a top priority for 80% of candidates within the Forestry and Land sectors.

High demand for talent sees salaries soar

A gap between the high demand for skilled workers and the supply of those actively searching for work has created a fierce competition for candidates within the Forestry and Land sectors with some salaries increasing by up to 35% within middle and senior management levels.

A shortage of skilled workers has led to some companies offering contract bonuses and additional benefits in order to secure highly skilled candidates.

These wage increases are driven by a need to respond to the current market with recruitment and retention challeng-





“IT IS LIKELY THAT THE SKILL AND LABOUR SHORTAGES WILL DRIVE THE INCREASE IN WAGES ACROSS ALL LEVELS AND DISCIPLINES THROUGHOUT 2022.”

es forcing a higher wage, however, some businesses are unlikely to respond to such wage increases choosing to focus on company culture, support, development, and training, allowing employees the opportunity to grow within the organisation and providing long term job security. These companies are typically focusing on long term achievements over immediate salary increases.

Reducing recruitment cost for businesses

Significant candidate movements have considerable cost implications for businesses, with potential expenditure up to

“A HEALTHY WORK LIFE BALANCE AND POSITIVE COMPANY CULTURE WAS AT THE TOP OF THE LIST OF RECRUITMENT REQUIREMENTS OVER SALARIES IN 90% OF PLACEMENTS.”
(AGRECRUITING STAFF STUDY, AUGUST 2021)

£18,000 for management level hires including recruitment, onboarding, and cost of time. Implementing retention tools and working with employees to better understand company culture can drastically reduce these costs with some companies now offering external focus groups to understand the priorities of their current employees and increase retention and productivity.

Feedback from registered candidates of Agrecruiting Staff in 2021 show that internal recruitment processes within the Forestry and Land sector need to continue to improve with some candidates stating that a more efficient recruitment process would encourage them to be open to new roles, with some recruitment processes taking up to 4 months to complete and requiring as many as 5 assessments and interviews.

Additional feedback from candidates show that well-structured onboarding, mentor support and retention programmes were a top priority for them when moving to a new company.

Forestry sector sparking interest of career movers

With the current spotlight on the forestry, land and environmental sectors and with climate change at the forefront of the public's minds highlighted by events such as COP26 this has caused an influx of career

movers interested in working in the forestry and land-based sectors further proving that priorities have changed within all sectors. Enquiries to Agrecruiting Staff from those interested in a career move into land-based industry increased by 20% in mid to late 2021 with enquiries coming from a diverse background including engineering, oil and gas, military and finance.

As the Forestry and Land sectors continue to grow, we look at ways to promote the industry to the next generation, the launch of the Forestry STEM ambassadors program supported by Lantra which equips professionals from the Forestry and Land industry to take on the challenge of introducing the wide-ranging roles available within the sectors to school age children has received some fantastic feedback.

From companies offering Forester shadow days to university students who have had limited field experience due to the COVID pandemic to Haulage Academy days collaboratively developed with a wide range of individuals from the Forestry sector shows the dedication of everybody involved within the industry who are ready to help support and guide the future passionate professionals.



SAMPO ROSENLEW



Sampo Rosenlew continue to develop the range with the new FR68 Forwarder. Powered by AGCO power 74AWF 280 HP engine, hydrostatic transmission, heavy duty NAF axles and 26.5 inch wheels. This new forwarder also has a rotating cab to improve visibility and operator comfort.

New and used machines available with short lead time and exceptional back up service throughout UK and Ireland

+4428 3833 0011 +353 1969 7894

www.oakleafforestry.com

35a Derryall Road, Derryvane, Portadown
Co. Armagh BT62 1PL

Oakleaf
FORESTRY.COM



SAMPO ROSENLEW



Can you help find a better fit for female PPE?

Forestry England highlights the need for suitable personal protective equipment (PPE) and welfare units for female and non-binary workers.

In 2019, the Forestry Commission, including Forestry England, began a 'Women in Forestry' programme to make positive changes for women in our workplaces. A series of focus groups and surveys were carried out over the course of a few months and one common piece of feedback received from the colleagues who took part was a feeling that there was a real lack of suitable, well-fitting and appropriate PPE and welfare facilities for women working in the forestry industry.

One action resulting from the internal programme's work at the time was to improve access to PPE and welfare facilities. Now, a group from across Forestry England have begun to work together to look at how we can encourage the wider industry to improve female-fit PPE, including that specifically for chainsaw use.

Forestry England survey on PPE

The first stages of this work have completed with an internal survey of PPE wearers allowing Forestry England to take stock of the current need, determine how broad the issue is and get more views and opinions of predominantly female, but also other wearers, of PPE. The survey was open to all those who feel that clothing fit has been an issue for them in the past and recognised that more inclusive PPE could benefit other groups such as trans women, trans men and non-binary people.

- 57% of respondents have encountered difficulties in accessing PPE which fits their body shape properly
- Only 50% felt their current chainsaw-specific PPE and only 55% of wearers of other PPE felt the items fit 'quite well' or 'very well'
- Sizing of chainsaw trousers were highlighted as a particular issue for female wearers – with waist sizes and leg lengths not being appropriate for many
- Many struggle to find appropriate boots and gloves in the smallest sizes
- Although 'female-fit' chainsaw trousers are now marketed by some brands they are often still not suitable for female body



The FTN editor's real life experience of chainsawing in oversized PPE, at a product launch event in 2016.

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

"I want to see a lot more women in this industry feeling comfortable and like they belong. I know it's only clothing but it's still a barrier that we have to overcome...among the many others! I feel like it would be an amazing step in the right direction to get some inclusive PPE!"

"I feel like the message, throughout the industry is that women can work with chainsaws but only at a low level. I feel

shapes and options continue to be very limited

Share your experience

Forestry England is now calling for more experiences, feedback and opinions from across the wider industry on this topic. Do you or your organisation have similar experiences in struggling to get the correct PPE products for your female staff? Have you already started work on,

I have fought for well over a decade to be accepted in this industry, but equality will never be possible when the underlying message is that women are not viewed as equal as the PPE is not available unless you wear things which are not suitable."

"Even looking at (PPE supplier) catalogues women rarely feature in the 'hard' work, if they appear at all it's either with lightweight gardening type machinery... as an industry as a whole, I don't believe there will ever be equality when the underlying message from those who make PPE etc is that we are not equal and that we are not good enough."

or made changes, to address this issue? Are you interested in becoming involved in helping to address this issue across the forestry industry? If so, and whatever your individual or corporate experience, Forestry England would love to hear from you.

Contact Please email operationsadmin@forestryengland.uk with 'Female PPE' in the title by the end of March 2022



Workforce issues in the forestry sector – a Scottish perspective

Jamie Farquhar reports

SCALE OF THE WORKFORCE

There have been various attempts during the last decade to quantify the size and scope of the forestry workforce. A comprehensive review is now underway in terms of the GB Economic Impact Assessment Study, which should also provide up-to-date information on employment levels. Members are reminded that they are asked to complete the survey (www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/GBForestrySurveyConfor).

In Scotland we still refer to the 2015 CJC Consulting report, which although the data is now ten years old, estimated there were 19,555 FTE jobs in the £1bn 'primary wood supply chain' – ie from forest nurseries to the first processing of timber – at that time. The report identified 8162 jobs in what I regard as the critically challenged

part of that supply chain at present – establishment, management, and delivery to processor.

A review of the future of the forestry workforce in Scotland prepared for Lantra and the Scottish Forest & Timber Technologies in 2019 (data from 2017) suggests a significant increase in jobs was and is required in this area to cope with not just re-

tirement and attrition, but notably for the increasing harvest and restock, as well as significantly rising levels of new woodland creation to meet Scottish Government planting targets for climate change mitigation. It is safe to assume that there are now probably about 9000 FTEs involved.

THE CHALLENGES

Forest Managers

There is a general shortage of experienced foresters, as can be seen from a brief look at our own job vacancies and those advertised by ICF, indicating a constant churn between businesses, and so a real challenge for those needing to expand. Informal survey suggests at least 10% of existing FMs are not British, and although most will be UK domiciled, there is always a threat to them wishing to remain in the UK.

Whilst our colleges report a healthy demand in entrants to "forestry" courses, we understand that many subsequently choose an allied rural role other than pure forestry management. Employers are therefore turning to alternative sources

Figure 1	British	EU	Other	Total
Permanent full-time	242	115	0	357
Permanent part-time	18	30	0	48
Seasonal	54	273	0	327
Total	314	418	0	732

of graduates. Recent demand for managers has been so high, that middle year students are being offered permanent employment by their host companies with a view to finishing their studies remotely in employment rather than return to full time studies.

Machine operators

An informal survey indicates about 600 forest machine operators are presently engaged in harvesting, and another 250 or so in ground preparation, road construction, etc. in Scotland – with possibly about 15-20% being foreign nationals. These highly skilled personnel are in great demand – with storm Arwen presenting new pressure on their services. Conversely, the wind-blow clear-up may help retain some who are otherwise tempted by arguably better pay and conditions in mainland Europe, where work continues clearing substantial disease fellingings.

Nurseries

Confor’s (GB) Nursery Producers Group together with the three state nurseries employ about 750 people and produce aprox. 95% of plants used by the UK forest sector – currently about 130 plants per annum. They have so far managed to meet the increase in plant demand over the last few years, although nature plays a dominant role, whether through variant seed supply dictating shortages in some species year by year, or weather or diseases, etc. But essentially the make-up of their workforce to cope with these vagaries, as surveyed in 2020 is concerning (see figure 1).

Note the high reliance on seasonal labour, and of that 65% was foreign. A significant proportion of that foreign seasonal labour has been stymied by the UK Government’s new immigration regime, and some nurseries are struggling to adapt, finding it difficult to substitute them with suitable domestic labour. Some nurseries are investing in mechanising operations wherever they can – though simply not possible for every operation – through access to grants under the FGS Harvesting & Processing option.

Establishment & Maintenance

Our UK survey in 2020 covered 32 companies planting 91 million trees in the season 2019/20– an 83% of an estimated programme of aprox. 110 million trees (which was constrained by Covid). Extrapolated to that full programme it revealed employ-



LAURENT BIENFAIT
OF LAURENT BIENFAIT
WOODLAND SERVICES

The initial planting of a Woodland Creation is often the “glamorous / best “ part of the job and many forget that the work does not stop there. Maintenance and the task of establishing the trees can be more time consuming and, in many cases may take three or four years.

I strongly think we need all year-round forestry workers and not on a seasonal basis.

Another issue is, if we lose (and this is starting to be the case) foreign skilled workers who have been doing the job for a good few years, they start to move on for personal reasons – better paid work here or returning home – at the moment we have no fresh starters learning the skills required from existing workers. Trying to recruit a Scottish workforce has proven to be difficult.

ment of (see figure 2).

Note again the high reliance on seasonal staff, and that over a quarter of the trees were planted by foreign hands. The 2020/21 planting season was anecdotally similar, albeit this time more constrained in the north by weather conditions. Importantly though, the new immigration rules did not kick in until the planting season was over, so the effect of a potential loss of skilled foreign labour was not lost.

The 2021/22 season now in full swing, with an even greater new woodland planting target and a considerable restock programme, together with a predicted high beat-up requirement, is bringing even more pressure on our E&M businesses. Several have stated that they have cut back on their usual contracts because they have lost access to their usual north and eastern

European labour – and are finding it difficult to replace them from the domestic resource, usually quoting the lack of culture for hard, repetitive outside work in all weathers.

New woodland creation on ‘virgin’ sites may be relatively easy work for the planters – and indeed some sites can be mechanically planted – but work on restock and beat-up sites is another proposition. Either way, some of these businesses have welcomed the new constraints on ground prep, knowing this will mean more work for them – as some sites fail to establish initially in inferior soil conditions due to restrictions on ploughing and other cultivation methods.

Timber haulage

Our industry is no different from the rest of the country in suffering a shortage of HGV drivers, and we have supported the RHA’s arguments for making obtaining the requisite tickets easier. However, we have the added problem of finding drivers with the culture and aptitude for crane work as well as driving off tarmac, and willingness to work outside. No easy task when similar pay is available for the ‘soft’ option of motorway driving. We have therefore supported the ‘taster’ courses run by the Timber Haulage Academy – next one in March in Ayrshire (www.confor.org.uk/news/latest-news/timber-haulage-academy/) and the production of a video via the Timber Transport Forum.

WHAT CONFOR IS DOING

Despite the new immigration regime, there shouldn’t be too much difficulty in recruiting Forest Managers and Forest Machine Operators from abroad – if pay and conditions are attractive enough, but there is strong competition in this section of the labour market throughout Europe. For FMOs we have been helping organize introduction ‘taster’ events. And we are continuing our lobbying to have both these jobs listed on the Occupation Shortlist, which the Migration Advisory Committee advises government upon.

