# FORESTRY & TIMBER NEWS

October 2022 Issue 113

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ENVIRONMENTAL INNOVATION

SOFTWOOD PRODUCTION FORECAST

APF 2022

## Wood in the circular economy

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Promoting forestry and wood

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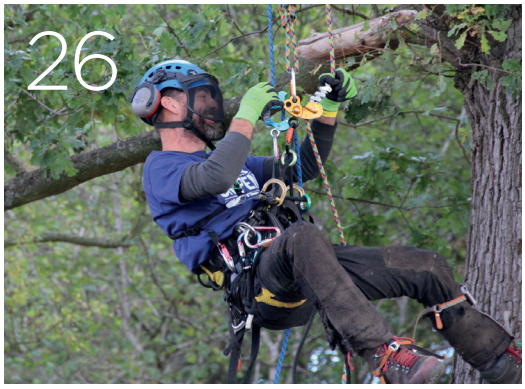

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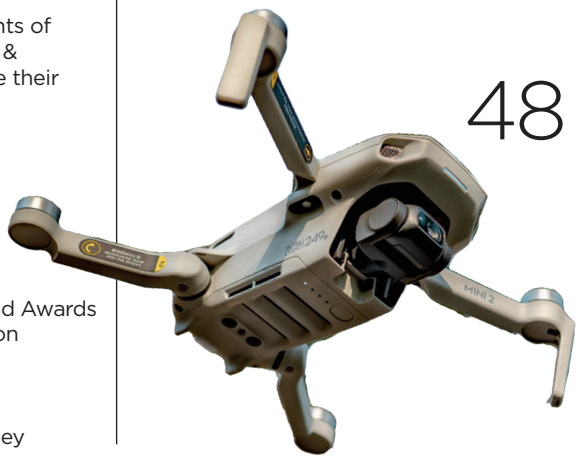



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# TUBEX NATURE BIODEGRADABLE TREE SHELTERS

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**SCAN ME** to learn more about Tubex Nature

**Tubex Nature is the first biodegradable tree shelter to combine externally tested soil biodegradability with scale of manufacture and proven performance.**

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- **Proven performance:** Tested to perform with expected 5-year service life with a robust twin-walled construction, while providing excellent light transmission to facilitate growth
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## NEW STYLES

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|---|---|
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| Nature Ventex | Nature Easywrap |
| Nature Shrubshelter | |

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EDITORIAL

# Winds of change

**STUART GOODALL**
CHIEF EXECUTIVE, CONFOR

The curse "may you live in interesting times" comes to mind yet again. As I write, the pound is plumbing depths not seen since the 1980s, taxes are being cut but interest rates are climbing, energy prices have been capped (temporarily for businesses), and war in Ukraine continues.

What will it all add up to? Well, here's my best attempt at a (VERY!) early analysis.

I expect the 'new' UK Government will focus on economic growth with a zeal perhaps greater than anything we've seen before. Growth isn't something you can turn off and on like a switch and there has to be an election in just over two years' time. So, there's no time to lose.

The machinery of government is the ultimate example of a super-tanker that takes time to turn, especially when it's something as over-arching as delivering a step-change in the economy – and the headwinds are strong, even for a super tanker!

We can expect that UK departments will be told to do what they can to deliver growth – deregulate, challenge current orthodoxies like that on restricting migration, find more 'business-friendly' ways to achieve net zero, incentivise investment, etc.

In the rural sector, we have a strong story to tell about modern productive forestry and timber to unlock growth, while still delivering greater biodiversity and tackling climate change. That said, it's already clear Defra ministers are likely to champion greater food security. This will be challenging for further tree planting on higher quality land in particular.

Meanwhile, we're seeing NGOs gearing up for a big fight on the threat they see to 'nature' from a dash for growth, and Labour (leading in the polls) is unrolling a twin track message of fairness and being green.

At Confor, our aim is to get in early so that we can present our case and avoid being buffeted too much by the inevitable arguments and shifting alliances around us. The fact we can deliver both economic growth and environmental benefit stands us, as always, in good stead.

So, while it's not clear what impact this will have on the sector outside England, for those of us operating there my advice is – buckle-up! This could be quite a ride...

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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***

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# FUTURE WOOD FIBRE SUPPLIES

**Andy Leitch** provides some insight into the much awaited 25-year forecast of softwood timber availability (2022).

The 2020 25-year softwood availability forecast, originally due for publication in December 2020, was finally published on 29 July 2022, over 18 months later than planned. Of course, the Covid pandemic didn't help the Forest Research team meet the challenging deadline.

So now that we have it, what can we read into the outputs of the report?

A key point to remember is that this is a forecast of softwood availability and does not necessarily reflect how much volume will come to the market, and when. This is becoming a greater influencing factor as the percentage of the forecast timber is from the private sector.

### Differences between the 2016 and 2022 forecasts

Compared to previous versions, there are differences in how this forecast was derived. Yield models have been updated and they are predicting greater production across the board, with Sitka spruce models now allowing for up to Yield Class (YC) 40, whereas previous forecasts capped Sitka YC at 24.

Instead of running the forecast with yield models at maximum mean annual increment, it is based this time, at the behest of the private sector working group, on assumed felling at a maximum DBH (diameter at breast height) of 30cm for spruce and 25cm for other species. This is to reflect current management practices and market demands.

Adopting this scenario, alongside delays in felling over the last five years, has contributed to an increase in overdue stands, now predicted to be nearly 100 million $m^3$obs. The forecast assumes that 75% of this will be felled over the 25-year period.

## KEY FINDINGS OF THE 2022 FORECAST

### Stocked area of conifer

The UK stocked area of standing conifers is reported to have fallen from 1.384 million hectares in 2016 to 1.3 million hectares, most likely because of restructuring through the implementation of the UK Forestry Standard in restock plans.

It is assumed that at least half of the reduced area is now planted with broadleaves. However, this remains to be seen and may warrant further investigation thorough analysis of restocking species and area breakdown to get a more accurate picture.

### Gross Standing Volume

On a positive note, the forecast estimates that there is more standing volume than there was five years ago, at 409 million

"THE UK STOCKED AREA OF STANDING CONIFERS IS REPORTED TO HAVE FALLEN FROM 1.384 MILLION HECTARES IN 2016 TO 1.3 MILLION HECTARES"

m³, up from 376 million m³ in 2016. This is mainly a result of predicted higher yields from improved spruce.

It should be noted that this volume is forecast to reduce to 348 million m³ by 2042-46 because of the age class structure of UK forests predicted at this time.

So how does this impact on the forecast?

- The forecast of potential softwood availability for the UK forest estate is an average of 16.5 million m³ of softwood timber per annum over the 25-year period:
  - **Scotland:** 10.7 million m³obs
  - **England:** 3.5 million m³obs
  - **Wales:** 1.7 million m³obs
  - **Northern Ireland:** 0.6 million m³obs

*It should be noted that approximately 12.4 million m³obs of softwood was harvested in 2020.*

- The range of softwood availability over

*continued on p8*

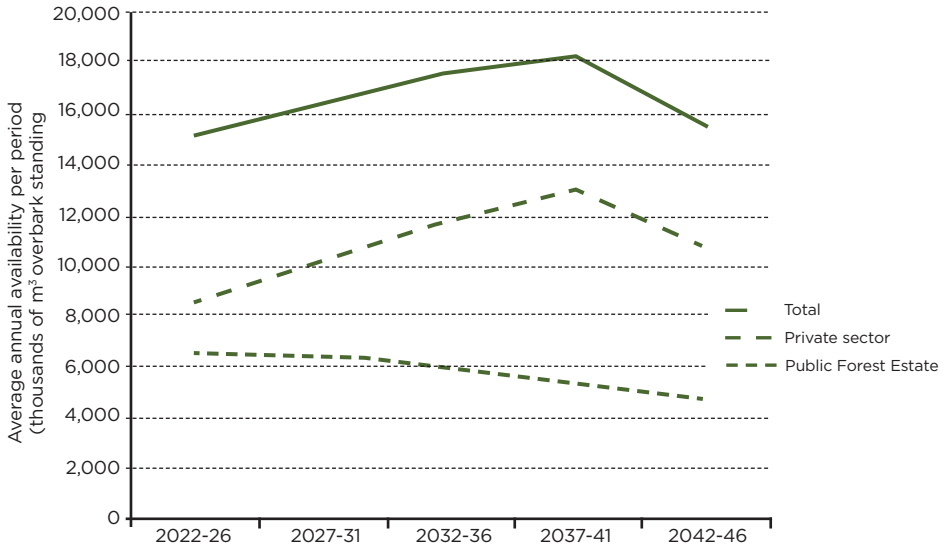


***Figure 1:*** *Summary of the 25-year forecast of softwood timber availability 2022 for the public forest estate and private sector estate in the UK (25-year forecast of softwood timber availability, Forest Research, 2022).*

*continued from p7*

the 25-year period is from 15.1 million m³ per annum in 2022–2026, rising to 18.2 million m³ per annum in 2037–2041, before reducing to 15.5 million m³ per annum in 2042–2046. Whilst the profile is very similar to the 2016 forecast, the drop in availability isn't now forecast to happen until the 2040s.

- The profiles for the public forest estate and private sector estate are different. Over the forecast period, the public forest estate shows an overall reduction in forecast availability while the private sector estate shows an overall increase. Private sector softwood availability is forecast to increase for the first 20 years of the forecast period followed by a decline from 2042-2046, with annual availability in the last 5 years (2042–2046) returning to a level similar to the 2027–2031 period.
- The GB public forest estate is projected to generate an average of 5.1 million m³ of softwood timber per annum for the next 25 years if existing forest plans are followed and production/marketing is not constrained. In the first five-year period (2022–2026) 6.1 million m3 per annum would be potentially available and this will reduce to an average of 4.1 million m3 per annum in the final five-year period (2042–2046).

It has been intimated that Scotland will offer less to the market than forecast, which is disappointing news for processors and could negatively impact on Scottish Government's ambitions to store more carbon in construction through wood products.