We have argued for the past two years for forest workers – in nurseries and planting & establishment businesses – to be eligible for temporary work visas under the Seasonal Agricultural Workers scheme (SAWS), but although the argument has been made forcefully, with backing from Defra and Scottish Forestry, this had been refused until an announcement just before Christmas of a concession to include “ornamentals” in the scheme from January 2022, which had previously been restricted to edible horticulture. We have since established that this covers tree nurseries and Christmas trees, which is obviously welcome, though we are still seeking clarity whether this includes those who plant the trees. We will continue our lobbying.

Figure 2	British	EU	Other	Total
Permanent full-time	203	36	1	240
Permanent part-time	54	11	0	65
Seasonal	242	137	40	419
Total	499	184	41	724

SAF WOODLAND MANAGEMENT

Specialist tree nursery and foresters

We grow our tree saplings using the ELLEPOT growing system in biodegradable paper pots to reduce waste and improve woodland establishment with root air pruning technology.

Pioneering research into microbial rich organic growing medium to improve plant health and establishment

Seed to planted and established tree in 18 months

Reserve your 2022/2023 planting stock and receive 10% off your order



Spring 2020 Autumn 2020 Spring 2021 Autumn 2021



www.safwoodland.management

Telephone: 01239 611980

info@safwoodland.management

Llwydrain Woodland, Mynachlog-ddu, Clynderwen, Pembrokeshire SA66 7SR

Cellgrowntrees.co.uk

The UK's longest established woodland tree cell grower

We offer British grown Woodland trees, hedging and shrubs

Cell grown

Container grown

Field grown

Guards - Stakes - etc

Planting service available

Nationwide delivery service

Heathwood Nurseries Ltd

Growers of Quality Trees, Shrubs & Hedging Plants



sales@heathwood.co.uk

www.heathwood.co.uk

The Meadows Higher Heath

Whitchurch Shropshire

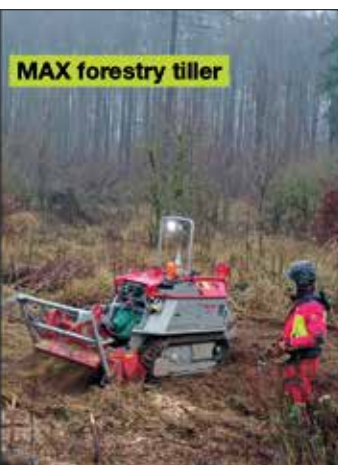
SY13 2JA

Tel +44 1948 840120

Forestry planter



MAX forestry tiller



Strip seeding machine



Forestry winch



Natural reforestation

Moritz is the basis for natural and sustainable reforestation. From the preparation of the area for sowing or planting to the maintaining of the young plantations, the remote-controlled implement carrier convinces with its possibilities.

Attachments for the Moritz

- ❑ MAX forestry tiller
- ❑ Forestry winch
- ❑ Forestry planter
- ❑ Strip seeding machine
- ❑ Stump grinder



The Moritz mini mowing and mulching tractor in use as a remote-controlled implement carrier

Pfanzelt
MASCHINENBAU

www.pfanzelt.com

Setting up and growing an effective, safe and compliant timber business

The timber industry is perhaps at higher risk than others, particularly when it comes to safety, so it is imperative that all new businesses are set up correctly right from the start. The team at the Diverse Regeneration Company has some useful advice.

SOME OF THE CRITICAL THINGS TO CONSIDER INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING

- **Decide which type of business is right.**

Will you be a registered company, partnership or sole trader? Companies House provides information about different company structures, and an accountant can advise on what is right for you (initial consultations are often free).

- **Take out any necessary insurances.** Depending on the nature of your work, this may include public liability, professional indemnity, employer liability and office insurance. Local brokers can help find the right insurance at the best price or use online price comparison sites if you know what you need. Insurance is essential to win contracts and protect you, your business, your clients, and the public.

- **Invest in training and accreditations,** and research the necessary licenses and permissions for your work. These will enhance your skills and assure your clients that you can do the job legally and effectively.



Set up a check list of all protocols, risk assessments, etc for each piece of work you engage in. This will mean you don't miss things and can work safely. Professional and trade bodies are set up to help with this.

- **Set up effective and consistent record keeping** and keep client data secure. This will save time as your business grows and data security/compliance is a legal requirement. Advice is available from local IT companies across the country.

- **Set up your finances properly,** and have

a plan to help manage cashflow, which is the single most common reason for business failure. Local bookkeepers and accountants can help and any costs are easily outweighed by the benefits.

- **When it comes to employing others,** there a wide range of rules and requirements, and ACAS provides a comprehensive overview on this including templates for such things as drawing up contracts.

In addition to the above suggestions, your local business growth hub such as Heart of SW (for Devon and Somerset) offers sources of local experts. Across the country, local organisations such as The Diverse Regeneration Company (www.drcompany.co.uk), a not for profit, community interest company, based in Devon offer expert advice to support rural businesses.

If your business is set up correctly from the start it forms a strong foundation from which to grow and builds customer confidence, as well as helping the business win contracts and mitigate financial, reputational and safety risks.



CASE STUDY JEZ RALPH OF TIMBER STRATEGIES

Jez tells us how he got help and advice to develop his business.

I have been running Timber Strategies since 2014. It had always been a 'self-employed'-type business run ad-hoc without much thought to systems or processes but with a feeling that things could be done better.

In 2019, with the help of a business coach, I started rebuilding the business to be able to take on larger contracts in a more professional way. Putting systems in place to manage this has been key. Some of the lessons I've learned include:

- 1 **Automated scheduling.** Simple acts such as ongoing scheduled diary entries to keep up to date with organisations like FISA means we don't have to remember to check.

- 2 **File-sharing.** Moving to cloud-based file sharing and email means sub-contractors can have access to all the information they need including risk assessments and work packages.

- 3 **First staff.** Taking on the first employee is terrifying but knowing that someone is on a paid rather than contracted basis reduces the time needed finding and briefing sub-contractors.

- 4 **Using an accountant.** Using the services of an accountant has freed up my time on other aspects of the business with the confidence of knowing everything is being done properly.

- 5 **Getting paperwork right.** Having template formats for risk assessments, contracts and other necessary paperwork has given me confidence that I am taking the right, safe and legal actions.

- 6 **Insurance.** Spending time sourcing insurance that I know actually and adequately covers what we do.

- 7 **Business coaching,** for me, has been the most important step since the business started. I can't recommend it strongly enough, no matter what type of business you are in.

Having put all these things in place it has taken a huge burden off my mind and means I can concentrate on the trees. I see this as something that allows the business to be more innovative, more excited and more focussed on our clients.

For Jez and many businesses like Timber Strategies, taking the advice of experts to help guide you through every aspect of your business is clearly a sensible move.

Peverstone
Cullompton,
Devon EX15 1RW



loglogic

Tel: +44 (0) 1884 839999

loglogic.co.uk

TOOLTRAK 75

The multi purpose compact tool carrier:



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

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,
Barnsley, South Yorkshire S72 7BD
Email: sales@promaxaccess.com
Web: www.promaxaccess.com



Tel: 01226 716657

Fax: 01226 716658



FUELWOOD

FORESTRY & FIREWOOD MACHINERY SPECIALISTS

www.fuelwood.co.uk

01926 484673

Lone working in winter: increased risks for employers



Victoria Anderson, senior associate at Brodies LLP and specialist in health and safety law, offers useful advice to ensure workers' safety and wellbeing.

In November 2021, two firms were fined nearly £900,000 following health and safety breaches that resulted in the death of a security worker exposed to freezing conditions at a windfarm construction site in East Ayrshire. The tragic case highlighted, in particular, the risk of failing to provide adequate welfare facilities/heat sources for lone staff in remote locations, as well as the risks created by poor mobile phone service that prevent workers raising the alarm or calling for assistance in emergencies.

Let's look at some 'season-specific' risks to be aware of for the direct workforce, as well as contractors.

KNOW WHO IS AT RISK, AND HOW

Those in the industry most likely to be affected are:

- Harvester or forwarder drivers at the outer extremities of a particular site;
- Chainsaw operators working on-site but outwith the risks zones of other machinery;
- Timber purchasers visiting a sale;
- Drivers visiting remote locations.

Certain 'high-risk' activities should not ever be undertaken by lone workers, including:

- Pruning and felling trees in proximity to overhead power lines;
- Using chainsaws, power pruners or wood chippers;
- Using motorised winches or mobile overhead cranes to lift objects without the supervision of a banksman;
- The application of pesticides;
- Work requiring the use of safety harnesses as fall prevention;
- Climbing of trees for any purpose, or the use of rope access techniques.

Once lone workers and their work activities have been identified, consider if your lone working policy makes specific provision for winter, with control measures such as access to heated shelter - be that in a vehicle cab or a welfare facility on-site. Thought should also be given to whether the areas where workers will be located are covered by mobile phone signal or if alternative methods such as radios may be required. The ability of workers to contact their appointed supervisor or emergency contacts, should the need arise, is critical.

Supervision of lone workers during winter may also require different/additional steps to ensure your legal duties are dis-



charged. Increasing the frequency with which supervisors check in (by phone, radio or physical visit) may be necessary.

APPLY YOUR WEATHER POLICY

Consideration should be given to your business' winter weather/poor weather policy. The policy should clearly indicate the weather conditions in which work should be stopped and workers (especially lone ones or anyone working in more exposed locations) be directed to return to base/home. These 'cut-off' limits may differ according to the nature or location of the work. Supervisors should also have a means of monitoring weather forecasts in the local area, and be instructed to do so regularly. Increasing the regularity of contact/communication with lone workers during poor weather is strongly advised.

The increased risks are not just apparent in the environment/working conditions, the worker themselves may be more vulnerable for reasons including a pre-existing health condition or English not being their first language. It is good practice to ensure such information has been identified and shared, if appropriate, with their supervisor.

Risks can be further mitigated by ensuring that lone workers receive additional training for the role, covering wider topics than might be immediately obvious. For example, lone workers should ideally have first aid training and be provided with basic first aid equipment for their use in the event of an incident. The lone worker selected should have appropriate experience to ensure that they fully understand

the risks and precautions involved in their work, as well as the location at which they will be working.

CONSULT THOSE AFFECTED

Finally, there is a legal duty on all employers to consult their workforce on the health and safety arrangements that relate to them. Accordingly, it is important that the arrangements for lone workers are discussed directly with those who will be working alone and any feedback from them on those arrangements taken into consideration. In the event of a unionised workforce, it may be that such consultation takes place via appointed representatives. Any consultations should be recorded in writing and any concerns/feedback received from the workers

In addition to the potential sentencing implications for health and safety breaches mentioned at the outset, lone working is something that the HSE is particularly focused on, and we are seeing an increase in prosecutions involving 'lone working breaches'. Lone working is an area that impacts the forestry sector's workforce significantly and one that employers and their HR teams should be focusing on now, if they haven't done so already.

CONFOR MEMBERS FREE LEGAL CONSULTATION

Confor has partnered with law firms Brodies LLP and Atkinson Ritson Solicitors to run a legal clinic for members looking for guidance on key issues that impact forest owners and the forestry sector.

Whether your query is employment law, health & safety, planning, tax or property-related, contact one of our partners for a free initial consultation.

For members based anywhere in the UK
Brodies LLP
0131 228 3777
www.brodies.com
confor@brodies.com

For members based in England/Wales
Atkinson Ritson Solicitors
01228 525221
www.atkinsonritson.co.uk
info@atkinsonritson.co.uk



New Year and a new dawn

Global Outlook

After the savage price corrections of the third quarter of 2021 the modest recovery seen in the fourth quarter has gathered serious momentum during December 2021 and early January 2022

In the USA, December saw prices rise by \$300 per 000bdf and there has been further price gains in January so prices are now back above spring 2020 levels!!!!

Low stock levels at sawmills due to very smart management of production, 18 months of strong demand, and now severe winter weather on the west coast has led to pressure on both log supplies and the ability to haul finished products.

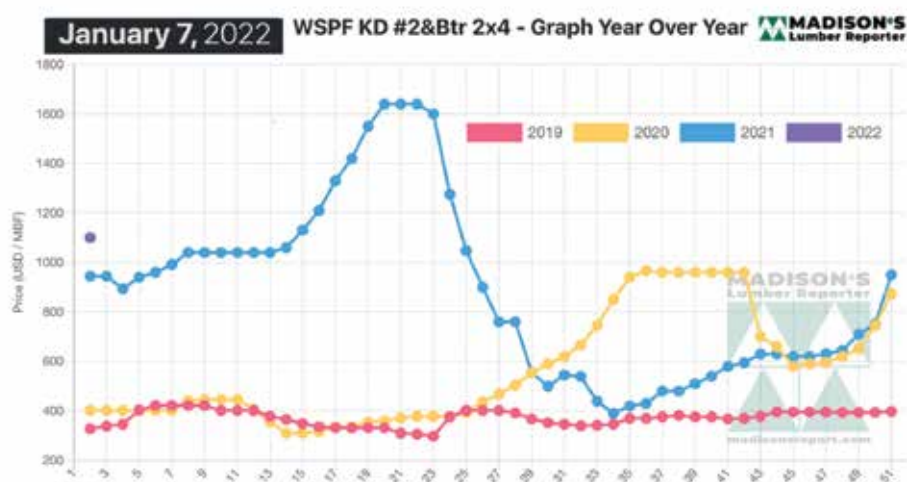
This coupled with the Biden administration looking to double tariffs on Canadian timber products and put them back up to Trump era levels of 18% has made buyers focus on securing volume.

Mill order books are extended past one month which is exceptional for January and is leading some observers to forecast further increase through the spring as seasonal demand picks up

European prices for key products have also started to rise again after a price correction at the end of 2021.

Oak, spruce and pine sawlog as well as spruce pulpwood prices are all beginning to move upwards again. It is interesting to note the scale of the increases seen in Germany last year reported by the German Federal Statistics office:

- Spruce sawlogs 52% gain November 20 to November 21
- Pine sawlogs 21% gain November 20 to November 21
- Fuelwood 24% gain November 20 to November 21
- Oak sawlogs 7.7% gain November 20 to November 21



- Beech sawlogs 3.5% fall November 20 to November 2021

Increasing global demand especially from the USA has started to draw Scandinavian and Central European sawn softwood whilst China is starting to increase its demand for softwood in sawlog form and again purchasing European material.

2022 sees a mood of cautious optimism returning and a firming of prices as confidence increases again.

Softwood market

Storm Arwen will impact on supply in the UK directly in terms of short term availability of material but also indirectly in terms of availability of machinery and haulage capacity and adjustments to felling programmes.

It is, however, important to remember that the price levels in the UK are set by availability and pricing of imported material. Late 2021 saw increasing volumes of imported material landing in the UK and

some downward pressure on prices at the same time as UK demand started to falter. This created uncertainty in the market at the same time as a seasonal slow down in demand. These were only relatively small swings but saw stocks start to build and order intake slowing down.

January 2022 has seen a modest upturn in demand, a slowing of import volumes and a firming of global prices. A lengthy period of dry weather in January, Omicron seeming to be less severe than initially feared and continued consumer spending have seen optimism returning and a renewed confidence.

Although it is early days the UK softwood market seems to be starting 2022 with the demand side in good health.

Hardwood market

The UK hardwood market continues to be dominated by the onwads and upwards rise of oak sawlog prices, the valiant efforts to keep the ash export market going

£ per tonne delivered to customers in Wales, central and south England (January 2022)

Product	Lower price	Upper price	Trend
Log 16 (Spruce Df)	£90.00	£100.00	=
Bar 14	£75.00	£85.00	=
SRW	£50.00	£55.00	=
Fencing	£70.00	£75.00	=
H Wood firewood	£50.00	£60.00	=

£ per tonne delivered to customers in north England and Scotland (January 2022)

Product	Lower price	Upper price	Trend
Log 16	£80.00	£80.00	=
Bar/pallet 14	£50.00	£60.00	=
SRW	£45.00	£50.00	=
Fencing	£60.00	£65.00	=
H Wood firewood	£60.00	£70.00	=

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



In Germany, prices for spruce sawlogs have increased by 52% in 2021

Roadside hardwood sawlog prices January 2022

	Oak planking	Oak beam	Oak fencing	Export ash	White ash sawlogs	Export beech	Large Douglas fir and Larch
High price	£20.00	£15.00	£8.00	£3.00	£4.00	£3.00	£5.25
Mid price	£17.00	£12.00	£7.00	£2.75	£3.50	£2.75	£4.50
Low price	£15.00	£10.00	£6.00	£2.00	£3.25	£2.50	£3.00

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

despite a supply chain that extends half way around the world and the trials that presents as well as the battle to find any market for other hardwood sawlogs.

As an aside to the timber market it is interesting to look at the current drive to plant trees everywhere and wonder what the timber output of these new plantings might be???

The fashion for rewilding, biodiversity, native provenances and natural capital driven mixes does seem to be very distant from the reality of the market. Spruce, larch, douglas fir, pine and oak are in demand globally by the high end markets in quantities large enough to have a vi-

able processing industry, anything else is basically energy wood which is the lowest level of the market. These species can accommodate most sites, we know how to grow them, they provide a number of marketable products and have the critical mass to support an industry and an established research programme yet they are being ethnically cleansed from the new planting programmes.

Is following the fashion going to lead to us continuing to create more woodlands destined to be unmanaged because they are full of low value expensive to work mixtures just like the restocking of the 1987 storm damaged woodlands.

Some questions

Here are a few thoughts for you to ponder and to distract you from the woes of Storm Arwen:

- Why is there a drive to plant more native species to address a changing climate, how does that work in the long term or is this positive discrimination in forestry?
- Is political correctness and fashion overtaking common sense and have the vocal minority shouted louder than the silent majority?
- How is experience and wisdom and the successes of growing trees over the last 100 years in Britain being valued in the rush to “greenwash” society?
- When the government money runs out after 15 years and the landowner has to make a return from the woodland and generate cash are we going to wishing we had planted timber producing species?

Contact 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.



ALSTOR 8x8
Superior to handle in the terrain

**Alstor mini-
forwarders and
harvesters**

**Unrivalled in
the Terrain**

UK & Ireland Alstor 8x8 Agent
Rabaud Forestry & Agricultural Machinery
England and Wales Syketec dealer
WORKBOX

T. 01746 718 456 • M. 07966 365 157
• [E. nathan@homeforestry.co.uk](mailto:E.nathan@homeforestry.co.uk) •
Home Forestry llp, Willowdene Farm,
Chorley, Bridgnorth, Shropshire, WV16 6PP.

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.





Any way the wind blows

Only the day before Storm Arwen landed on our coasts I had been ruminating with a very learned colleague about the seemingly remorseless rise of tree pathogens that have been assaulting us over the last few decades, particularly the apparent onset of *Ips typographus* in southern England. He stopped me short by reminding me that windblow was the greatest risk in British forestry and whilst we had learned to manage around it, we had not had a significant event for years.

Well, we didn't have to wait very long!

On the Friday evening my eldest son gleefully pointed out the weather forecast and the expected winds of up to 60 miles an hour from the north which seemed concerning but not too bad. However, as the wind got up and it got noisier, we looked out of the window and saw that my old friend, the 150-year-old copper beech had blown over the B road that passes the house. Then we watched as the log shed (open to the north) reared up as its front supports failed. While I was considering if I was brave enough to venture out and put a ratchet strap on to hold it down, it flipped over onto its back, somersaulted over the hedge and ended up next to the copper beech on the road. Most alarmingly the ridge tiles then started skidding down the roof and crashing onto the ground at the front of the house.

In the morning I was reminded how I am blessed with my neighbours (a forestry contractor, a tree surgeon and a firewood merchant) and we had the road open by early afternoon. It took longer for me to summon up the courage to venture up on the roof to fix the slates and the ridge tiles



but rain coming into the house acted as a strong motivator.

Our problems were obviously nothing compared to many other places who lost power and communication for a long period as we started to hear of, and indeed see, the extent of the windblow across much of Scotland and northern England. I must add here the impressive work that Forest Research have done in mapping the extent of the resultant windblow which now appears to be amounting to a substantial portion of the annual British cut.

Layering the effects of storm Arwen is still difficult and I have reflected on my

experiences of the 1987 windblow events in southern and eastern England and east Anglia and the wet store of what, at the time, seemed an enormous stockpile of 40K of Pine logs. Then 1990 and cutting my way out of Holly Hatch enclosure in the New Forest where we had been second thinning Scots Pine until it all got a bit hairy surrounded by mid-19th century oak, that we could not see, snapping and sounding like artillery going off. And Christmas 1998 when there was extensive blow in southern Scotland and northern England – we were busy cutting windblow for over a year.

How does this all affect the market for roundwood?

Prior to the Arwen windblow the last third of 2021 had seen a significant over supply of construction grade sawn product being landed from Europe. This was due to the supply chain finally catching up with the shortfalls through the early part of the year, resulting in an oversupply in the market, spot prices for imported construction fell by over 40% by the year end from their high in early summer, but practically there was no market at any price as the supply chain was completely full of product, and many importers came under further pressure as they started to be charged rent for unsold stock in ports.

At the same time almost all the British sawmillers, remembering supply difficul-

ties at the end of 2020 and early 2021, had filled their yards up with roundwood and had started to build unprecedented levels of finished goods as well. As the market slowed producers of construction timber went on to reduced working with circa 20% of capacity temporarily been taken out.

The small roundwood market was also seeing reduced demand as some of the medium-term reduction in capacity that had been seen was exacerbated, as the mild weather slowed demand for biomass requirements, and the panel board sector saw some significant production outages due to similar issues to those mentioned above for sawn.

All of the above has contributed to a very slow start to the new year with some sawmills not starting immediately after the end of the holiday period. Until all the finished product 'washes' through we will see a very slow market. Thereafter we anticipate a market that picks up as we move towards spring.

Further out there is perhaps more optimism with many talking the demand in the market up towards the end of Q1 and through into Q2.

Processors will need to continue to buy because although storm Arwen has knocked down a significant proportion of the annual cut much of it will be absorbed through the normal harvesting program.

Creating Tomorrow's Forests

With the challenges faced by the forestry industry of rising costs and bottlenecks in planting projects, many businesses are looking at ways to diversify their core operations. Finding novel ways of expanding your business can enhance your existing model as well as bringing in additional revenue. One company that has branched out into a new area is Tomorrow's Forests, who launched their new project 'Creating Tomorrow's Forests' in 2020. **Simone Webber**

Tomorrow's Forests was started in 2014 by two tree planters who had been working in Canada and wanted to bring efficient Canadian tree planting processes back to the UK. From the outset the company was interested in innovative techniques, driving the tree planting industry forward, and exploring new technology. Due to issues of stagnant contracted prices for tree planting services, particularly in the forestry sector, the founders, Nick Hollingworth and Elisabeth Boivin made the decision to explore diversifying the core business. "We had always had a dream of finding a way to fund the creation of native woodland in the UK, with a real focus on restoring lost habitat and increasing biodiversity" Liz explains. "The first Coronavirus pandemic lockdown gave us the pause that we needed to plan out



how we could do this by harnessing business investment to fund forest creation".

Diversifying from the main business model was a risk, although the success of Tomorrow's Forests and their expertise in planting and maintaining woodlands proved to be an excellent foundation. When Nick and Liz investigated the other organisations offering carbon offsetting and tree planting for businesses, it became apparent that the majority of trees were planted overseas in tropical forests, often in monoculture plantations of non-native species. These plantations offered little value to local people and wildlife, and there was poor visibility for the businesses investing in them.

The Creating Tomorrow's Forests business model is based on ownership, transparency, and responsibility. Owning the



land on which the trees are planted means that they can ensure the longevity of the forests that they create. It also means that they can design and manage the habitats precisely how they decide, based on scientific evidence to maximise benefits for people and wildlife. They can also allow access to the site, to engage people with the habitat and provide education, which fosters understanding of the need to protect nature. Nick explains "We really wanted to take our customers on the forest creation journey with us by providing regular updates on how the trees are growing. Because we plant and manage everything ourselves, we can ensure that everything is done to the highest standards possible". The Creating Tomorrow's Forests project is reliant on the tree planting services provided by the parent company, and the two op-





CTF Team: Nick Hollingworth, Elisabeth Boivin, Dr Simone Webber, Toby Brusey

MIYAWAKI METHOD

The Miyawaki Method replicates natural forest regeneration of native saplings by planting mixed species of seedlings at high densities to accelerate growth through competition. The saplings can grow up to ten times faster, leading to the establishment of a stable forest community in 30 years. It is particularly effective on degraded land and can be used where standard forestry planting would not be possible. Miyawaki forests sequester more carbon and have an average of 18 times higher biodiversity than adjacent plantations. It is the ideal technique for rapidly reforesting small areas.

erations work in harmony, increasing brand awareness via social media channels, and minimising costs.

Launching a new venture

To launch the new company, an ecologist and a marketing team were employed to sell the idea to business customers. The first steps were to create the website, define products, and identify marketing and selling strategies. The feedback that was received was overwhelmingly positive, with many businesses keen to plant trees in the UK and to engage with visiting the sites. It did become apparent that providing carbon offsetting services can be difficult,

particularly if customers required verified carbon units from Woodland Carbon Code (WCC) accredited sites. The WCC has very strict stipulations to ensure a standardised approach to assessing how much carbon a tree has sequestered, and the requirements regarding weeding and spacing can make maximising biodiversity within the woodland problematic.