- The potential availability of softwood timber from the private sector estate for the UK is forecast to average 10.8 million m³ per annum for the next 25 years. The forecast for England is an average of 2.4 million m³ per annum; for Scotland 7.6 million m3 per annum; for Wales 0.8 million m³ per annum; and for Northern Ireland 0.035 million m3 per annum.

Availability ranges from 8.5 million m³ per annum in the first five-year period, with maximum annual availability of 13.0 million m³ per annum occurring in the period 2037–2041.

- The private sector forecast represents potential availability of softwood timber under the assumption of a management scenario of felling at a specified target diameter where viable. The actual levels, and timing, of timber that will be brought to the market will vary from the forecast as the decision to harvest is influenced by other factors such as market conditions and owner objectives.

## REFLECTIONS ON THE FORECAST

As reported above, the new forecast clearly illustrates increased availability for the next 20 years, which is positive news for growers and processors alike. But of course, as we have known for some time, there will be a significant dip in availability after that.

How far down that dip goes and for how long is uncertain, and that lack of certainty will impact on the confidence of the wood processing sector for future investment and growth: that is why we now need a 50-year softwood availability forecast as soon as possible.

It is not just processors that need this clarity, but policy makers. At present there are net zero targets not only to increase tree planting, but to increase the amount of wood used in construction and now an increased government focus on productivity and growth.

If the long-term 50-year softwood forecast shows availability is much less than it is today, urgent action will be required to ensure these important targets are achieved and maintained. Especially if we continue to fail to meet planting targets, minimise the amount of productive softwood planted, and arbitrarily reduce the percentage of spruce planted on suitable soils.

This is against a backdrop where it is recognised that global demand for wood is forecast to triple in the next 25 years. The UK already imports 80% of the wood-based-products it consumes in a financial climate where the pound has touched an all-time low against the dollar.

There are also potential new (to the UK) green industries looking to wood as feedstock, such as wood fibre insulation and biorefining, all potentially adding economic value to the sector and the economy, as well as further climate change mitigation.

Confor has commissioned Guy Watt of John Clegg Consulting to undertake an update of the wood availability and demand report, which accounts for the future ambitions, and associated demand, of the wood processing sector. The purpose of the report will be to provide a more accurate picture of wood availability and demand at regional, as well as national level over the next 25 years.

It is anticipated that the final report will be published early in the new year.

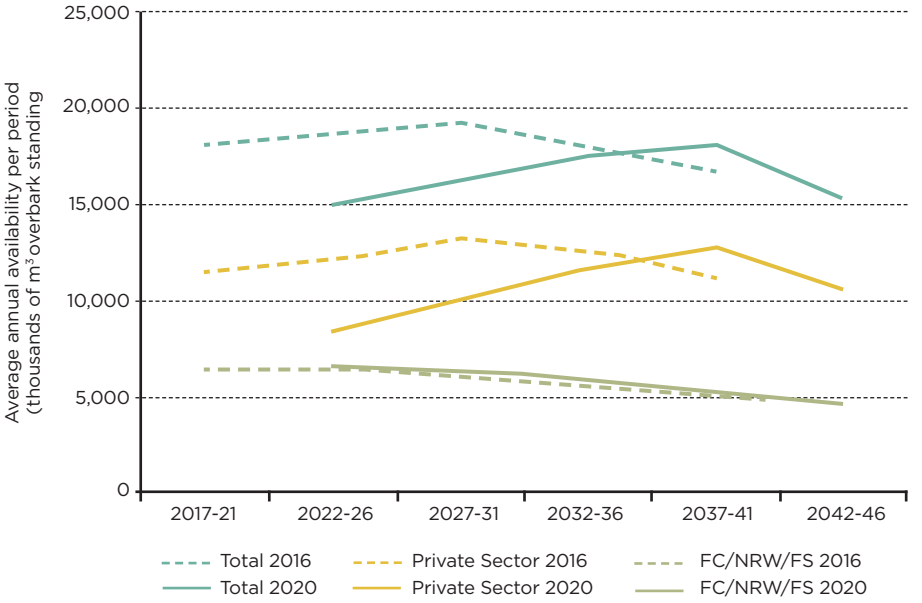


***Figure 2:*** *Comparison of 2016 and 2022 softwood timber availability forecasts (I. Stewart, 2022)*

### FUTURE FORECASTS

Further wood fibre availability forecasts are in the pipeline (the 50-year hardwood availability and 50-year softwood availability) but the publication dates have yet to be agreed.

### WEBINAR

As part of our support for members we arranged with Forest Research (FR) to hold a seminar on 28 September, where the forecast and its outputs were discussed and explained in more detail. There was also a session on the new spruce yield models. A recording is available on the Confor website.

### PRODUCTION FORECAST REVIEW GROUP

Forest Research have set-up a small Production Forecast (Private Sector) Review Group which consists of private/public sector representatives. The purpose of the Group is to help Forest Research identify opportunities to better plan and execute future forecasts. The findings of this group will be shared more widely in due course.

# Tustins

# WOODLAND FOR SALE

**CAE GWIAN FORESTRY ESTATE**
Bontddu, Barmouth, Gwynedd
474.14 Acres / 191.88 Ha
Fast growing forestry asset in rural Wales combing Snowdonia National Park location with outstanding commercial forest.
Sporting included.
Guide price: **£3,750,000**

**TYN Y CEUNANT**
Dinas Mawddwy, Gwynedd
29.74 Acres / 12.04 Ha
A high quality replanting site with species mix of own choosing. The site is clear, well roaded and highly fertile.
Sporting rights included.
Offers over: **£93,000**

**REEDSHAW MOSS**
Keighley Road, Cowling, North Yorkshire
134.94 Acres / 54.61 Ha
Fully mature spruce forest planted in the 1970s on good conifer ground with superb vehicular access.
Located next to Laneshaw Reservoir.
Guide price: **£1,300,000**

**THE KINGTHORPE WOODLANDS**
Kingthorpe, Pickering, North Yorkshire
In all - 243.5 Acres / 98.5 Ha
A collection of four woodlands with a wide range of species and ages ranging from mature and maturing commercial crops and mixed broadleaves.
Guide prices: **£25,000 - £975,000**

**PERTHYBU WOOD**
Sarn, Montgomery, Powys
73.18 Acres / 29.61 Ha
A compact, commercial forest of newly-planted spruce and Douglas fir as well as extensive stands of mid rotation spruce and pine. Sporting included over part.
Offers over: **£375,000**

**TWO POND COPPICE & THE BELT**
Alwalton, near Peterborough, Cambridgeshire
15.50 Acres / 6.27 Ha
An attractive, principally mid-rotation oak woodland with two ponds.
Sporting included.
Guide price: **£140,000**

**ALLT HENGERAINT**
Ciliau Aeron, Aberaeron, Ceredigion
45.79 Acres / 18.53 Ha
A restored ancient woodland on a valley side only two miles from the sea. This tranquil leasehold woodland offers amenity benefits and timber harvesting.
Guide price: **£160,000**

**MENITH WOOD**
Menithwood, Worcestershire
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Sporting included.
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**CLIFTON HEATH WOODLAND**
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Sporting included.
Offers over: **£990,000**

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Forestry Investment Specialist

**John Clegg**
Forestry Expert & Agency Specialist

**Marcus Winnall**
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# SETTLING INTO A NEW REGIME

After a turbulent summer, Confor's **Maria Bellissimo** looks forward to a more stable and productive autumn for politics and forestry.

This update was supposed to be all about the new Government and the incredibly supportive new Forestry Minister that, in normal circumstances, the new administration would have appointed by now.

In a very sad turn of events, all Government and Parliamentary business was suspended on the evening of Thursday 8 September, when Her Majesty the Queen passed away. The days since then have been a time of reflection and mourning as we all come to terms with the loss of such a beloved monarch and outstanding example of service and dedication.

Given Her Majesty's love for nature and trees (she planted more than 1,500 trees during her reign), I cannot think of a better way to pay our respect to her and welcome our new King Charles III than promoting the forestry and timber sector with even more determination and ambition for our future.

**The new Government**

After a two-month long campaign, Liz Truss was announced as the new leader of the Conservative Party on Monday 5 September, after being chosen by 57.4% of the Conservative Party membership. The campaign itself was quite brutal, marked by many personal attacks from both camps that sparked concerns for the unity and governability of the Conservative Party in Parliament after the contest.

Although Ms Truss was considered the favourite from the start, her opponent, former Chancellor Rishi Sunak, ended up with a higher share of the vote than anyone expected.

In her first speech as Prime Minister, Ms Truss set out her plan for the United Kingdom: economic growth, energy to power the country, and an NHS fit for purpose, alongside the promise to continue supporting Ukraine in its effort to repel the Russian invasion. The renewed focus on growth and delivery are very welcome.

The Confor team sees in this the opportunity to reset the engagement with the UK Government and Parliament and obtain greater policy support for our sector, something which the previous administration has failed to do.

"THE CONFOR TEAM SEES IN THIS THE OPPORTUNITY TO RESET THE ENGAGEMENT WITH THE UK GOVERNMENT AND PARLIAMENT AND OBTAIN GREATER POLICY SUPPORT FOR OUR SECTOR."

Of course, the new DEFRA team will be a determining factor in this. Mirroring the Prime Minister's focus on growth, in his first message in his new role the new Secretary of State, Ranil Jayawardena, MP for North-East Hampshire, stated growing the rural economy as one of his key priorities. We plan to make the new Secretary of State aware of the great contribution to the rural economy and decarbonisation that our sector already makes and – most importantly – of the even greater potential for growth and job creation that can be unlocked with supportive policies from his department.

It's impossible to avoid the so-called elephant in the room: the Forestry Minister role will have a huge impact on our industry, how much we can contribute to growth and net zero, and the opportunities for further development that we will grasp or miss over the next few years.

As was highlighted in the last issue of Forestry & Timber News, we feel that the outgoing Forestry Minister has been more focused on a personal agenda than on delivering government commitments or achieving net zero.