The first CTF site was on the Somerset levels, and it was selected because it provided a chance to restore a wet woodland on low grade agricultural land. The unused grazing pasture was the ideal location for wetland tree species such as alder, black poplar, and willows. It was planted using an innovative high-density technique called the Miyawaki Method, which accelerates woodland establishment and can increase biodiversity and carbon sequestration. Although there is extensive evidence of increased forest growth rates in tropical climates, the Miyawaki Method is fairly new to Europe so the sapling growth rates are being monitored to allow an estimation of how quickly the woodland will be established.

The company has evolved over the 18 months that it has been in operation by being responsive to what businesses needed from tree planting partners, by developing bespoke solutions, and by integrating tree planting into business operations to incentivise sales. Education is also a high priority for many companies,

and customers have benefited greatly from visiting the sites and listening to lunch and learn sessions provided by the Creating Tomorrow's Forests team. The greatest challenge for the company has undoubtedly been striking the balance between profitability and the market value of trees. This is primarily due to the price of land, which has risen in the last year. The company is working on new solutions to monetise biodiversity and allow businesses to invest in the biodiversity increase itself on their sites, as well as planting trees.

Diversifying from the Tomorrow's Forests core business has enabled the company to move in an exciting new direction with immense scope for future development. The Creating Tomorrow's Forests business model has proven very popular, and it allows for growth into other areas. One of the most important factors affecting a successful outcome was defining a niche in the marketplace, and ensuring that the offering provided was unique from that of other companies in the same arena. From the basic concept this was enhanced by being flexible to the demands of the marketplace and constantly assessing what the consumers needed in a tree planting partner.

Contact www.creatingtomorrowsforests.co.uk

Responsive Silviculture: The Future of UK Silviculture

The effects of climate changes, non-native plants, pathogens and animals, and other anthropogenic effects are creating novel forest ecosystems where silvicultural practices utilised in the past may not be appropriate for the future, says **Bryan Elliot** of Eucalyptus Renewables Ltd.

What is responsive silviculture?

Responsive Silviculture relates to forest operational processes being specifically tailored to meet present and predicted shifting of forest ecological conditions and societal demands. Forests will illustrate a natural tendency to prefer an optimum silvicultural treatment that validates a specific disturbance emulation such as a light thinning within a couple of years of a previous thinning operation.

The process relies on the ability of managers' experience to understand the forest type, complex silvicultural systems and opportunities. It is important to make consistent decisions on tree selection or silvicultural interventions within the constraints of the site condition and forest type. The knowledge to demonstrate a flexibility that can accommodate a variety of site conditions, species composition,

production of wood products and, also, the capacity to guide both sustainability for longer-term and restoration towards a suite of ecological, social and economic benefits.

Disturbance emulation

With operational intervention choices, a thriving, deep, photosynthate producing canopy structure will improve stand quality and productive timber yields. As a primary objective, the management of light that is filtering through the canopy will encourage multiple levels of varied canopy structure. This will maintain a thriving healthy canopy that encourages diverse layers of forest composition, natural regeneration and a multi-aged canopy structure that will encourage higher levels of biodiversity.

In many forest ecosystems, natural

and artificial disturbances are occurring so rapidly that multiple interventions will be utilised to maintain the ecological and economic integration of the stand.

Developing silvicultural systems specific to multiple stand types and locations will be the key to a resilient, multi-aged and multi-faceted forest structure.

Silvicultural regimes that involve using "Disturbance Emulation" have evolved to encourage a response to environmental and societal requirements. Replicating natural disturbance, such as fire and wind events, involves developing silvicultural regimes that resemble the types, extents and frequency of disturbances or directing ecosystems, which will ultimately develop forest landscapes to a more robust and resilient state. Clearfell operations are an example of part of an artificial disturbance, with subsequent silvicultural opportunities



Bowden Estate, Devon. Establishment of group shelterwood system, Eucalyptus nitens -18 months old. Priority targeted cellulose production silvicultural system in a multi-objective diverse ecosystem, December 2021. (Photo credit: Bryan Elliott)



CASE STUDY

Storm Arwen windblow Bransdale Valley, North Yorkshire, December 2021

Adjacent to a Forestry England clearfell site in the Bransdale Valley, North Yorkshire, a neighbouring property has had extensive windblow from Storm Arwen. The lack of general landscape impact planning comprising different owners has exasperated a vulnerability

specifically to windblow events. With potentially changing climatic weather patterns, we will need to manage our woodlands to mitigate for potential extremes of natural disturbances. Complex silvicultural decisions are required to manage the landscape with a more diverse, robust species outline, that blends with the existing landscape and minimises the impact of future disturbances, whilst also retaining an appropriate multi-faceted forest structure.

responding to each decision-making step, based on species life history, adaptations to changes in environmental factors, or growing space availability.

Flexible silviculture

The objective of forestry is to meet societal demands. Forests are managed to provide timber productive and conservation services in amounts, and at times that society desires. If society values steady production of ecosystem services from our landscapes, management must compromise between using silviculture to emulate timber disturbances and be able to produce conservation ecosystem services. Silviculture of the future will need to be highly varied and highly flexible in response to any variation in site characteristics.

New management circumstances and differences in the value of quality timber classes require a greater adaptation to the market. Utilisation of more intensive initial tending through complex silvicultural strategies will increase timber quality values and yield to produce more quality timber as an objective. Effective Silviculture strategy should be utilised to improve the opportunities for Forests throughout UK to deliver sustainable, ecological, societal and economic benefits.



Are you seeking advice in relation to carbon funding for new woodland creation or peatland restoration projects?

Forest Carbon have over 15 years experience developing carbon projects across the UK.

enquiries@forestcarbon.co.uk
0191 395 2956
www.forestcarbon.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

Farm Forestry at Scotland's Finest Wood Awards

David Lee finds out that true integration of farming and woodland can bring many rewards – and awards too!

Farming and forestry can be uneasy bedfellows. Scottish politician and farmer, Peter Chapman, once said he thought planting trees was seen by many farmers as a failure of their business model – and that he was determined to help change that.

Confor and its members talk regularly to farmers about the benefits of diversifying a farm business with trees. Ultimately, the decision to plant – or to make existing woodland more useful, or to expand it – depends on the individual farm business. The reasons for doing so will be specific to that farm.

This was very well-illustrated by the range of winners and commended entries in the Farm Woodland Awards categories of Scotland's Finest Woods Awards 2021. All of them were real enthusiasts for trees and what they could provide – but all had planted for different reasons and gained a variety of benefits.

Angela Douglas, Executive Director of Scotland's Finest Woods, which runs the awards, said: "All the entries recognised in the farm woodland awards in 2021 are very different – from a small croft to a large grain producer. However, each one has put trees and woodland at the heart of their specific business model and integrated it highly successfully into their operations."

The judges concluded: "The vision for how the woodlands could benefit the farm-



Nikki Yoxall, Howemill

ing business both now and in the future was very striking."

Farm Woodland Award Winner: North Tillydaff farm

Wendy Seel and Anne Taylor won the overall Farm Woodland Award, sponsored by SAC Consulting, for integrating trees into their organic vegetable-growing business at North Tillydaff in Midmar, Aberdeenshire. In making the award, the judges noted that planting trees for shelter doesn't just benefit livestock but can help crops too.

They said: "The viability of the horticultural enterprise is entirely dependent on the shelter provided by woodland and associated hedgerows. The business could

not have been established without this shelter."

The judges also said of North Tillydaff's woods: "They are well-cared for, and a great deal of thought has been given to their ecology and future management. The scale and planned integration in land-use, along with the future management plans including cattle grazing to better manage the field layer, make this an outstanding 'fit' for this award."

Wendy Seel also stressed the point of learning from others who have been there before: "If you have an opportunity to plant trees, then do so. But visit other sites with young stands of trees – and speak to others and learn from them."

Young People Award Winner: Howemill

Woodland is also integral – and well-integrated – to the farm business at Howemill, run by James and Nikki Yoxall, winners of the Young People Award for Farm Woodland, sponsored by Scottish Woodlands Ltd.

The Yoxalls produce beef on the farm near Huntly in Aberdeenshire – and believe agroforestry, holistic planned grazing and pasture-fed livestock is crucial to both ecological functionality and delicious, nutritious beef.



Wildlife Croft, Skye



North Tillydaff



Parks of Garden

The Yoxalls chose to graze Shetland cows amidst the trees on their own 7 hectares and through grazing agreements with neighbours on a further 32 hectares. Judges said choosing a small and adaptable breed such as the Shetland was “prudent and most appropriate” and felt the business would go from strength to strength.

The Finest Woods judges described Howemill as a “wonderful example of a unique integration of trees and farming” and had set up a “highly impressive grazing system where few would even consider it possible”.

Nikki Yoxall said the success of Howemill was due to the effective integration of cattle and trees: “It’s a harmonious system. The cattle bring benefits to the woodland and the ground flora and fauna, and the cattle benefit in terms of nutrition, and general health. ‘Outwintering’ can also reduce respiratory problems, make calving easier and cut costs of straw and other items. And we can reduce our inputs and avoid using any mined minerals.

“There are still tweaks and learning to be done, but we are well on the way to seeing that it works and that both the cattle and the woodland are better for it.”

Nikki said she and James had drawn inspiration from the inaugural winners of the

Young People Farm Woodland Award, Sandra Baer and Lynn Cassells, who run Lynbreck Croft near Grantown-on-Spey. “They were really central in giving us confidence in what we are doing, offering very practical advice and being a shoulder to cry on when things went wrong,” she explained.

Highly Commended Ednie Farms

Integration was also clearly evident on a larger farm (of almost 600 hectares) which was highly commended in the 2021 awards.

Ednie Farms, near St Fergus, Peterhead owned by the Booth family, has 70 hectares of woodland integrated into a large commercial farming operation - with the trees utilised to their full potential to deliver multiple benefits. For example, 500 tonnes of thinnings are used to dry the farm’s annual 1,500 tonnes of grain produced, the chips in some years are also used for cattle bedding and an income is gained from selling dried chips. There are shelter benefits both to cattle and cereal crops.

Rather like North Tillydaff, the judges noted that the woodland was absolutely central to the farm business. They said: “If no trees were present, this business would be unrecognisable both in landscape terms and financially. Ednie Farms is a fabulous example of farm woodland.”

Commended Entries

One of two commended entries was Phil Knott, the owner occupier of a 3-hectare croft at Sleat on the Isle of Skye. The judges described the many additional benefits delivered by the croft’s two-thirds woodland canopy cover, including fruit trees and willows for basket-weaving. The trees also provided firewood and mulch and the

croft, judges said, “has the potential to be a demonstration of what is possible in what might otherwise be thought of as a bleak, treeless landscape”.

Also commended were Walter and Margaret Dalglish who farm almost 100 hectares, a third of which is woodland, at Parks of Garden, Arnprior, near Stirling. Judges were highly impressed with Mr Dalglish’s use of the mature woodland - and praised his “ingenious self-built extraction equipment” to help with thinning. This has created an income stream for the farm by selling birch logs to a local firewood merchant.

Scotland’s Finest Wood Awards 2022

The two Farm Woodland Awards are among 11 prizes up for grabs in the 2022 Scotland’s Finest Woods Awards. The others are for:

- Climate Change Champion;
- Quality Timber - New Commercial Woods;
- Quality Timber - Whole estate or Forest;
- Quality Timber - Single stand/compartment of trees or a small wood;
- New Native Woods;
- Large Community Woodland;
- Small Community Woodland;
- Schools;
- Early Years settings.

All winners receive a beautiful trophy, many of them hand-carved, and a cash prize of £1000 (£500 for the Schools and Early Years Awards. Entries must be submitted by 31st March 2022. For full details, criteria and entry forms. see: www.sfw.co.uk/awards-2022/

MARSHALL

AGRICULTURAL ENGINEERING

NEW
MODEL



Quality
Machinery
Speaks For Itself



WESTTECH

GMT EQUIPMENT

KONEOSAPALVELU

SERRA

DinaSaw

TMC CANCELA
MULCHING SOLUTIONS

Eschlböck BIBER

Lennartsfors

FLEX
MADE IN SWEDEN

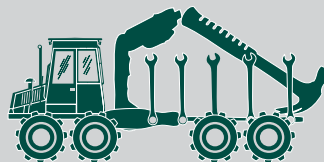
DALEN

Jussi

www.marshalllogging.co.uk



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



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



Highfield Forestry Ltd

Managing forests since 1981

Management Buy-out

After 40 years of trading, one of the few remaining independent forest management companies in the UK, has been the subject of a management buy-out.

Fred Drion and James Ramsay, part of the Senior Management Team, completed the MBO at the end of 2021 with the support of MBM Commercial.

James becomes Managing Director, Fred becomes Technical Director and Iain Peddie will retain an active role as Chairman.

Fred and James will ensure the company continues to deliver the professional management services their clients are accustomed to, whilst leading an innovative team of 12 foresters and administrative staff, who are all working hard to grow the business sustainably during these exciting times for the forestry sector.

Please contact James Ramsay for further info

01738 442 903

j.ramsay@highfield-forestry.com

www.highfield-forestry.com

The role of multistrata agroforestry in the UK's agroecological transition

Why use costly manufactured infrastructure when vertical farming is available naturally with multistrata agroforestry? **Karina Ponton**, MSc Environmental Forestry Graduate of Bangor University, asks the question.

Transformation for the future we all want

To meet the needs of current and future generations, a paradigm shift – of our goals, values, technology, social and economic systems – is necessary. The combination of Brexit, the end of the Common Agricultural Policy and declaration of a Climate Emergency by the UK government may be the largest trigger event to our land-use systems. Thus, we have an incredible opportunity to transform the way we do things.

I therefore decided to research the role of agroecological practices such as multistrata agroforestry during this transformative period we are bearing witness to. Agroforestry can be practiced in many ways to meet current and future demands for sustainable food, fuel and fibre. Many forms of agroforestry are compatible with woodland creation grants, carbon sequestration opportunities, innovation funding, Basic Payment Scheme and the incoming Environmental Land Management.

I am exceptionally grateful to the Forest Industries Education and Provident Fund for providing a grant towards my site visit travel costs, soil testing and interactive video subscription to process the data.

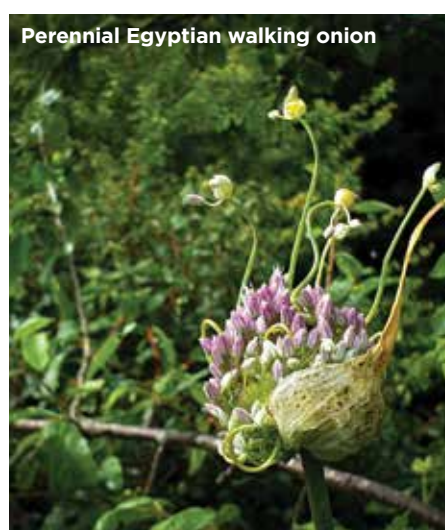
Multistrata agroforestry (MSA) research

The research project focused on the rapidly growing practice of multistrata agroforestry (MSA): multi-layered perennial polycultures (aka food forest / forest garden). In multistrata agroforestry, systems are designed to emulate or mimic natural forest systems, by planting or encouraging three or more perennial layers across a site (Table 1).

Research methods and key findings

The research project included a mixed-method survey of thirteen MSA sites aged 10-30 years, including:

1. Interviews with site owners identified difficulties and successes. Interviews revealed that temperate forest gardens are human-centred systems. Activities contribute to on-site and off-site agroecological transformations. Site managers' difficulties in establishment or maintenance (lack of resources, biotic or logistical setbacks) lessened over time.



Perennial Egyptian walking onion

Multistrata Agroforestry Layers (table 1)

Layer	Example species
Upper Canopy	pine, alder, cherry
Lower Canopy	apple, hawthorn
Shrub	gooseberry, autumn olive
Herbaceous	saffron crocus, Solomon's seal
Groundcover	comfrey, strawberry, wild garlic
Root	Chinese yam, mashua, oca
Fungal	oyster, wine cap
Climbing	chocolate vine, grape, wisteria
Aquatic	lesser spearwort, water mint

2. Diversity and abundance surveys identified planting densities. Woody plant surveys identified >4000 shrub and canopy plants. Abundance and density varied widely across sites and layers (Figure 1).

3. Ethnobotanical surveys identified species richness and utilisation. Floristic species richness totalled 520 species across sites despite a mean size of 0.5 ha. This is higher than large-scale organic and conventional agricultural systems – and is extremely likely an underestimate. Over 1800 plant uses were recorded, including food, biodiversity, timber/firewood, animal feed, natural fertilisers and medicine.

4. Creation of MSA virtual tours as an education and design tool. Virtual tours have already had over 3500 views. They can be accessed using the QR code (below) via mobile phones, tablets and computers to aid education, inspiration and overall MSA uptake.

The range of benefits of Multistrata agroforestry

Productivity

Multistrata agroforestry is highly productive. Participant and expert Graham Bell's crop yield records equate to 8700-15600 tonnes ha. This is comparable or higher than yields of wheat, barley and oats in the UK (Defra, 2019).

Climate benefits

Multistrata systems are second only to >>

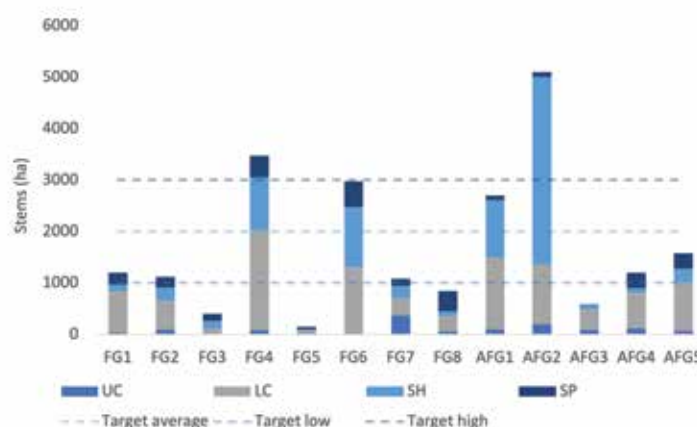


Figure 1. Number of stems (ha) across sites compared to UK broadleaf low-, average- and high stocking densities (Kerr & Evans, 1993) for upper (UC), lower (LC), shrub (SH) and SP (sapling) layers.





Stepney City Farm Forest Garden

natural forests in their ability to sequester carbon (Toensmeier, 2016). Through collection of DBH of all woody species, the study identified potentially useful species for timber or sequestration. These include *Leylandii* (8cm), *Alnus cordata* (13cm), *Hippophae rhamnoides* (8.3cm) and *Juglans ailantifolia* (9.2cm) (all values are average DBH of >20 stems per species at ten years growth).

Resilience

As we experience more unpredictable weather, and risks from pests and diseases, polycultures can provide resilience against such shocks. As one participant said “something always does well.”

Diversification


Multistrata agroforestry is often integrated into sites to provide a diversified portfolio (Table 2).

Conclusion

We have an opportunity to decide for ourselves what our land will look like and how we steward it. It up to us as to whether we embrace transformation.

Contact karinavponton@gmail.com for access to the full report and a simplified version for practitioners: www.permaculture.org.uk/research/forest-garden-research

Multistrata agroforestry for an estate’s diversified portfolio (table 2)	
OPPORTUNITIES	DETAILS, EXAMPLES AND FURTHER INFORMATION
Tours and Open Gardens	e.g. Agroforestry Research Trust, Carpe Diem Gardens
Perennial market gardens or preserve boxes	Perennials can be a USP, e.g. Old Sleningford Farm, Incredible Vegetables
Arboretums, unique specimens and seed banks	Conservation of endangered or heritage plants
Tree & plant nurseries	e.g. Agroforestry Research Trust, Cottage Garden
Supporting others	Gifting land to BPOC or marginalised (Land Workers Alliance, Ecological Land Cooperative, Food Forest Foundation)
Education & courses	For young or novice learners, e.g. Rootsman Rak, National Forest Gardening Scheme
Underplanted orchards	Underplant with fruit bushes and herbaceous perennials
Rewilding & regeneration	Integrate into restoration or rewilding
Farm clusters	Integrate into large scale or catchment efforts (Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust, Natural England)
Research & experimentation	Trialling new species, provenances, ecological interactions, growth performance for timber, fuel and soil remediation, e.g. Agroforestry Research Trust, Eric Toensmeier
Event space	For wellbeing retreats and weddings, e.g. The Quadrangle
Designs	Design consultancy services, e.g. Rootsman Rak, Whitefield Associates
Pick your own, cafes or fine dining	e.g. Stepney City Farm, Edibles




CENTRAL BOILER

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 30 – 106kW.
- Over 90% efficient, A+ rated.
- 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



West Fraser

WE'RE HIRING

Wood Fibre Manager
Cowie, Scotland
Salary – DOE

We are looking to recruit a Wood Fibre Manager who will strive to develop the role, in return accessing career progression, training & support in this challenging, but highly responsible and exciting career opportunity.

To apply or for more details, please send your CV to Kevin Thomas:
kevin.thomas@westfraser.com

uk.westfraser.com



KILN SERVICES LIMITED



Two 160 cubic metre firewood log drying kilns



One 16 cubic metre log drying kiln complete with 60kw biomass hot air heater

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

KILN Services has been designing and manufacturing timber-drying kilns from its base in Essex for over 45 years. The company provides drying and heat-treatment kilns for all sectors of the industry, including softwood and hardwood sawmills, pallet manufacturing, fence-post producers, biomass fuel producers, modified timber and research facilities in universities and training colleges.

In recent years, the market for kilns to dry biomass fuel has increased considerably. This has been driven by consumer awareness of product moisture and government initiatives to improve air quality, such as the Woodsure Ready to Burn accreditation scheme.

Manufacturers of Timber Drying Kilns for over 45 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

UK Eucalyptus silviculture in 2022

Bryan Elliot of Eucalyptus Renewables explains the silvicultural requirements to successfully grow high-yield Eucalyptus species in the UK.

Eucalyptus is suited to Short Rotation Forestry (SRF) as a biomass crop due to producing a high yield at a fast growth rate, typically providing chip or firewood after the fourth year of growth. The wood produced has a high density and produces a very high calorific value. Eucalyptus species typically have a strong apical dominance, meaning that they produce straight stems, perfect for harvesting, handling and transportation, keeping processing costs low using conventional machinery. Many of these Eucalyptus species provenances originate from higher elevations and generally lower average annual temperatures than much of UK. They will thrive given structured silvicultural treatments, which are no different from expected traditional standards of establishment that we should be carrying out for all other trees.

Soil

Eucalypts grow well on a range of soils, alkaline as well as acidic and neutral soils within the pH range 4.5 – 7.5, with most species preferring moderately fertile soil types. The vast differences within the Eucalyptus genus' indigenous habitat have resulted in an inherent adaptability and variation between species to optimal soil type. As a consequence, species such as *Eucalyptus dalrympleana* (Mountain white gum) and *Eucalyptus coccifera* (Snow peppermint) can be seen to grow best on rocky dolerite soils, yet more adaptable species such as *Eucalyptus glaucescens* (Tingiringi gum) will thrive in a wider range of well-drained soil types and pH. Most notable for sites with poor soil quality is *Eucalyptus rodwayi* (Swamp Peppermint) which has a low site nutrient requirement and an extensive rooting ability

which translates to suitability for land reclamation and shelterbelt qualities.

Eucalyptus and the British climate

Eucalypts do not have a true dormant period and retain foliage which enables growth during warm winter periods. As a result the rewards of eucalyptus are yields dramatically higher to those of traditional forestry. Yields will vary greatly depending on the species of Eucalyptus planted, to suit climatic conditions and specific site characteristics. *Eucalyptus glaucescens* has been successfully established throughout drier East Coast locations, Wales, Midlands and Scotland with annual yields in the region of 25m³/ha/annum.

Throughout the southern parts of Britain, *Eucalyptus nitens* and *Eucalyptus denticulata* are two similar species that are well suited to temperate climates with

CASE STUDY: Bawtry Plantation, Tilt Farm Estates, Nottingham

Bawtry plantation was almost entirely mature single age pines on sandy/light loam soils. Future Management strategy was based on diversification of age class structure with a varied crop type and productivity objective. As part of this strategy, Compartment 104 was planted with *Eucalyptus glaucescens* in 2014. Line thinning with some intermediates were felled in 2020, with an estimated 20m³/ha being removed over five hectares. All of the timber was sold locally standing to a firewood merchant with a relatively high return per metre. In 2022 production thinning will again take place with the capacity for higher volumes of removals whilst retaining stand viability. Thinning is important for the crop as light competition reduces tree piece sizes significantly. Complex and evolving silvicultural decisions will be taken in the future to assess maximum yield capacity whilst retaining a thriving deep canopy structure.