We look forward to working with a new representative to deliver the tree planting targets, address the barriers that their predecessor exacerbated, and unlock investment in planting and wood production to help the industry make the most of the opportunities of decarbonisation.

This new appointment, alongside a re-

*continued on p13*

# You can rely on treated timber

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

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

Several timber trade bodies are working together to help ensure that quality standards are assured across the timber supply chain.

So whether you buy or sell treated timber you can rely on its performance, just **follow the simple Ground Rules:**

- **Specify Use Class 4**
- **Use a trusted treater** who has **third party accreditation** of their operational quality management systems – such as the **WPA Benchmark Scheme.**
- **Be prepared to pay for quality**

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

Confor – Promoting forestry and wood
tdca – Timber Decking and Cladding Association
Timber Trade Federation – growing the use of wood
WPA – Wood Protection Association

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**UC015G:** Chain Oil Capacity 260ml, Chain Gauge 0.043", Chain Pitch 0.325", Chain Speed 0-25.5m/sec, Bar Size 35cm, Maximum Output 1,600w, Weight 6.2-7.5kg. Tool-less change and adjustment of saw chain, IPX4 rated.
**UC014G:** Chain Oil Capacity 260ml, Chain Gauge 0.043", Chain Pitch 0.325", Chain Speed 0-25.5m/sec, Bar Size 30cm, Maximum Output 1,600w, Weight 6.2-7.5kg. Tool-less change and adjustment of saw chain, IPX4 rated.
**UC011G:** Chain Oil Capacity 260ml, Chain Gauge 0.043", Chain Pitch 0.325", Chain Speed 0-25.5m/sec, Bar Size 35cm, Maximum Output 1,600w, Weight 6.1-7.4kg. Captive nut change and adjustment of saw chain, IPX4 rated.
**UC006G:** Chain Oil Capacity 200ml, Chain Gauge 0.050", Chain Pitch 1/4", Chain Speed 0-24.8 m/sec, Bar Size 25cm carving bar, Maximum Output 1,400w, Weight 3.8-4.7kg. Captive nut change and adjustment of saw chain, IPX4 rated.
**UC003G:** Chain Oil Capacity 200ml, Chain Gauge 0.050", Chain Pitch 1/4", Chain Speed 0-24.8 m/sec, Bar Size 30cm, Maximum Output 1,400w, Weight 3.8-4.7kg. Captive nut change and adjustment of saw chain, IPX4 rated.
**UC002G:** Chain Oil Capacity 200ml, Chain Gauge 0.050", Chain Pitch 1/4", Chain Speed 0-24.8 m/sec, Bar Size 25cm, Maximum Output 1,400w, Weight 3.8-4.7kg. Captive nut change and adjustment of saw chain, IPX4 rated.

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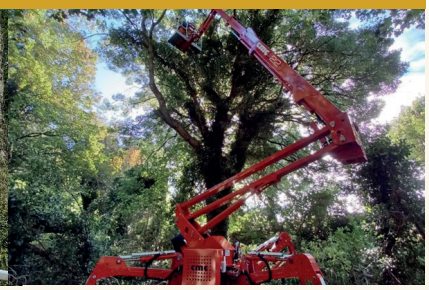
# Euroforest

*sustainable excellence*

## MECHANISED ARBORICULTURE

# DO YOU HAVE DANGEROUS OR DISEASED TREES THAT REQUIRE REMOVAL?



## Euroforest Ltd are specialists in Mechanised Arboriculture and offer a range of tree care and woodland management solutions to suit your needs:-

- Mechanised Arboriculture
- Tree Health Surveys
- Tree Maintenance
- Traditional Tree Surgery
- Site Clearance & Mulching
- Hedge & Verge Maintenance
- Tree Planting & Landscaping

Ash Dieback and other tree diseases continue to spread at pace throughout the UK. Sadly, expectation for losses is high with up to 97% loss of all Ash trees in the UK anticipated. Ash and other species at risk are widespread in woodlands and roadside edges causing a considerable liability risk to landowners associated with falling trees, especially adjacent to footpaths, highways, and property. Early intervention is always advised to minimise cost and maximise value.

Our highly experienced team can deliver an industry leading Arboriculture service across the country. Euroforest Ltd lead the way in compliance and public relations setting a gold standard through our accreditation to ISO 45001 Occupational H&S Management and ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems.

All of our projects are professionally planned and managed from start to finish. Euroforest offer a tailored approach to suit all requirements. We have pioneered Mechanised Arboriculture in the UK and always use the right equipment for each scenario, enabling us to achieve and deliver the best results. We use the following range of specialist machinery to allow us to safely dismantle any tree in any location:

- Mobile Elevated Work Platforms
- Heavy lift cranes
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*continued from p10*

newed focus on sustainable timber supply for the UK, brought by the upcoming COP27 and an ongoing inquiry on the topic led by the Environmental Audit Committee, will hopefully result in new efforts to plant more trees - especially for timber production.

Our efforts to promote our industry and represent the needs of our Members are not limited to DEFRA. We are aware of the concerns that many members are experiencing caused by the energy crisis and we will be working with the BEIS ministerial team to press for future support for the industry.

In particular, the appointment of a Minister for Climate, Graham Stuart MP, within BEIS is a very good opportunity to promote the sector's credentials for sustainable green growth and jobs.

Just in time for this issue, the Prime Minister and the Business Secretary, Jacob Rees-Mogg, announced the details of a programme of interventions aimed at freezing energy prices for businesses. From 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023 (when it will be subject to review), a Government-backed Supported Wholesale Price will be in place for businesses on fixed price contracts which should be £211 per MWh for electricity and £75 per MWh for gas.

For businesses on variable tariffs or flexible purchase contracts, there will be a Maximum Discount of around £405 per MWh for electricity and £115 per MWh for gas. Support to reduce energy bills will also be made available for all business that are off-grid or use other fuels, but we are still awaiting the details.

It will be very useful for us to receive your comments and first-hand experience of what these measures mean for your business, and what actions you are taking to adapt to the current situation in the energy markets. Hearing from you will help us build a strong case to ask for further or better tailored help from Government, so please do get in touch with us.

**A renewed focus on sustainable timber supply in the UK will hopefully result in new efforts to plant more trees.**

**Glen Shiel and Five Sisters of Kintail**

Photo credit: www.shutterstock.com/Nick Rowland

# NEW PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT IN SCOTLAND

On the same day the new Prime Minister started forming her Government, Scotland's First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, announced the new Programme for Government. In it, she recommitted her Government to meet the net zero target by 2045 and identifying new opportunities to grow the economy in a sustainable way.

She also mentioned the intention to "enhance the Forestry Grant Scheme to deliver better community engagement, improved biodiversity and increased value for money". In anticipation of this, our engagement work in Scotland has focused on these same themes, so we plan to continue working with our Members, MSPs, and the Government to support improved community engagement and to highlight the biodiversity and economic benefits we deliver.

Over the summer, we have also been working on the Confor response to the Land Reform Bill consultation. We would like to thank all the Members who have shared their expertise and views with us to help us compile a comprehensive response. Land Reform is a priority for the SNP-Green Party coalition, so we expect this issue to receive a lot of attention over the course of this Parliament.

This latest bill, to be introduced to Parliament in late 2023, will be the third piece of legislation since 1999 that aims to give communities more power in determining land use in their areas. The proposals set out in the document so far are not very detailed, but it is clear that the potential impact on forestry is very significant.

We plan to increase our engagement in Holyrood around this issue to ensure that the new Bill will strike the right balance between empowering communities and creating economic opportunities where forestry is involved.

Photo credit: www.shutterstock.com/cktravels.com

**Queen Elizabeth II Centre:** Venue for Confor's UK policy conference

# TIMBER! WHY THE UK NEEDS THE WOOD – AND THE TREES

Confor is set to host its first major UK policy conference since 2018 in London this December.

Join representatives from Confor and the sector to examine the increasing demand for wood, globally and in the UK. The all-day event will feature sessions identifying how to grow domestic supply, unlocking investment and job creation, and helping achieve net zero.

Speakers include Lord Deben, Chair of the Climate Change Committee, Richard Stanford, CEO of the Forestry Commission, and Mike Childs of Friends of the Earth.

The conference, kindly sponsored by Scottish Woodlands Ltd and Tilhill, will also highlight the work of Confor and its Members in promoting the sector in areas like community engagement and attracting new talent to the industry.

Stuart Goodall, Confor Chief Executive, said: "The new Prime Minister has signalled her determination to drive growth in the economy while still achieving net zero, and our sector is one of the best-placed to help deliver that ambition.

"However, that will mean change and this conference is well-timed to inform the new administration on what is required to unlock growth in forestry and wood manufacturing. I call on Members to join the discussion and have your say."

Ralland Browne, Managing Director of Scottish Woodlands Ltd, said: "Scottish Woodlands Ltd is very happy to sponsor this significant policy conference, which will examine the current challenges facing our industry, but more importantly, look at how we rise to those challenges and work together to overcome them.

"Part of that approach must be changing public attitudes towards forestry and wood processing – and this has been a key focus for Scottish Woodlands for some time. I very much look forward to contributing to the wide-ranging conference discussions."

Gavin Adkins, Managing Director of Tilhill, said: "Tilhill has always been at the forefront of discussions about the future of our industry, and we are delighted to sponsor this important event.

"Securing future timber supply in the UK is vital, and it's so important that the public and private sectors work together to ensure that we continue to plant the trees and grow the wood that future generations will need."

# DON'T MISS OUT ON WHAT'S NEW FOR CONFOR MEMBERS

**Eliza Hibbins-Cline**, Confor Membership and Marketing Officer

I hope those who attended the APF had a good time, it was wonderful to meet a lot of you there. After speaking via phone and email for nearly a year, it was great to put names to faces!

Members should have received renewals invoices for 2022/23 by now; if you haven't or if you have any queries about how to pay, please get in touch and I will be happy to assist you. The new subscription year starts on 1 October 2022.

I am so pleased to announce that our Membership Directory is now live! It's simple to register your details if you haven't already - all you need to do is log into the Members Area of our website using your Membership Number.

The Membership Directory is a free promotion tool for our members so please take advantage of it. We regularly signpost queries to the directory, so you are missing out on potential business opportunities if you aren't part of it. If you need any assistance with how to upload your details, please let me know.

I am also proud to announce that we have a new partnership with Dell that entitles our Members to a special Confor discount on technology products and accessories, access to tech advice, and other benefits. Find discount codes for up to 20% off in the Members Area and simply pop them in at checkout on the Dell UK website.

Our Annual Report 2022 is also available to view and download from the Members Area. This is a great way of seeing what Confor has done for you over the last year. If you can't locate a copy of the report, please let me know. *(See a summary of the Annual Report on p16.)*

We are really keen to get Member feedback as we come into our new subscription year. To share your thoughts about Confor, scan the QR code below or visit https://bit.ly/3eUBkJv. It only takes two minutes to complete and your feedback is really important to us.

The Confor Dinner 2023 is approaching from across the horizon and tickets will be released soon! Keep the 28 February 2023 free for a glamorous, forestry filled evening.

And finally, welcome to our newest members:
England: **Joshua Herron**, Herron's Tree Solutions; **Kieran Herron**, Forestry Professional; **Tom Gillett**, Treeworthy Services; **Rod Richardson**, Emmaus Cornwall (Community Tree Nursery).
Scotland: **Skye Campbell Bancroft**, Scottish School of Forestry (Student); **Dale Reed**, AHB Forestry Ltd.

**Contact** Eliza on 07918 880285 or email *eliza@confor.org.uk*

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# A YEAR IN REVIEW

## WHAT DOES CONFOR DO FOR YOU?

**Eliza Hibbins-Cline**, along with the Confor team, took a look back at some of our key achievements and outcomes in the past year.

Confor is working for you all year round. These are just a few highlights from 2022, illustrating the real value of your membership.

### WOOD SUPPLY

Our Changing Attitudes campaign this year explains why we need to produce more wood, contrasting rising UK and global demand with forecast declining availability. With global supply falling behind demand, Government is challenged to act so the UK has the timber it needs to decarbonise construction and achieve net zero.

So far, we've secured coverage in national newspapers, the BBC, Westminster media, and Times Radio as well as construction and architects journals. The campaign complements our lobbying, which has seen us work with Friends of the Earth on their report that calls for greater domestic wood production.

We are working to establish what specific planting is required to secure future supply, including utilising more of the existing woodland resource and the potential for greater on-site fibre recovery.

### GROWING THE INDUSTRY

We are working with the English and Welsh governments to develop industry leadership groups and strategies to grow the sector. This builds on the existing group in Scotland and, as one of the few cross-border organisations in the UK, we are combining efforts already to tackle the issue of bringing new recruits into the sector.

In addition to running taster sessions for harvesting and timber wagons, we're developing a portal with the Armed Forces to match industry vacancies with people preparing to leave the service.

With Defra, we're developing a government-wide roadmap to increase the use of wood in construction, and we continue to provide advice on a proposed "Borderlands" Forestry Innovation Centre.

### STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

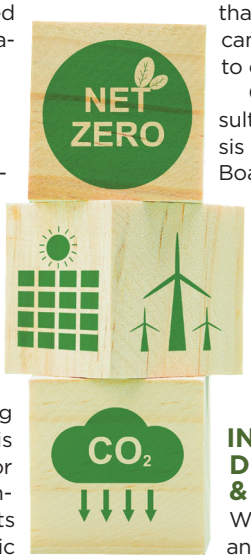
We've seen stakeholder opposition to planting flare up in a number of places in England, Wales and Scotland. This has 'spooked' ministers and added to existing delays and obstacles.

Recognising the problem, and that it can also affect other operations like harvesting and timber transport, Confor is developing a resource hub for Members. This will bring together existing and new visual assets for engagement with the public and relevant parties.

We are also working with a consultant to develop training for people in the sector who deal directly with stakeholders.

### MAPPING A COURSE TO NET ZERO

Achieving net zero by 2050 (2045 in Scotland) will have an enormous impact on industries, including forestry and wood processing. It is expected that industries will produce sector net zero roadmaps and that, done properly, these roadmaps can provide the means for industry to chart the best path forward.




Confor has commissioned a consultant to produce a carbon analysis of the UK supply chain and the Board has agreed that we will now work with Members (and partners in the forestry agencies) to develop a roadmap. This is expected to be published in Spring 2023. This will be presented to governments as a means to target measures to reduce carbon emissions.

### INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT & SUPPORT

We worked closely with Members and HMRC to ensure that supplies

of red diesel were not disrupted to forestry businesses in April when the new tax regulations were introduced.

As well as maintaining our regional committees, we have recommenced a number of technical support groups, including regional processors groups, a harvesting and contracting committee, safety, technical and compliance groups, and the environment group.

We continue to provide executive support to the Scottish Industry Leadership Group (ILG) and have set-up an ILG in England that is actively developing a sector strategy for productive forestry and wood-based industries in England.

In addition, we are actively speaking to Welsh government about leading on a similar strategy for Wales.

## SKILLS & RECRUITMENT

Through funding from Scottish Government and in-kind from industry, we developed and delivered a series of events offering potential new entrants an introduction to forest machine operation and driving in timber haulage.

We are also currently leading the development of a public/private sector national technical training skills hub.

**MORE INFORMATION** The full 'Annual Report 2022: What does Confor do for me?' was shared with Members along with subscription invoices for 2022/23. A digital copy may be requested by emailing *FTN@confor.org.uk.*

# Confor AGM held at APF 2022

## The 2022 Confor Annual General Meeting was held on 22 September at the Ragley Estate, Alcester.

Confor Chair Lord Ian Duncan led the 2022 Annual General Meeting, held in the Confor tent at the APF exhibition on 22 September.

It was confirmed that the required quorum of at least 20 Members were either in attendance or had allocated their vote to a proxy. Votes were counted by a show of hands.

There was first a small correction to the minutes of the previous AGM, noting that a Member had been speaking on their own behalf, rather than as a representative of their organisation at the time. This was acknowledged and no further objections or comments were put forward.

Kirstin Donaldson, Head of Finance and Company Secretary, then talked through the audit report and accounts for the year ending 31 December 2021. On behalf of the Board, Lord Duncan proposed that the audited accounts submitted to the meeting and the reports of the Directors and Auditors thereon be adopted. This resolution was approved.

Chief Executive Stuart Goodall, acting on behalf of the directors in consultation with the Advisory Board, put the reappointment of Lord Duncan as Chair for a further two years to vote. This was also approved by Members.

Finally, Lord Duncan proposed that Greaves West & Ayre, Chartered Accountants, be appointed as auditors and this motion was also carried.

The AGM was followed by a lunch, kindly sponsored by John Clegg & Co, during which Stuart and Deputy Chief Executive Andy Leitch updated Members on Confor's activities and achievements throughout the year prior.

We would like to thank all those who attended and contributed.

# Confor Woodland Show returns in 2023

After four years away, the Confor Woodland Show will be taking place at a new location on 21-22 September 2023.

We are excited to be taking over Bath and West Showground with an exhibition of all things forestry and wood and hope the move to a new venue will bring new opportunities and the chance to grow the show's offering for our exhibitors and Members.

In 2019, 1,550 visitors attended the Confor Woodland Show at Longleat, taking in demos and displays from 100 exhibitors, as well as enjoying a hive of activity in the Confor seminar tent.

The trade show provides a platform for industry professionals to network, meet existing and potential customers, and see what others in the sector have to offer.

Confor Chief Executive Stuart Goodall said: "We are delighted to be bringing the Confor Woodland Show back to the southwest in 2023.

"The return to in-person events has already been a wonderful experience this year and the chance to meet so many of our Members and industry representatives at APF 2022 really drove home the value of those experiences.

"I look forward to an equally successful Confor Woodland Show 2023."

Booking for exhibitor places will be available soon so keep an eye on the Confor website for early bird prices – everything is available on a first come, first served basis! If you were an exhibitor at APF 2022, you are also entitled to an additional 5% discount.

Various tiers of sponsorship for the show and certain events therein are also available. These will also be announced in due course.

# Partnership to continue with SCDI Young Engineers and Science Clubs

Confor is excited to support young learners across Scotland with the 'Climate Smarter' project for another year, encouraging interests in science and forestry.

Confor has again committed to be a sponsor of the 'Climate Smarter' initiative, delivered through SCDI's Young Engineers and Science Clubs (YESC).

Climate Smarter is an exciting project designed to develop the STEM and digital skills of second and third level pupils (Primary 6/7 and Secondary 1/2) in Scotland. Young learners are encouraged to think creatively to come up with solutions to the biggest global problems that they face now, and those that will impact them in the future.

YESC provides schools with the resources and training to deliver experiments and activities that will take them on a journey to investigate how we can tackle the climate emergency. This includes wood samples supplied by Confor with the help of Dave Mills at Boat of Garten sawmill, and Logie Estate.

The programme culminates in the pupils designing and building models of their future eco-school, incorporating all their research into sustainable building materials, energy efficiency, smart controls, energy generation and responsible water use.

They then showcase these models for judges and other school teams at Celebration of STEM events throughout the country.

Confor Communications Manager Eleanor O'Neill went along to one of these events at the Scottish School of Forestry earlier this year. She said: "It was fantastic to attend the event and see what the primary and secondary pupils have been working on.

"The attention to real-world problems and creativity in finding solutions was very impressive. All the participating schools should be very proud, and we look forward to seeing more from them in the future."

Over 1,500 schools are currently a part of the YESC network, engaged in a variety of in-classroom and extracurricular projects to build knowledge and skills.

**Get involved**

If you would like to find out more about getting involved with YESC through giving talks at schools, running activities at events, or providing resources for learning, get in touch with Eleanor O'Neill (eleanor.oneill@confor.org.uk).