CASE STUDY: Dovers Linhay, Crediton Fitzpaine, Devon

A 21-hectare woodland creation site with approximately 17 hectares of productive Eucalyptus species (six species), and around 4 hectares of riparian zone focussed, native broadleaves and open ground. All lines were sprayed and then ripped to reduce compaction to encourage white root development and also improve anchoring capacity as the rate of top growth will be exponential. The Eucalyptus plugs were planted from April-May 2021 with two out of five fields planted with a micro-white clover to suppress weed competition and improve soil nutrient status. Weeding operations commenced within a month of completing tree planting, with nearly 100% survival and an average tree height of around 1.2m after 6 months growth. Six species of Eucalyptus were selected to reflect site constraints and owner objectives on anticipating future wood supply chain requirements.

cool, wet winters. With good planting procedures in place and timed spraying interventions, these two species will command world class growth rates of over 40m³/ha/annum. Basic Wood Density of the juvenile (sap)wood is in the region of 520 kg/m³, with mature heartwood developing up to 950 kg/m³, with similar wood cell structure parameters to English oak.

Seasonal changes to light levels and photoperiod, are one of the primary constraints to Eucalyptus plantation establishment in northern Scotland. Light duration and eastern aspect that will maximise morning sun conditions are important for Eucalypts.

Ground preparation and establishment

Initially, vegetation control across a planting site must take place, primarily targeting grass, to aid the successful planting and succession of eucalyptus plugs. The land should ideally be mounded to produce a clear planting area. Sub-soiling or ripping to a maximum depth of 25cm will significantly improve establishment, increasing the air volume within the soil working against compaction, to allow white roots to spread laterally and anchor with initial taproot development. It is important for lateral roots to develop freely to provide structural support to the tree. The roots systems tend to be active in developing mycorrhizal fungal activity, which aids specifically in the establishment and initial growth of the young trees.

Planting within rip lines with sprayed-

out or mulch mat 30-45 cm centres is recommended to improve the initial development of root establishment. The use of a wide net tree guard and tree stake/cane assists establishment, by encouraging an upright growth manner with stable root development. Eucalypts have strong adaptive apical tendency which prioritises the leading apical bud over lateral buds. The primary objective in establishing these Eucalypts is to achieve canopy closure as soon as possible and thereby developing a suitable forestry microclimate.

Planting for productivity

Spring planting using plugs, after the last frosts of the new year, encourages the longest growing opportunity over summer and autumn before photoperiod and temperature impacts on growth rates. Generally, initial planting spacing should be up to 2 x 2 m (2500 sph) for maximum biomass (cellulose) production as light and space competition will soon become

an important silvicultural consideration driving production thinning interventions. As a silvicultural tendency, productivity objectives are an important criterium for determining initial spacing and interventions than for other tree species as growth response is more immediate. For the first two years of growth, weed control is critical until canopy closure is achieved, especially on previously grassed sites. It should be noted however, that on forestry clear-fell sites, the Eucalypt trees are largely successful, as they develop and tap into available mycorrhizal fungal activity and will compete effectively against most other types of weed competition.

Deer and squirrels

Eucalypts seem to be generally unaffected by grey squirrels or voles. Deer also show little interest and given other browsing opportunities will leave the establishing Eucalypts alone. Individual trees can be targeted by deer fraying.



UNBEATABLE QUALITY • EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE

Approved
HYDRAULICS



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.

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



SUPPLYING THE FORESTRY & TIMBER TRADE

sales@approvedhydraulics.co.uk

0161 480 0869

approvedhydraulics.co.uk

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



JOHN DEERE

Forwarders - a market roundup



Andrew Smith,
Forestry
Lecturer at
Scottish School
of Forestry, UHI

Hopefully you have all recovered from the festivities and are having a good start to 2022. Many of you will, I am sure, be trying to make plans for a clean-up post Storm Arwen, whether that is a small-scale tidy up or large tracts of windblow that have to be dealt with. Varying reports have been emerging of the damage sustained, particularly on the East coast of the country (read more on page 6 – 8 in this issue).

You may also have read sad reports of the death of Mr Lars Bruun, a pioneer in our industry. Amongst his many creations, Lars designed the Mini-Bruunett forwarder, a machine which many hold in fond regard and which paved the way for the definitive design of the modern forwarder. Many of our older machine operators began their careers on these nimble little machines. Indeed, they commonly

followed the chainsaw thinning squads of old.

It is somewhat fitting therefore, that this month's machinery review is on forwarders available in the UK, from some of our bigger industry players. Although there have not been huge developments in this area, it is interesting to remind ourselves of what is available.

Firstly however, and in a little tribute to Lars Bruun, let's have a look at the specification of the Mini-Bruunett 678 forwarder available in 1986. The 678 weighed in at 8500kg and had a load capacity of 7500kg. It was fitted with an international engine which produced around 83hp, and a fuel tank capacity of 90 litres. It could be fitted with either 500x22.5 tyres or 600x22.5. When fitted with the 500x22.5 option the 678 was only 2.4 metres wide. Ground clearance at the centre joint was 575mm. The crane, as many will remember was fitted above the cab, and entry to and from the cab was via a door at the rear – basically onto the centre joint!

JOHN DEERE

John Deere's forwarder range comprises six models – the 910, 1010, 1110, 1210, 1510, and the 1910G with load capacities of 9, 11,

12, 13, 15 and 19 tonnes, respectively. The 910 and 1010G are aimed primarily at the thinnings market, with the 910G being the smallest in the range and a load capacity of nine tonnes. John Deere engines are fitted with outputs of 158hp and 176hp. Boom reach varies between 7.2m and 10m depending on the specification. Machine weights, something that is becoming more important in thinning machines, start at 14,700kg for the 910G and 14,950kg for the 1010G.

The mid-range comprises the 1110G and 1210G, with capacities of 12 and 13 tonnes. The 1110 has been around for a long time now and has become a firm favourite for many operators and contractors alike. Options include a short, medium or long load space, a fixed or levelling/rotating cabin and a long rear-bogie option ideal for reducing ground pressure on wet sites when fitted with band tracks. Minimum weights are 17,000kg for the 1110G and 18,000kg for the 1210G.

At the top of the range comes the 1510G and 1910G, with load capacities of up to 19 tonnes on the 1910G. These machines are ideally suited to long hauls and rough terrain. The 1510 can also be fitted with the long rear bogie too, again >>


KOMATSU

making it suitable for soft ground. Features of the 1910G include greater lifting capacity and 680mm of ground clearance. Big machines require big horsepower and the 1910 is no exception with 270hp available. The minimum weight of the 1510 is 18,230kg whilst the 1910G starts at 22,000kg.

KOMATSU

Komatsu's range of forwarders also features six machines, with the recent introduction of the 825tx recognising the need for a smaller thinning machine. The range comprises the 825, 835, 845, 855, 875, and the 895. Load capacity varies between 9 tonnes for the 825 and up to 20 tonnes

for the 895. Features such as Smart Crane and Comfort Ride are available throughout the range.

At the smaller end of the range the 825 and 835 are ideally suited for thinning. The load capacities of 9 and 11 tonnes, respectively, are comparable with other manufacturers, with crane reach of 7.7-10m available depending on specification and end user requirements. Machine weights start at 14,580kg and 16,040kg, respectively. Both machines are fitted with 4-cylinder Agco engines rated at 170hp and can be as narrow as only 2.6m wide.

The mid-range 845 and 855 models fall into the popular 12 and 14-tonne class of

machines, respectively. The 845 featuring a 187hp 4-cylinder engine, whilst the 855 features a 6-cylinder Agco unit producing 228hp. These machines weigh in at 16,890 and 18,000kg, again, depending on specifications. Examples of options include tyre fitment to the 855, which can either be 600, 710 or 800mm wide.

Finally at the upper end of the range we have the 875 and 895 forwarders. The 875 is equipped with a 255hp engine, is rated for a 16-tonne load and weighs a minimum of 20,100kg itself. By comparison, the 895 features a 287hp engine, is rated for 20 tonnes and weighs from 23,600kg. The 895 features and impressive 790mm of ground clearance. Both machines are fitted with 220 litre diesel tank and 22 litre Adblue tank capacity. Options include load flex - a bunk widening/lowering option proven to have benefits on soft ground.

PONSSE

The Ponsse forwarder range features nine models ranging from the smallest Wisent rated at 12 tonnes up to the largest Elephant King at 20 tonnes load capacity. This also includes the recently introduced Bison model, which in a change from the now standard hydrostatic/mechanical transmission, features a CVT transmission similar to many modern tractors that readers may be familiar with. The Ponsse range of forwarders are fitted with Mercedes Benz engines. In addition, the machines are all fitted with the cavernous Ponsse cab, with lots of space and storage.

The Wisent and the Elk, have load capacities of 12 and 13 tonnes, respectively, >>


PONSSE

MASON WOODCHIPPERS



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

LOOKING FOR
A DISEASE OR
ASH DIEBACK
SPECIALIST?



• Site clearance • Forestry works
• Roadside works • Fully operated
machinery including harvester,
forwarder, chippers, mulchers, 360°
with various attachments (tracked)
Sennebogen road legal machinery, etc

E: alec@kwrplanthire.co.uk | T: 07903 463743 or
E: kate@kwrplanthire.co.uk | T: 07775 770454

www.kwrplanthire.co.uk



allswage^{uk}

A SELECTION FROM OUR EXTENSIVE RANGE
FOR THE FORESTRY MACHINERY INDUSTRY



H CRIMP 110

- 1" 4SP
- 110t
- 28kg
- Robust
- Manual



H CRIMP 80

- 1" 2WB
- 80t
- 25kg
- Lightweight
- Manual or pneumatic



S CRIMP 70 EVO R

- 1" 4SP
- 70t
- 75kg
- Revolving head
- 230/415/12V

43-49 Roebuck Street, West Bromwich, West Midlands B70 6RB
0121 553 5048 | allswageuk.co.uk

**HOSE ASSEMBLY
EQUIPMENT SPECIALISTS**



ROTTNE

and 200 horsepower 4-cylinder engines. Whilst both machines may seem similar, the Elk features a wider bunk and higher ground clearance. The Elk can also be fitted with the K90+ crane with increased lifting and slewing capacity. The wisent typically weighs 17 tonnes whilst the Elk typically weighs in at 18.8 tonnes.

The Buffalo, a stalwart of the Ponsse range since the square cab days, the Bison and the Buffalo King fall into the 14-18 tonne machinery class. With the Buffalo rated at 14 tonnes, and the Buffalo King rated at 18 tonnes, it is effectively a Buffalo with a bigger load capacity as the two feature the same engine, crane etc all be it, with an increased tractive force. The Buffalo weighing in at 19,800kg and the King variant at 21,100kg. The Bison, by comparison, is rated at 16 tonnes and weighs in at 22,600kg. All three machines can be fitted with various crane models in-

cluding the K100+, the K101, and the K111. In addition, the Bison and Buffalo can be fitted with the smaller K90+.

Lastly, the top of the range Elephant and Elephant King with load ratings of 18 and 20 tonnes and typical weights of 22,800kg and 23,700kg, respectively. With both fitted with 280hp Mercedes Benz engines, the King variant features an impressive 240Kn tractive force. Both machines are available with either the K100+ or K121 loaders which feature lift capacity of up to 195kNm and a reach of up to 10m. They both feature ground clearance of 800mm.

ROTTNE

The Rottne forwarder range features six machines, from the 10 tonne F10 up to and including the 20 tonne F20, with power throughout the range provided by John Deere engines. The F10 and its 12-tonne

counterpart, the F11, are suited to thinning. Amongst the options available on the F10 are 500/600/710 tyre options so widths can be kept to a minimum especially if using bandtracks.

The F13 and F15 are 13 and 15-tonne machines. Featuring similar engines, and with crane reach options up to 10m, the F15 weighs in at 18,700kg whilst the F13 is 19,900kg. However, an option available on and unique to the F13 is its Wagon Steering, whereby the rear axle steers in conjunction with the machine's standard frame steering and providing tighter turning angles. Indeed, this option increases then steering angle from 43° to 54° making the machine much nimbler in thinning.

Lastly, the F18 and F20, 18 and 20-tonne machines which have been attracting plenty social media attention in the UK in recent months. Featuring 278hp engines, 210 litre fuel tank capacity and 10litre ad blue capacity. Available with crane reach up to 10m, these machines weigh in from 23 tonnes.

TIGERCAT

Whilst we generally associate Tigercat with the tracked harvester range, there are forwarders available too. Namely the 1055C, 1075C and the 1085C with load capacities of 14, 20 and 25 tonne capacity respectively. With weights starting at 22,150kg for the smallest 1055C and 27,325kg for the largest 1085C these are not small machines! These machines are typically fitted with cranes reaching up to 8.5metres and with impressive lifting figures of up to 195kNm. Depending on options, fuel capacities of up to 370litres are available and up to 43 litres of Adblue capacity.



TIGERCAT

UFKES Greentec

UK ■



- Wood chippers
- Wood chipper combinations
- Stumpgrinders
- Woodgrapples, cutters & saws



07977 098432 | 07813 110886 | mark.jibson@sky.com

...financing
your business

BUSINESS
FINANCE
BROKERS LTD

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

Hire Purchase ■ Lease Purchase ■ Loans



Weathering the storms

With devastating weather events becoming more likely, and the aftermath of Storm Arwen exemplifying the challenges that companies face, **Rory Gibson**, of forestry and woodland insurance specialist Lycett's, examines how a sound awareness of insurance options and pre-emptive strategies can take the financial sting out of future catastrophic onslaughts.

Siting, salvaging and structuring

The demand for wood has risen significantly in recent years, caused largely by the Covid-19 pandemic. The timber needs of furloughed workers eager to engage in DIY, along with supply issues and associated problems caused by HGV driver shortages, all combined to create cautious optimism within the forestry industry.¹

When capitalising on this favourable climate, it is vital that those in the forestry sector are mindful of the preventable risks and the protection that is available.

Before a single sapling is planted it is important to choose a site that offers the least risk should storms strike. The extensive deployment of mechanisation may have simplified access to, extraction and removal of wind-blown trees, but this still remains a major consideration. Those located on inaccessible slopes or banks will inevitably constitute revenue loss, unable to be salvaged and left to rot in situ.

For landowners whose forests are at risk from storm damage, salvage retention insurance policies are an option that should be considered here. Retaining the salvage allows woodland owners to reduce their insurance burden, by only having to cover the gap between expected value and the salvage value. This is opposed to standard policies where the insurer retains the salvage and owners should insure the crops for their full market value.

Legislation currently requires forest compartments to be replanted within two years of a harvest. Owners are also restricted on the percentage of a crop that can

be harvested at any given time presenting problems when it comes to trying to re-structure forestry after a major wind event. Good risk management will include looking in detail at which compartments should be felled first, in order to minimise the wind exposure of those crops that remain standing.

The nature of plantations can also leave them further exposed, particularly to fire. Where owners are looking to achieve natural regeneration or low-density plantations and there is far more light reaching the forest floor, creating a habitat that allows flora and fauna to flourish. From an ecological perspective, such plantations are undoubtedly a boon, but from a risk management point of view there is the risk of a greater

fuel load, increasing the likelihood of total losses.

Species choice is also a key factor for those considering carbon sequestration. The government's support of this practice, which has woodland creation projects at its heart, has certainly aroused interest in existing and prospective forest landowners. Carbon farming reduces the amount of carbon being released into the air – through a process called soil carbon sequestration – and instead, converts it into organic matter and plant material.

The Woodland Carbon Guarantee (WCaG), the government's £50 million scheme to increase rates of woodland planting, offers lucrative incentives. Landowners are given the option of selling cap-





TOP TIPS

tured carbon in the form of verified carbon credits, known as Woodland Carbon Units (WCUs). These can be sold on the open market, or to the government which offers a guaranteed price which, because it is index linked, reduces the long-term financial risks.

Such viability makes carbon farming an attractive proposition for many landowners, but it is important to consider which tree species you choose. Native broad-leaves are frequently banded as the best tool for the job when it comes to carbon sequestration, but landowners should also consider other options such as the attractive financial returns offered from productive conifers on a much shorter rotation.

Inspect to protect

Falling trees and branches caused five per cent of fatal injuries in forestry in the year to March 2021². It is a legal requirement that forest landowners take all reasonable steps to have defective and potentially dangerous trees made safe.

Although the inspection of every tree in a forest is an unrealistic expectation, owners will usually notice physical defects in particular trees. Where this occurs, the services of a professional, who can conduct a detailed inspection and make recommendations, should be sought. Following a storm, checks should be made on trees that may appear physically sound but that, due to their location, may have had their roots weakened through being buffeted by heavy winds.

Landowners also have a responsibility

PREPARING A WOODLANDS INSURANCE CLAIM

Should the worst happen, and your business is severely impacted, being confronted by a mountain of bureaucracy can only exacerbate the distress. A substantial amount of information is required for insurance claims and having the relevant data prepared in advance can help prevent delays and result in swifter outcomes.

Essentials

- The quantum of the claim
- Compartment maps
- Maps of the affected areas

Helpful Documents

- An up-to-date forest plan
- Drone Footage or Aerial Photography
- Historic felling receipts

to take action to remove dead trees within a reasonable timeframe due to their unpredictability when left standing. The importance of this has been brought into sharp focus following the ash dieback outbreak of recent years. Priority should be given to those in highly trafficked areas, and most won't have failed to notice the amount of dead Ash on our roadside verges and hedges waiting to be dealt with.

Prepare for the worst

The increasing volatility of weather conditions and the subsequent damage wreaked can have a devastating effect and huge financial impact on the forestry industry.

A significant increase in near surface wind speeds across the UK is being predicted for the second half of the century. Temperature rises in the North Atlantic³ is also increasing the likelihood of the country being hit by the tail-end of tropical storms.

What's more, higher temperatures not only increase the chances of extreme rainfall and flooding, but they also increase the risks of drought. Swathes of forest risk being transformed into tinder, heightening the risk of wildfires.

Extreme weather is not something that can be controlled and, understandably, this can leave many feeling at the mercy of nature at its worst. But what can be controlled are the steps you take to protect yourself. That is why employing appropriate risk management processes and ensuring comprehensive insurance cover is in place should be a priority.

No landowner likes to think that an unforeseen event could decimate their business, but it is sensible to be aware of the possibility and think strategically. As the saying goes, hope for the best but prepare for the worst.

Contact www.lycetts.co.uk

References

- 1 Forestry Commission, Forest Research statement, 2021
- 2 HSE report, 2021
- 3 Met Office report, 2020

How alive is your soil?



Daniel Iddon of SAF Woodland discusses the feasibility of bringing the woodland soil environment into the nursery to support early growth and plant health for successful woodland planting and creation.

In the 1960s Maureen Iddon was a pioneer of the post war era. Her decision to start a plant nursery, earned her a reputation in growing and breeding rare herbaceous plants that spanned more than 30 years, including exhibiting at national Royal Agricultural and Horticultural Flower Shows. Observing plants, nature and creating a healthy growing stock has been the bedrock of the family business across three generations. Switching the family nursery to trees in 2019 and developing growing trials, grandson Daniel Iddon recalled a story from Maureen where her Roses bloomed better mulched with donkey manure compared to horse, cow or pig manure. The 'why' wasn't always known and growers will often observe these differences for varying plant species when trying different growing mediums. Compared to the 1960s, we now have a better understanding of plant biology and high technology laboratories to provide the data and the 'Why?'.

Growing healthy plants is essential, but the challenge is whether we can grow trees to also suit their planting environment. This challenge drove Daniel to relocate his nursery operations to his woodland in Pembrokeshire. Planting trees from the growing trials in his woodland, he noticed how the trees were changing outside of the carefully controlled environment (soil moisture, air humidity, chemical food source), adjusting to the new climate local to the woodland with an abundance

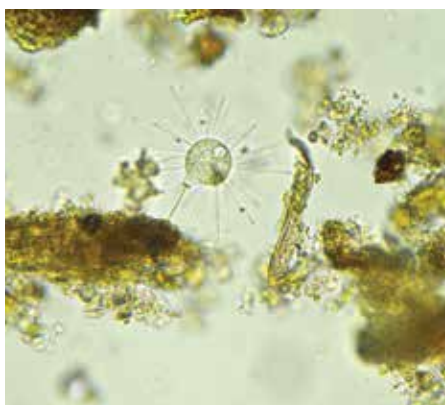


Photo credit: Soil Ecology Laboratory

Stalked Heliozoa

of bacteria, fungal species and microbes in the soil.

During growing trials to support the SAF Woodland investment in the Ellepot growing system, opportunities for improvement in the growing medium was identified. Peat based composts are typically the cheapest medium but are also the least sustainable. Other peat free alterna-

tives contain a high proportion of brown sterilised mediums or coir as a base, and are not conducive to root structure development or able to provide sufficient natural nutrients. At this point it was clear that an alternative was required.

The Forestry Commission launched a Tree Production Innovation Fund (TPIF) in 2021 that has been designed to encourage the development and adoption of new technologies and ways of working that will enhance the quantity, quality and diversity of tree planting stock available for planting in England. By 2025, the government is seeking to dramatically increase tree planting to 10,000 hectares per year in England. To meet these planting targets domestically will require a corresponding increase in the UK production of tree planting material.

Caroline Ayre Confor National Manager for England said, "We welcome the Forestry Commission fund to support Tree Production Innovation and projects like SAF woodland are running. The reality of the anticipated increase in afforestation

"WE GROW TREES BASED ON THE SEED SOURCE TO SUIT GEOGRAPHY HABITATS, IS IT POSSIBLE TO GROW TREES IN A GROWING MEDIUM TO SUIT THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT AND SOIL FOOD WEB TO BETTER SUPPORT THE WOODLAND MYCORRHIZAL NETWORK WHEN PLANTED?"



Ellepot Growing Trials

across the U.K. is that plant production will have to evolve.

We need to meet both the initial demand of tree supply and ensure that we achieve the aim of delivering healthy successful trees. Whether grown for carbon projects of high quality timber supply the risk posed by pest, disease and climate change are real, and healthy trees stand a greater chance of survival than stressed ones."

SAF Woodland Management has been awarded a TPIF grant and is working to meet Challenge 2 as part of a feasibility study to investigate the development of a living soil. The project aims to improve tree sapling growth and development in a woodland environment. The anticipated outcomes are improved growth rates,



health and resilience as well as accelerated woodland establishment success and carbon sequestration whilst limiting or avoiding chemicals applied during the nursery stage.

Woodlands are more than a collection of trees. The complex underground soil food web with a predominant mycorrhizal network of fungi, microbes and bacteria work in unison with tree roots to exchange nutrients. The networks role in the soil is as important to trees as our microbiomes are to our existence.

What is the most appropriate growing medium to fill biodegradable paper pots to mimic the woodland based fungi and microbe environment?

SAF Woodland Management is working in partnership with Chartered Foresters, FERA, Soil Ecology Laboratory and regenerative agriculture specialists who are now looking to understand what can be achieved in the nursery setting as part of this feasibility study.

The aim is to provide a substrate with the functional and physical characteristics suitable for our biodegradable paper

for use in a biologically living fertigation programme replaces these artificial inputs. The collaboration with FERA to analyse the microbial community in the potting media we produce, will allow high throughput sequencing (metabarcoding testing) when combined with support from the Soil Ecology Laboratory using the microscopy analysis conducted to date.

Compost recipes, methodologies and ingredients have been carefully chosen for their value of carbon, nitrogen and micronutrients. This will aid the balance and support of the complex behaviour and breeding of the bacteria, fungi and microbes that create living soil from waste products. The compost hosts and develops the simplest living organisms that form part of the soil food web to support root health and plant growth in its natural forms without the need for chemicals and sterilised soil.

The DNA metabarcoding testing will provide the baseline and understanding for further studies to start identifying the relationships between groups of microbes and fungi in relation to the measurement of plant health (growth rates and vigour).

“Through the TPIF, the FC are supporting 16 innovative projects such as this one, designed to enhance the quality, quantity and diversity of tree planting stock. We are delighted to support SAF Woodland management and their sustainable approach to developing a natural product with the potential to enhance growth and establishment rates on the nursery. By evaluating the role of beneficial microbial associations in tree production, this project addresses challenge 2 of the TPIF, and will produce a bespoke growing medium optimised for plant health and resilience.” *Jack Clough Forestry Commission*

and mycorrhizae) on saplings grown in the media.

With Government targets of peat free sold to gardeners by 2024 and professional growing accounting for 30%, we can use this time as an opportunity to not only find an alternative, but create a living product that provides targeted resilience to disease, plant health and increases woodland creation successes.

The existing regulatory framework on composting is being investigated and while the testing will identify pathogens along with bacteria, fungi and microbes, the legislation will require fully understanding through consultation with the Association for Renewable energy and Clean Technology should this method become commercially viable. Routes to production, may include improving existing municipal waste compost which is affordable and certified. The planned SAF growing trials will be conducted using living compost developed under the waste exemption regulation due to the low volume.