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# Measuring growth

Recipients of grants from the Forest Industries Education & Provident Fund in 2022 share their upskilling experiences.

**This year has seen a wider range of Education Fund award applications than previous years. These included the more traditional chainsaw, tree climbing and safe use of pesticides courses; tertiary level Diploma, MSc and dissertation modules; as well as FSC® Forest management course and Project Management qualification.**

**The Education Fund is open to all Confor Members wishing to undertake technical and professional courses as well as educational trips, field courses and study tours. Applicants should not only outline the benefits to their career in forestry of undertaking the training or visit, but also how they can contribute to the wider development of the forestry sector.**

**A couple of recent award winners have shared their experiences.**

**SIMON WEBB undertook a Soil Association FSC® accredited Forest Management Course to improve his knowledge on FSC certification processes, progressing his role as a lead auditor for a UK-based certification group.**

The course started with 16-20 hours of e-Learning, undertaken prior to the instructor-led element, and introduced the basics of FSC forest management, the history of the Forest Stewardship Council and why the development of the 10 principles was necessary for ensuring sustainable forest management. This also included an assessment on Trademark use and implementation.

The instructor-led training was held online over the course of five days, with 10 other students from across the globe. Each of the 10 FSC Principles were covered in greater detail, with specific sessions on Group Scheme Certification, Audit Planning, and Stakeholder Involvement in Certification.

After each session, small breakout groups worked through scenarios to reinforce the content learnt and gain some practical experience through exercises such as analysing management planning documentation. We were also encouraged to apply any decisions to other relevant sections within the FSC standard and cross reference elements of the scenario that could apply to multiple International Generic Indicators.

Completing the training and receiving my FSC Forest Management Course certificate has meant that I am now in a better position as a Group scheme auditor, offering dual certification, to ensure owners and managers alike are aware of the requirements to obtain certification for their forests.

Certification helps to confirm the importance of sustainable forest management for the long-term benefit of the forestry sector as a whole and the wider community who rely on well-managed forests for a multitude of services.

**More Information** on how to apply is available at *https://bit.ly/3Ue9fNy.*

**LANGLEY LOGS, a Hertfordshire-based firewood specialist and merchant based in 100 acres of mixed pasture and woodland, recently applied to train their entire team on a two-day chainsaw maintenance and crosscutting course provided by Vale Training in Aylsebury.**

Demand for product has grown year-on-year and was particularly apparent during lockdown as increased numbers of our customers were working at home and lighting their fires during the day as well as the evening. The kiln dried range was also popular with families entertaining children with campfires and camping whilst they were unable to go to school.

To increase production to meet this demand, with the same machinery, workforce, and time frame, we were looking at ways to improve our efficiency and productivity within yard operations. One way to do this was to increase and broaden our staff skillset.

With several staff relatively new to the business and others not fully trained to cord wood, we decided to train up the whole team to be able to use a chainsaw so, no matter who was available, the processors would never be without wood, and we wouldn't run out of our core sales product.

The grant application was very straightforward and the follow-up process and communication with Confor very easy. Steve was an excellent tutor and we all felt we had learnt a lot, even those with previous chainsaw experience.

To have essential training funded was a great cost saving to a small operation like ours. But the overall financial implications are far wider reaching as more staff are now trained, able and safe to chainsaw. This has had a direct impact on our efficiency and productivity levels and therefore our profit margins.

Photo credit: www.shutterstock.com/Alessia Pierdomenico

# The legacy of a monarch

**Lord Duncan of Springbank** PhD FGS leads a tribute to Her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on behalf of Confor.

It was announced on 8 September 2022 that Queen Elizabeth II had passed away at the age of 96, after reigning as monarch of the United Kingdom for over 70 years.

As a long-standing and iconic figure in global leadership, her death was widely felt and reported by news services all over the world.

The forestry sector, too, was touched by her loss and Confor offered our condolences to the Royal Family during the period of mourning and transition.

### The Queen and Forestry

As noted by Lord Duncan, the Queen was responsible for planting an impressive number of trees over her lifetime and many more were put in the ground in her name.

This is set to continue as the Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) initiative, on the wishes of patron King Charles III, has been extended to the end of March 2023 to give people the opportunity to plant trees in memoriam.

Created to celebrate Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee, the nationwide tree planting project invited people across the UK to "Plant a tree for the Jubilee" honour the Queen's reign with a contribution that will benefit future generations.

Over a million trees were put in the ground as part of the initiative during the first official planting season from October 2021 to March 2022.

By inviting everyone to plant considerable numbers of new trees throughout the country, the QGC seeks to not only create a living legacy to Her Late Majesty, but also to highlight the significant value of trees and woodlands in cleaning the air we breathe, slowing the impact of climate change, and providing important wildlife habitats.

In response to her passing, the Royal Forestry Society (RFS) stated: "Her Majesty's love of trees was well known and most recently exemplified by the Queen's Green Canopy which marked her Platinum Jubilee.

"Her Majesty followed a line of royal patronage of the RFS dating back to her great grandfather Edward VII. We are grateful that she was such an engaged patron over many years and are pleased to share these happy memories of her involvement with the society."

Photo credit: www.shutterstock.com/McCarthy'sPhotoWorks

"HER MAJESTY FOLLOWED A LINE OF ROYAL PATRONAGE OF THE RFS DATING BACK TO HER GREAT GRANDFATHER EDWARD VII."

Queen Elizabeth was a Patron of the RFS throughout her entire reign and attended many events at Great Windsor Park and beyond. Notably, a number of RFS members were also kindly invited to visit the Buckingham Palace gardens and Sandringham Estate woodlands.

RFS President Sir James Scott, who has since stepped down, was among the 2,000 guests invited to Her Late Majesty's funeral at Westminster Abbey and gave a reading.

Another standout contribution to forestry came in the form of The Queen's Commonwealth Canopy, a conservation project aimed at raising awareness of the value of indigenous forests, and of preserving them for future generations.

The project was launched in 2015 with an appeal to 53 Commonwealth nations to contribute areas of indigenous forest to be preserved in perpetuity to mark Her Majesty's lifetime of service to the Commonwealth.

The Queen's Green Planet, a 2018 ITV documentary that explored the ambition of the initiative, featured a conversation between Her Late Majesty and Sir David Attenborough, in which they discussed trees and nature while walking in the garden at Buckingham Palace.

Poignantly, speaking about how climate change will have an impact on the trees they were viewing over the next 50 years, Queen Elizabeth II noted in good humour: "I won't be here though."

## A statement from the Confor Chair

For most of us, Queen Elizabeth II is the only monarch we have ever known; a constant in a changing world.

Her first Prime Minister was born in 1874, her last more than a century later. Over seven decades, with quiet dedication she has served her people. The grief we feel today is the price we pay for love.

It was often through trees that the Queen marked events. In her lifetime, across the globe, she personally planted more than 1,500 trees. More than a million trees were planted to mark her Platinum Jubilee.

On behalf of Confor, I would like to offer sincere condolences to the King and the Royal Family at this most difficult of times.

We join the nation and so many around the world in mourning the passing of Queen Elizabeth II. She was an inspiration and represented so much that was good about the United Kingdom.

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**Bronwin & Abbey winners (left) and NRW winners (right).**

# Royal Welsh Show hosts Woodland Awards and Schools photo competition

**Anthony Geddes**, Confor National Manager for Wales reports

The Royal Welsh Show 2022 was a highlight in the Confor Wales calendar, showcasing the ability of the forestry sector to listen, reflect and engage on those serious issues, ranging from woodland creation and community engagement, to the new Sustainable Farming Scheme and Forestry Act reform. More to follow on those and the consultations later in the year.

The RWAS is also the stage for two great woodland-based competitions: the Woodland Awards and the Schools Woodlands Competition.

## Well-managed and award worthy

The Woodland Awards were, as always, well represented with 22 public and private woodlands across southeast Wales entered for the judges' consideration. These awards cover a host of categories, acknowledging excellence in management of different age classes, planting species, management types and outcomes, including community or public access and farm woodland.

Special thanks must be given to our two judges, Chris Jones and Alan Hubuck, who generously gave up their time to visit all of these properties and use their years of professional experience to choose the prize winners. We would also like to thank John Clegg of Tustins for stepping into the breach to award the prizes to our successful entrants at very short notice!

With a strong field of entrants, we must congratulate Bronwin & Abbey Forestry who swept the board with no fewer than 22 awards across seven different woodland properties. Of note are the Llanover and Llangoed estates owned by Ross Murray, which took eight awards, including Gold Medals in Conifer Woodlands categories for 11-30 years old and restocking, and the Best Entry in Woodland Classes 1, 2, 3 & 4.

A more than commendable showing and a testament to the quality of management and commitment to productive forestry.

Natural Resources Wales and Pryor and Rickett Silviculture also performed excellently, taking seven and six awards respectively. Gold medals were awarded to Pryor & Rickett for 'Area managed using LISS' and 'Broadleaf woodland 11-40 years old'; and to NRW for 'Community or Public Access Woodland' and the Meirion Davies Memorial Perpetual Challenge Cup for the Best Community Woodland or Public Access Woodland in Stand Class H.

Both Tillhill and private farmer Glasnant Morgan were recognised for their management of entries into the Conifer Woodland over 30 years old and Best Farm Woodland categories.

We will shortly publish the full schedule of results on the Confor website for those interested in viewing the winners and we encourage you to think about entering your properties in 2023. Details will be available on the RWAS website in the new year.

### PRIMARY SCHOOL AWARD

| Prize | Winner |
|---|---|
| 1st | Cari Jones-Evans, Dolafon School |
| 2nd | Isla, Cefnllys School |
| 3rd | Kiki Jolie Johnson, Gynradd Saron School |

### SECONDARY SCHOOL AWARD

| Prize | Winner |
|---|---|
| 1st | Elgan Vernau, Gynradd Nefyn School |
| 2nd | Zakia Bella Johnson, Dyffryn Aman School |
| 3rd | Meleri Rees, Uwchradd Brynhyfryd School |

## Snapping up prizes

The second of what has become a RWAS institution is the Schools Photography competition. The competition funded by the Welsh Government seeks to engage children from primary and secondary schools across Wales with trees and forestry.

This year saw a theme of 'People and Trees' with a host of great prizes for the winners. With the focus on inclusion, the judges' brief was simply "We want to see what trees mean to you!". The entries could be a tree you pass on the way to school every day, a tree you have played on forever, or a woodland or area that means a lot to you.

As the competition hadn't been able to run during the pandemic, we saw some significant rewards for the successful entrants, with winning schools being awarded top prizes of £1,200 and second and third being £800 and £500. Well worth the effort for those competing!

The competition is open to all schools in Wales and we encourage those reading this with school age children to get involved and share the competition with friends, family and other competitors! We would also like to extend our thanks to Ruth Rees for judging the photo competition from all those in the Confor Wales and RWAS teams.

# A TRIUMPHANT RETURN TO RAGLEY

**Eleanor O'Neill** reports from the 23rd APF Exhibition, the UK's largest forestry, woodland, arboriculture, fencing and biomass show.

As the sun came up on the morning of 22 September, APF exhibitors and staff were busy making final preparations to ensure the return of the sector's biggest event in the UK was a success.

The weather (mostly) held up throughout the three-day exhibition and went a long way towards encouraging over 20,000 people through the gates. Everyone, from exhibitors and competitors to networkers and attendees, were clearly delighted to have this show in-person again.

Business was done, introductions were made, poles were climbed, and wood was carved. There was never a dull moment for the professionals or visitors who made their way to the Ragley Estate.

Photo credit: Forestry Journal

### In the Confor tent

Thursday saw a packed schedule of events for Members and guests to enjoy and engage with in the Confor marquee. Settled right beside the south gate, many early birds were tempted inside by the promise of a breakfast, kindly sponsored by Tustins, and a lively discussion.

Naomi Matthiessen, Director of the Government's Nature for Climate Tree Programme at Defra, spoke to the gathered crowd about the work ongoing in her team and the direction of the forestry sector in the context of the new UK Government's plans.

"We've now built a really strong team within Defra, working very closely with our Forestry Commission colleagues and a range of other delivery partners," she said.

"Just over 18 months ago, we published our England Trees Action Plan, which sets out the government's long-term vision for trees and forestry in England, including the ambition to treble tree planting rates in England by May 2024, and covering not just woodland creation, but also woodland management, trees outside of woodlands, the role of trees and forestry in our economy, and the huge importance they hold for all of us as individuals."

Photo credit: Forestry Journal

Naomi, while answering questions from the audience, did acknowledge that forestry as a sector has received a lack of political attention, particularly in England. However, she also highlighted that the new administration is a likely source of support.

"Our new Secretary of State, Ranil Jayawardena, has put economic growth and water quality and scarcity as two of his top priorities. We also know that the new government has reaffirmed its commitment to achieving net zero. Trees and forestry are really very relevant across all of those priorities.

"The forestry sector has opportunity for

growth, and it can support levelling up in less affluent areas and create a range of skilled jobs. Now is definitely the time to be making the case to Government for the strategic importance of the industry."

With new opportunities for tree planting becoming a running theme for the day, many returned to the Confor tent to hear a panel discussion on 'Woodland, Hedgerows, Agroforestry and Trees', chaired by Penny Oliver, Head of Future Farming and Transition at the Forestry Commission.

She was joined by Ewan Calcott, Head of Woodland Regulation at the Forestry Commission, Hugh Williams, Associate Director at John Clegg & Co, Jim O'Neill, Agroforestry Advisor for the Forestry Commission, and Edd Colbert, an independent Agroforestry Advisor.

Queries came from audience members representing both the worlds of forestry and farming, covering gaps in knowledge about funding, planning, design, and product outcomes. There was one clear message: there is a lot of potential to be realised.

For foresters, agroforestry presents a new way in which to utilise their skills and expand their offering. Getting trees to work as part of a farm is a widely varied and purpose-driven undertaking; Edd had plenty of examples.

"I define agroforestry as any form of ecological integration of trees and farming elements," he said. "Timber might be part of that system but a good design in agroforestry always starts with the objectives. For a particular farmer, it might be that they want a long-term return, and so will be selecting a system that is well-adapted to timber production.

"Another farmer might be trying to reduce run-off from the land. Then they'll be looking towards riparian buffers and not actually to an output at all. Others might be looking to diversify for shorter term gains through a short rotation coppice or fruit production."

Hugh highlighted that the sheer diversity of the specialism could be a catalyst for a shift in thinking for foresters and their businesses.

> "THE FORESTRY SECTOR HAS OPPORTUNITY FOR GROWTH, AND IT CAN SUPPORT LEVELLING UP IN LESS AFFLUENT AREAS AND CREATE A RANGE OF SKILLED JOBS."

"Just in terms of the professionalism side, I think [agroforestry] is also a huge opportunity for the classic forestry profession to really think differently about what they do.

"I think the profession has shown that it can adapt and be very agile to pests and diseases, to different species, and with all knowledge of the soil and landscapes. We're ideally suited, therefore, to promote agroforestry and certainly to sell its products."

Ewan pointed out that one of the easiest ways to integrate trees on farms is for the benefit of livestock. But this is also one of the biggest disconnects for foresters used to trying to keep animals away from trees to avoid timber damage.

"From a policy perspective, we've had 30, 40 years now of new woodlands being created and livestock being excluded. In the context of agroforestry, there is a historic relationship between using the woodland space and having animals grazing on that land.

"It has to be done sustainably and sensibly. It's not a case of putting your animals in there for 12 months of the year, it's got to be the right animals, at the right density, and at the right time.

"Just because we keep domesticated livestock out of woodland today as a mat-

*continued on p28*

# Showing students the ropes

Confor's Richard Hunter led groups of university students on skills tours around the APF showground, introducing them to potential future employers and showing off what the sector has to offer.

The APF exhibition is a great show case for all things forestry, so the Confor team decided that we should use it show off the great careers that the sector offers.

There has been a steady increase in graduates applying for forestry roles after having completed a geography or a land-based science degree. Therefore, it was felt we should target this audience at the start of their 3rd year - before other sectors get their hooks into them.

We created a short tour that meant we could describe seed to sawn, and the students heard directly from organisations how they fit into the forestry supply chain. The incentive was to meet potential employers, the carrot was free entry to the ground.

Though we asked several universities near Ragley Hall to post our invitation on their social media and jobs pages, the idea really took off with Derby University. They hired a coach to bring students en masse. On Friday morning, 20 students and three members of staff were ushered in and introduced to forestry.

Several Confor Members stepped into the breach and gave a 10-minute overview of what they and their organisation do. More importantly, they described the lifestyle of forestry and explained the reasons why they chose that career path.

The first stop was Tilhill, discussing the benefits of forest management and their graduate programme, followed by Cheviot Trees offering a nursery perspective. Lantra presented options for practical training, conveniently demonstrated by the Scottish School of Forestry next door. Pryor and Rickett Silviculture covered growing quality broadleaves, while AW Jenkinson ensured that the students fully understood how important wood fibre is to the UK. The tour concluded at the Forestry Commission stand where both public and private forestry was discussed.

At the start of the tour, we posed the question: "What do you know about forestry?". The answer was blank looks and awkward shuffling. By the end, eight students had signed up for further information and the university staff left with the confidence to talk about the benefits of forestry with all their students.

Many of the tour attendees also returned to the stands in the afternoon to discuss options for the future. Given this was the first time we tried something like this, I think we can say it worked. The trick is to improve the experience next time!

*continued from p27*

ter of policy, doesn't mean to say that we don't have the largest deer population that we've ever had in those woodlands, doing exactly the same grazing as we would potentially see. Livestock are already in our woodlands, they're just not domesticated."

"I very much want to get the message across that I see agroforestry as a way for farmers to keep farming - by using trees. Trees can help them do their day job, which is really what they want to carry on doing," concluded Jim.

"If we can increase awareness of the business and environmental opportunities for the farming community, then all the better."

Despite the soaring temperatures and sunshine outside, Neil Stoddart of Creel Consulting Ltd still garnered a lot of interest for his talk on 'Decarbonising Timber Transport', presented by the Timber Transport Forum on Saturday.

Earlier this year, Creel Consulting produced a report on the decarbonisation of road haulage for the Forum, laying out how electric vehicle and biofuel adoption will impact timber transport in the decades to come.

Neil expanded on the immediate action that needs to be taken: "We've had 120 years of developing the oil supply chain and we've got to change that over the next 15 years to net zero fuels.

"Whether we like it or not, we've got to accept that there's government targets on this. You're not going to be able to walk into a Volvo showroom in 10 years' time and

Photo credit: Forestry Journal

pick a 750hp with a 30-litre engine or get a Scania V8 at 770hp. They won't be for sale.

"We need to look at alternatives now. We can't leave it too much longer."

He touched on the expense associated with buying and running electric or hydro vehicles suitable for road haulage, acknowledging that, for the moment, diesel is still a much smaller investment. However, with new progress being made everyday to commercialise low carbon transport, the hope is that suitable vehicles will be available to meet demand in the near future, at a price point that makes economic sense.

An alternative for the immediate term is Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO), a renewable and green diesel fuel similar to biodiesel. 10 vehicles running on HVO with an added additive system (Green D+ HVO) emit the same CO2e as a single diesel machine.

This is already approved for use by steadily growing list of manufacturers, including Scania, Volvo and Renault, marking a shift in mindset that has to occur in logistics, infrastructure and timber transport as a whole for a difference to be made.

Finally, we welcomed Forestry Commission back to the Confor tent for Andy Hall, Head of Tree Health in England, to deliver an overview of the pests and diseases that pose a threat to the UK's woodlands.

Over 200 of the entries on the UK Plant Health Risk Register impact trees. This is everything from Oak Processionary Moths and Ips typographus to Phytophthora pluvialis and Ash dieback.