“THE FUTURE OF PLANT NUTRITION WILL BE BASED ON UNDERSTANDING THE SCIENCE NEEDED TO SUPPLY 100% OF A PLANT’S NUTRITIONAL REQUIREMENTS AS MICROBIAL REQUIREMENTS, AND NOT AS SIMPLE IONS FROM APPLIED PRODUCT” – JOHN KEMPF

pots, that also hosts a diverse microbial community to enable beneficial microbial associations with sapling roots. The aim is to eliminate requirements for artificial fertilisers by providing nutrients in an organic, living form. The use of ‘inoculant grade’ compost to make a water extract

The exciting challenge is whether we can align compost recipes with varying combinations of fungi and bacteria to specific plant species to support resilience to disease and biodiversity. We will also develop a phase 2 research proposal to evaluate microbial associations (endophytes



T: 07748 973226

www.catsheadforestry.co.uk

info@catshead.co.uk

Forestry, Estate & Woodland Management Services



Timber Harvesting Specialist low impact harvesting using a precision stroke delimber harvesting head for precision timber cutting • **Timber Extraction** Environmentally friendly timber extraction using low ground pressure machinery, ideally suited to wet and difficult sites • **Timber Marketing and Standing Sale** Marketing and sale of standing timber and cut roundwood of all types and grades • **Woodland Management** Undertaking all aspects of Woodland Management from pest control and pesticide application, vegetation management, site clearance, windrowing and brash raking, site preparation and replanting • **Estate Management** Site drainage, ditch clearing, bracken and gorse control, forestry roads and infrastructure and work on Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).



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



020 8539 0611 | www.tipperforsale.co.uk



Litter and littering

While not wanting to begin a new year with depressing thoughts, the scourge of litter and, especially, fly-tipping is a fact of life in our times. And any owner or manager of land, be it small or large, has to face up to the problem. I write this not because I've had a recent fly-tipping experience – thankfully the last was six years ago – but to explore what we can all try and do to minimise such blight in the countryside before ending on another note altogether.

'Litter attracts litter' – good signage and a tidy entrance make a difference

I remarked on this topic in FTN in autumn 2019 when discussing the environment and what each of us can do to play our part as responsible citizens. As a reminder, the adage 'litter attracts litter', remains true even if the psychology of why is less immediately obvious. Keeping a tidy entrance will help deter thoughtless littering and, probably, reduce risk of fly-tipping as it shows that the entrance is frequented. Neighbours can be hugely helpful in this matter by keeping an eye on things and one way to keep them on side is allowing them to walk the dog or visit your wood especially if there are no public rights of way. Years of experience has shown the benefit of the woodland owner playing their part in the community.

The matter of signage can be contrary. None suggests neglect and no interest, too much can itself become a tiny eyesore assailing the senses. A clear sign naming the wood and, perhaps, requesting the entrance not to be blocked is often enough. Whether a stark PRIVATE Keep Out in large letters works is open to debate, goading some and 'frightening off'



others. One sign I have added recently is the Hampshire County Constabulary sign about countryside crime. It is free and reminds the reader that not only is the owner aware of problems but has linked up with the police's own approach to minimise rural crime. Already one of my

neighbours has asked if I've been suffering problems recently – no, but they have and asked me to help them source a sign. So, the police sign does get read and does perhaps have a deterrent role.

Regular litter picks

For years my wife and I have walked the lane frontage of our wood, about 700 m, to pick litter. We do it every couple of months or so. It yields the usual crop of drinks cans, discarded lunch wrappers and assorted detritus – the most recent is in the picture. But what this practice does, as well as countering 'litter attracts litter', is a thank-you to our neighbours. The lane they regularly travel is kept litter free and with us all practising it something like two miles of lane is kept tidy.

Good 'litter'

Here I play on the word meaning the covering of the forest floor with leaves, twigs, needles, cones, fruits and the like that protects the soil surface, builds organic matter and is part of nutrient recycling. We now know that carbon in soil amounts to more than half, and usually around 70 per cent, of the total woodland C storage. Looking after this litter layer, not plundering it, not damaging it through thoughtless extraction, and not neglecting it will lead to real environmental benefits. Heavy rain will infiltrate better, soil erosion will be reduced, and these nutrient rich parts of the forest will breakdown and recycle their bounty as well as hosting an astonishing array of countless microorganisms. Look after the litter layer in your wood, and the growth and biodiversity of your wood will respond – and you help store carbon. Happy 2022.



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



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

Timber Transport project officers - the Facilitators



Paul Boobyer of the Timber Transport Forum highlights the importance of the UK's five timber transport project officers – a key role for the smooth functioning of timber haulage in our country.

The Facilitator sounds like a Jason Statham movie but is also the most apt one-word summary of a timber transport project officer's role. When considering the constituent parts of the timber transport supply chain, a timber transport project officer may not immediately spring to your mind. Yet the work of these five people is essential for the mitigation of timber transport issues in Scotland, particularly in remote areas with fragile roads.

These regional timber transport project officers help resolve timber transport issues at a local level by liaising with local authorities and regional timber transport group (RTTG) members on the most appropriate routes for timber haulage; they also engage and consult with the public and landowners. Their RTTG members comprise hauliers, forestry agents, sawmill management, local authorities, and other stakeholders. Essentially, the project officers provide a link between industry, local authorities and the public. They are also strategic planners: They forecast timber flows onto the public road network and assist local authorities in Scotland to prepare bids for the Strategic Timber Transport Scheme (STTS), which provides funds annually to mitigate the impacts of timber transport.

Project Officers keep councils abreast of developments in timber transport on their roads. They also help educate the public, often by emphasising that the route designation on the Agreed Routes Map (ARM)

Who are the project officers?

- **James England** – Borders, Dumfries and Galloway, Cumbria and Northumberland
- **Claire Glaister** – Grampian, Stirling and Tayside
- **Iain Catterwell** – Argyll
- **Simon Stuart** – Ayrshire and South Lanarkshire
- **Colin Mackenzie** – Highland

is a voluntary agreement. The ARM can be viewed via a link on the Timber Transport Forum's website, or by typing www.timbermap.org into a browser.

Project Officers often carry out studies in conjunction with whoever is running a haulage job to review the state of roads before extraction takes place, and consult with hauliers on routes, tonnages of timber, timings of first loads through villages and perhaps how haulage will be managed when school buses are on the roads. If the road is in poor condition, built on a weak substrate, or if there are certain constraints, a timber transport management plan (TTMP) might be required. Severely Restricted routes usually have a TTMP in place.

Due to staff changes in councils, the rationale behind a route having been categorised as Excluded isn't always apparent. The project officer will work with councils to review such some of these routes to de-

termine solutions such as installing passing places or road widening.

Communication is key to effective timber transport management. Forestry agents and council staff tend to communicate well with project officers, although there have been breakdowns in communication, often as a result of new staff not understanding the role of a project officer or regional timber transport group. With organisational staff changes, a project officer will occasionally need to raise awareness of the Agreed Routes Map and its categories.

The role also involves managing perceptions and expectations, which is particularly important when liaising with the public. Thankfully most meetings tend to be amicable and constructive, and the public usually accept that timber transport serves an important function and is an essential part of the timber supply chain. The most challenging aspect for some of the project officers is reaching agreements on shared access rights on in-forest roads.

Issues vary across regions. In Argyll, for example, timber transport by sea is significant, and there are ongoing issues with the A83 at the Rest and Be Thankful. In the Highland region roads built on peat are common. These roads are expensive to maintain and often require timber transport management plans.

A feature of upland regions is single-track roads up linear glens planted with forests. Managing timber flows onto these roads poses challenges, particularly when the only road serves small, remote communities. Rural roads in Scotland, particularly minor roads, are often former cart tracks laid with asphalt. They were not built to withstand the weight of a timber lorry weighing 44 tonnes. And some roads, particularly in the Highlands and parts of Argyll, are built on peat substrates which makes them fragile, particularly during periods of freeze and thaw. The careful management of timber transport, forward planning, and strategic road improvements are essential.

The next time you catch the sweet tarry whiff of freshly laid bituminous surfacing floating on a morning breeze, spare a moment to consider the facilitators who help keep the timber flowing.





Distinctive Volvo front end.

Eamonn Wall gets behind the wheel of the diesel B5 version of Volvo's largest vehicle.

HIGH FIVE!

The B5 is a slightly enhanced version of the superseded D5 4-cylinder 2-litre diesel engine previously available in the XC90 and some other Volvos too. Confusingly, it is also available in petrol version. So, you really now have a B5(D) and a B5(P), and a petrol plug-in hybrid – the T8.

The XC90 has been a great success for Volvo, and this second version replaced the original model a few years ago and will itself be replaced next year. It is the second-best selling Volvo vehicle attracting around 80,000 customers annually worldwide. The smaller, or less large, I should say, XC60 is its best seller.

Prices for the XC90 start off at £57,485 for the B5(P) and £61,535 for the slightly higher spec B5(D). The model I was given to test was a top-of-the-range Inscription Pro version priced at £66,385 and £72,895 including extras.

The updated B5 diesel engine comes with mild hybrid assistance which you don't really notice but helps the engine provide a healthy 235bhp and 480 newton metres of torque. It is certainly a fast



Comfortable interior

car sprinting to 60mph in 7.1 seconds with a top speed of 112mph. A few years ago Volvo decided that it would limit its cars' top speed to 112 mph which seems a good idea. The fuel tank holds 71 litres, and the Ad blue tank 11.7 litres. My Land Rover Discovery uses about one litre of Ad blue per thousand miles. Fuel consumption varies naturally but averaged about 35 mpg in my hands. Automatic gearbox and automatic 4WD come as standard.

Ground clearance at 217mm is 6mm higher than the smaller XC60 but the long wheel base of the longer XC90 will limit its off road capabilities. I think it is best treated as a tough estate car rather than an off roader, which it is not. You would not take it off road in the same manner as the useful Discovery. It weighs in at 2101kg and can tow up to 2700kg for a braked trailer.

The XC90 is 4953mm long and 2140mm wide, so it is a large vehicle. Its exterior design is very well executed and hides its large size to some extent. It is one on the better-looking vehicles on the market today. All XC90s come with three rows of seating and thus appeals to folk carting

about large numbers of large kids. In some ways it feels like a minibus when driving it, as it is so large. The boot is huge and becomes vast when all the seats are folded. When the third row of seats are erected, the boot obviously reduces in volume and would not be large enough to accommodate the luggage of seven people.

Volvo interior design has been very well executed since the times of the first V70. The current design introduced on the second generation of the XC90 has been rolled out in all Volvo's vehicles since which include XC60, XC40, V90 and V60. On the model tested here, the interior is sumptuous but I felt the door card was over designed. There are few dash buttons with all functions accessed via the large LED screen. I would prefer a few more easy accessible buttons for the heating and ventilation. However, overall it is a lovely interior.

The XC90 drives very well and rides a little firmer than expected. This does enhance the handling and so the vehicle can be easily driven briskly on a twisting road unlike its forbear which lost composure pretty quickly. The engine noise is subdued and better insulated than on the XC60 where it can be a bit whinny. Visibility out is good, but I did find it a little compromised in that it was not always easy to place the vehicle in tight spots. Overall, it is a very comfortable vehicle to spend time with as long as the off roading is mild.

Yes indeed the XC90 is a great looking vehicle and a very useful people carrier and tough 4wd estate car. Its size will be its attraction but for me it is perhaps too big for the UK. Nice car!

Eamonn Wall is a forestry and arboricultural consultant and managing director of Eamonn Wall & Co.



Large boot for sure



Jamie Farquhar as he will be remembered – a gentleman of impeccable manners, combining an always professional appearance with exceptional kindness. In this picture, Jamie is enjoying a bubbly with PK Khaira-Creswell and Laura Charles of Forestry England (shortlisted for Future Leader Award), at the Confor dinner and awards event 2020 at the Sheraton Grand Hotel in Edinburgh.

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, a short comment text to go with the picture, and an image 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.

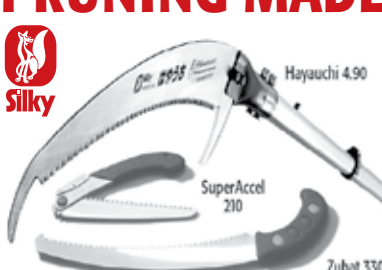
By submitting a picture to Forestry in Pictures you give Confor permission to use the file for non-commercial purposes in Forestry and Timber News or the Confor website. Photos will always be credited.

COMING UP IN APRIL 2022 – GET INVOLVED

In April, we will run our regular annual features on Skills and Careers, 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 the April FTN is 10 March 2022. If you would like to pitch an article idea, please do so by the end of February 2022.

MACHINERY EQUIPMENT

PRUNING MADE EASY



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

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

The world's finest pruning saws

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

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

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

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, Elmswell,
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

UK FCG
Forest Certification
Group

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



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@crocadon.co.uk

JAS P WILSON

FOREST MACHINES

The one stop forestry shop!



Take control with



Botex xCrane Loader Control System

Excavator Attachments and Forestry Guarding



QUALITY MACHINES,

QUALITY SUPPORT.

Tractor Based Machinery, Forestry Guarding & More...



www.jaspwilson.co.uk

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



BOTEX

POSCH

LASCO

IGLAND TP

EAZIPAK

JAK

HARVADIG
THE VERSATILE CHOICE

FAE

SIP

Keto Harvesters