> "I VERY MUCH WANT TO GET THE MESSAGE ACROSS THAT I SEE AGROFORESTRY AS A WAY FOR FARMERS TO KEEP FARMING – BY USING TREES."
>
> **JIM O'NEILL, AGROFORESTRY ADVISOR FOR THE FORESTRY COMMISSION**

Andy discussed the immense amount of work undertaken by FC and Forest Research to identify and limit threats as they occur, as well as working with government to put funding and assistance in place to help landowners manage the issues that do occur.

"Why are we doing it?" he asked listeners. "Well, in 32 years there were only five incursions that established themselves as a problem. Then there were 20 in the 16 years after that. That is serious.

"Despite all the efforts going in by the Plant Health Services and others, things are still getting in. That's no surprise: sometimes it's through trade, sometimes it's through natural movement and pathways."

Biosecurity and vigilance were emphasised as the best ways to help, on any scale. Report anything you come across so pathways can be identified, and specific action taken to mitigate risk.

A huge thanks to all our presenters and panellists who did a wonderful job keeping our guests engaged and encouraging new perspectives. It was fantastic to see such a buzz in the marquee and we hope to come back bigger and better in two years' time.

## New tools and toys on display

Many exhibitors at APF 2022 launched new products and initiatives at the show, capitalising on the event's impressive turnout.

Rainbow Professional showed off their all-new biodegradable tree shelter, which utilises UK PEFC certified softwood residue and Bio Resin from Northern Europe. The materials are proven to break down safely in freshwater and marine environments, and the product is the first of its kind to obtain European certification for soil biodegradability.

Just a short distance away, NextGen Tree Shelters also had new offerings on display, and announced a five-year warranty on all their products. After rigorous and extensive research, they are confident that their products will last the course.

Over in the Husqvarna marquee, conveniently set up right next to the Husqvarna World Pole Climbing Championships arena, visitors got a first look at two new product ranges from the brand. The 540 XP® Mark III 40cc class chainsaw is optimised for arborists and tree care professionals with a rear handle.

To complement the new machine, an arboriculture-aimed set of climbing gear is now also available, designed in partnership with Teufelberger and offering comfort and mobility for hours spent in canopies.

A new programme funded by the Forestry Commission through the Woods into Management Forestry Innovation Funds was also kick-started at the event. Northwoods will accelerate innovative approaches and technology to stimulate practical action in unmanaged and undermanaged woodlands, as well as improve biodiversity and sustainability. *Find out more on p48.*

AS SEEN AT THE APF!

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# Recognising the need for trees

## Confor welcomes new report from environmental campaigner group.

Friends of the Earth, the UK's largest grassroots network, has published Why We Need More Trees in the UK – a look at the need for trees to cool cities, restore nature, and lessen the UK's reliance on imported timber.

Stuart Goodall, Confor's CEO, provided a supportive quote for the document, which highlights the need to increase domestic timber production to reduce the UK's heavy reliance on imported timber.

The UK is currently importing just over 80% of all its wood products, the world's second largest net importer after China.

Despite predictions that global demand for timber will treble, or even quadruple, by 2050, the UK is still well off-course to hit planting targets. In England particularly, the proportion of new woodland creation that is wood-producing conifers is extremely low – just 12%, according to the latest Forest Research figures for 2021-22.

Against that backdrop, Stuart welcomed the Friends of the Earth report as a very significant contribution to the debate about the link between domestic wood production and global deforestation.

In his supporting statement, he said: "We applaud the call [by Friends of the Earth] for the UK to produce much more homegrown timber to reduce the significant biodiversity harm caused by rising imports from countries such as China, Brazil and Russia. Confor is ready and eager to discuss with the government, conservationists and farmers how a much expanded industry can deliver jobs, carbon and nature benefits.

"Confor welcomes the publication of this report as a very significant contribution to the discussion about tree planting and wood use in the UK and the link to global forests.

"It has been frustrating over the years to hear environmental organisations fail to grasp the need for more productive tree planting in the UK to secure future timber supplies. With global demand rising and the amount of wood-producing forests in the UK declining, this report comes at a very important time. I hope it will lead to a realisation that it makes economic and environmental sense to grow more of the wood we use in the UK at home.

"I look forward to working with Friends of the Earth and others to continue these vital discussions."

"IT HAS BEEN FRUSTRATING OVER THE YEARS TO HEAR ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANISATIONS FAIL TO GRASP THE NEED FOR MORE PRODUCTIVE TREE PLANTING IN THE UK TO SECURE FUTURE TIMBER SUPPLIES."

Mike Childs, Head of Science and Policy at Friends of the Earth, will speak about the report at Confor's policy conference in London on 8 December. (Register for Timber! Why the UK needs the wood - and the trees on the Confor website.)

The report is also backed by Lord Deben, Chair of the Climate Change Committee and by the Nature Friendly Farming Network.

The introduction to the report says the UK Government needs to be far more ambitious in its plans to extend forest cover and calls for an increase of one million hectares of new productive forests.

The Trees for Timber section of the report highlights another issue repeatedly raised by Confor - that dislike of plantation forests of the past and outdated perceptions should not influence current policy.

It says: "We can't let previous poor practices hold the UK back from establishing productive forests now. There is a pressing need to eliminate imports of timber and timber products from high-risk countries and there is a growing global demand for timber.

"The UK must increase its productive forestry faster than ever before. And it must do so in harmony with nature and the communities who manage our land. At least 1 million hectares of new productive forests sounds a lot. And it is. But the UK has the land to do it, as well as land for more woodland for nature."

**More Information** Read the full report here: *https://bit.ly/3SkioT2*

# Using pesticides with professional care

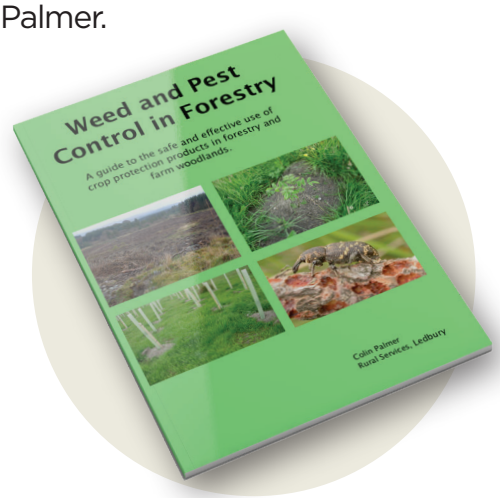
**Eamonn Wall** reviews Weed and Pest Control in Forestry, a practical new publication from pesticide specialist Colin Palmer.

Colin Palmer is the Confor specialist adviser on pesticides in forestry (now for over 40 years) and has recently published this 62-page booklet to replace its predecessor from 15 years ago.

The new version is packed with very useful information. It covers everything you need to know about using herbicides and insecticides in UK forestry, including regulations, qualifications and safety, as well as detailed information on the chemicals, equipment, and how to use and calibrate it.

The main forestry herbicides are glyphosate (e.g. Roundup Pro), propyzamide (Kerb Flo) and asulam (Asulox). Clopyralid (Dow Shield) is also frequently used for docks and thistles, cycloxydim (Laser) to control grasses without harming trees, and carfentrazone-ethyl (Shark) for foliar scorch of annual weeds.

Farm forestry adds many more chemicals to the mix, such as pendimethalin (Stomp), a residual for broadleaved weeds, and the similar isxoben (Flexidor). These and more are all detailed in the booklet, alongside the chemicals not classified as hazardous by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).




Another useful section covers the treatment of scrub, cut stumps, short rotation forestry and weeds on restock sites. Amusingly flame throwers are considered as generally unacceptable in the woodland environment. The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) assessments are fully explained, as are chemical container labels. I was interested to read that some chemicals, such as Kerb, Flexidor and Stomp, need shaking well before mixing.

A handy table about glyphosate and its effectiveness with 21 different grasses and rushes also gives different dosage rates from 3 litre per treated hectare to 6 litre/ha when controlling hard rush. Glyphosate at these higher rates can also be used on young gorse.

Additionally, the booklet features photos documenting the treatment of a range of broadleaved weeds including creeping buttercup, dock, Himalayan balsam, hogweed, Japanese knotweed, nettle, ragwort, rosebay willowherb, bracken, broom, bramble, gorse and ivy.

The final section deals with insecticides and treatment of weevils on restock sites, where Gazelle is by far the most commonly used insecticide.

Overall, the guide is very useful to have on hand and provides a good overview of relevant information for safe and effective pesticide use in forestry.

***Weed and Pest Control in Forestry: A guide to the safe and effective use of crop protection products in forestry and farm woodlands*** *by Colin Palmer*
ISBN 978-1-897781-43-2
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# Future Trees Trust announce new CEO

## Former housing charity leader to take the helm on drive for genetically-improved broadleaves

Future Trees Trust has announced John McLaughlin *(pictured right)* will be taking over as their new Chief Executive.

The organisation is the UK's only charity dedicated to improving broadleaved trees by selective breeding, delivering environmental, economic and wellbeing benefits for current and future generations.

John joins from Response, one of the largest mental health and housing charities in the Thames Valley, where he has been CEO for 18 years. He spent his early career working in the NHS and has also served as Executive Chair of the RAW Workshop - a wood recycling charity that provides employment for vulnerable adults.

John will be supporting Future Trees Trusts' strategy to promote resilient, healthy and productive woodlands in the UK. He will be working to realise a vision for all productive woodlands in the UK to contain a proportion of genetically-improved trees, primarily for the purpose of producing wood for use in net zero carbon social housing and public buildings.

He said: "I am really excited to be joining Future Trees Trust as their new Chief Executive. In the short time I have spent with FTT, I have been incredibly impressed with the passion and commitment of everyone I have met.

"With its new strategic plan and ambitions to increase impact, it is a great time to be joining. I look forward to meeting all our partners and supporters over the coming months."

In addition to the core work of improvement for timber, tree health, and enhancing woodland-level resilience through increased use of minor broadleaved species and mixed planting, John will also be upholding the charity's continued support for young foresters in their early careers via a scholarship programme for placement of early-career foresters and researchers.

Jo Clark, Head of Research at Future Trees Trust added: "It's great to have John as the new CEO of Future Trees Trust. We are very excited to have such an experienced CEO on board to help us develop as an organisation and take our work forward in providing industry with qualified and tested forest reproductive material."

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# GROWING A LEGACY

**Eleanor O'Neill** spoke to Robert South at Bronwin & Abbey Ltd about the business' recent growth and how his team is a perfect example of what can be achieved when you put the client at the heart of your business.

Andrew Bronwin & Co has been synonymous with forest management in Wales for over 20 years. In 2021, the business merged with Abbey Forestry, based just a hop, skip and jump over the border in Worcestershire, to broaden their reach across the Marches and Midlands as well.

Earlier this year, the resultant Bronwin & Abbey joined the Velcourt Group, opening up even more opportunities across the rural sector.

"Merging with Velcourt was possibly a sideways step by what some people may perceive," said Robert South, Operations Manager. "Our vision is that, in the future, it won't be agriculture and forestry, it will be land management. Breaking down those barriers between forestry and agriculture is actually quite good.

"The heart of our work is in traditional estates: complex by nature, multiple stakeholders, generally quite difficult.

"That's where our specialism is, in the detail. Part of the reason behind joining up with Velcourt was maintaining our independent stance. We did not want to be swallowed up by one of our larger competitors."

Robert has been around long enough to gain a decent perspective. He joined Andrew Bronwin & Co eight years ago as a Forest Manager, working up to Harvesting Manager and eventually to his current role. He laughed when asked what his day-to-day work looks like.

"I'm a general dogsbody, really," he admitted. "My role is primarily around technical forestry, whether that's harvesting, haulage, civils, tree surgery – overseeing and managing those operations for health and safety compliance, along with ensuring compliance with all of our ISO certifications and running operations on the ground.

"I'm only in the office a day a week. If I was stuck in an office, I would go mad. I enjoy being out, I enjoy the challenge."

'Challenge' is a theme that permeates Robert's view on the industry and what needs to be done to ensure the good work happening in the sector can continue unimpeded.

Operations Manager Robert South

"The industry, particularly in Wales, is being suppressed by government, to some extent, and that is predominately down to lack of education," he said. "Everyone, including ministers and some very intellectual, professional individuals, don't realise that the roof on their house is made of wood. They don't make that connection and it's a huge problem. For years as an industry, we've been very good at preaching to ourselves, and the tide needs to change.

"We need to appear, as an industry, forward-thinking and modern. I had a very interesting comment from a client, who said 'oh, I bet your meetings are all blokes sat around in chequered shirts'. That's not a great image but it's what's ingrained in everybody's heads.

"As a company, I'm very proud to say that, though we're small, our workforce at Bronwin & Abbey is 50% female. We've got British, Spanish and Ukrainian staff. People diversity is something our industry lacks.

"But the industry as a whole, because of that outdated impression, doesn't attract a diverse range of applications. We don't portray that we are multi-disciplined, skilled professionals. We need to have that education of the masses, whether that's in secondary schools or in universities.

"A forester now, a good forester, is everything from a silviculturist to a civil engineer at times."

**James Townshend, Executive Director at Velcourt, commented on the merger with Bronwin & Abbey.**

"Many farms and estates are looking to forestry to deliver on biodiversity and natural capital agendas, with an eye on the opportunities from sequestering carbon in addition to supplying the UK's timber markets.

"Opportunities exist to realise the potential of established woodland in addition to plant new land areas which hitherto have been marginal farming land.

"The UK Government has set out its aspirations for tree planting alongside its agenda for UK agriculture: inevitably this will result in considerable change and will necessitate experienced and technically proficient leadership within the sector. Velcourt has a strong reputation of innovation and delivery in the farming sector, as do the Bronwin & Abbey team in the forestry world.

"Against this backdrop, it's an incredibly exciting time for both our own and the Bronwin & Abbey team to work together to deliver for farmers, forest and landowners."

The evolution of the sector and the high level of skill required to work can be a great opportunity, not just for recruitment and bringing new talent into the industry, but also in what companied like Bronwin & Abbey can offer clients.

"The modern age of forestry is about openness, transparency and relationships. Our clients value us because we are completely transparent about everything we do, and because we value them.

"We're the first company in Europe to have digital timber tracking software. Our clients can track their loads from their woods to the mill. There's no ambiguity – it's all there, tracked, monitored, and our clients like that. Everything we do is in their best interests because that's where our core values lie.

"Even all the way out to how we do our woodland creations. We don't slap square blocks of Sitka on a mountain anymore. We plant well-designed, diverse woodlands."

And, in the end, that's what forestry is about - the trees left behind.

"What gets me out of bed in the morning is doing something that makes landowners appreciate and manage their woods. We are a professional, multi-disciplined industry, with great opportunity to leave a hell of a legacy behind.

"These woodlands that we design now are a mark in time on the landscape – forever. But we still live in the shadow of our grandfathers' mistakes when discussing or consulting on woodland creation."

*Robert sits on the Confor Committee for Wales, working to secure the future of forestry.*

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LEGAL MATTERS

# Promoting transparency in UK forestry assets held overseas

**Graeme Leith**, Real Estate Partner at Brodies LLP, answers our questions on the Register of Overseas Entities.

Forestry assets in the United Kingdom are commonly held in trusts and other corporate entities that are incorporated in non-UK jurisdictions – Channel Island trusts being a particularly common ownership vehicle.

The arrival of the Register of Overseas Entities (ROE) on 1 August 2022 brought with it important changes for overseas entities involved in UK land ownership.

## WHAT IS THE REGISTER OF OVERSEAS ENTITIES (ROE)?

The ROE is a new register introduced by the Economic Crime (Transparency and Enforcement) Act 2022 which seeks to promote greater transparency and combat illicit money laundering by overseas entities. An overseas entity must make a submission to the ROE if:

- it owns or is the tenant under a long lease of ROE property;
- between 28 February 2022 and 31 January 2023, it disposed or disposes of ROE property; and/or
- it wants to buy or take a long lease of any UK property

ROE property is property where the overseas entity's title or lease was registered in Scotland on/after 8 December 2014, or in England and Wales on/after 1 January 1999. A long lease in Scotland is a lease with a term of over 20 years and in England is a lease with a term of seven years or more.

The overseas entity must provide information about itself, its beneficial owners and, in certain cases, its managing officers. This information is published in the ROE (except date of birth and residential address information) and must be updated annually by the overseas entity.

## WHAT IS AN OVERSEAS ENTITY?

For ROE purposes, an overseas entity is a body corporate, partnership or other entity that is a legal person in a non-UK country and governed by that non-UK country's laws. If you are an overseas individual who owns, or has a long lease of UK property, the ROE does not apply.

## HOW DO I REGISTER IN THE ROE?

The ROE application must be submitted online to Companies House. However, the overseas entity must first:

- Identify its beneficial owners. This is similar (although not identical) to identifying persons of significant control when registering UK companies. For example, it captures those holding more than 25% of the shares and/or voting rights and those who exercise significant influence or control over the entity.
- Gather the required information about its beneficial owners and/or (if required) managing officers.
- Issue its beneficial owners with an information notice giving them one month to confirm or correct their information.
- Arrange for a UK regulated agent supervised for Anti Money Laundering purposes to verify the information.

There is a £100 fee for the ROE registration. Once it accepts the ROE application, Companies House will issue a unique ROE identifier number for the overseas entity.

**The new Register of Overseas Entities requires overseas entities that own land or property in the UK to declare their beneficial owners and/or managing officers.**

## WHAT IS THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION TO THE ROE?

Overseas entities that currently hold ROE property (or have disposed of ROE property since 28 February 2022) must register in the ROE by 31 January 2023. However, if an overseas entity wishes to purchase, or acquire a long lease of, UK property before then, it will need to register in the ROE prior to completion of the purchase/acquisition. This is due to the bar to property registration that is noted below.

## WHAT IF I FAIL TO COMPLY?

There are criminal sanctions, which can include a fine or imprisonment. In addition, a failure to register in the ROE (or to update annually) means that the overseas entity will be prevented from completing certain transactions involving UK property, because:

- As of 5 September 2022, overseas entities are unable to register freehold/heritable or leasehold title to UK property in the UK property registers without an up-to-date ROE registration.
- From 1 February 2023, overseas entities will be unable to dispose of or grant a long lease or charge/standard security over ROE property without an up-to-date ROE registration. There are some exceptions to this, but they are limited.

As a result, a failure to comply with the ROE rules can substantially delay the completion of transactions.

It is vital that overseas entities review their existing UK titles and leases now so that, if they need to register in the ROE, they can begin the registration process as soon as possible.

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MARKET REPORT **Oliver Combe,** Timber Auctions

# Volatility in the timber market

Demand has fallen faster than supply as the threat of recession impacts on confidence

## The global situation

The ongoing war in the Ukraine has had a significant impact on the global economy.

As sanctions and tariffs impact on global trade patterns, we are seeing food shortages, escalating energy prices, disruption to shipping and now increased currency volatility. After the recent COVID pandemic this is another significant economic shock that is creating uncertainty and impacting on consumer confidence.

Inflation in most western consumer economies is running at over 10% and is forecast to reach 18% in the UK by 2023. Energy and food have seen the biggest increases and that has had a severe impact on disposable income.

Governments still reeling from the costs of the COVID pandemic are now faced with the direct costs of supporting the war effort in Ukraine, at the same time as domestic economies come under serious pressure from inflation for the first time in over 20 years.

Global demand has fallen steadily through the second quarter of 2022 to the point where most processors are battling to reduce production capacity so it comes back into balance with demand and prices can be stabilised.

Sadly, that does not appear to be the case currently and there are signs of a 'race to the bottom' on timber prices, particularly in the carcassing sector.

The slowdown in the US housing market has seen US 4 X 2 KD spruce pine fir fall from a peak of $1,400 per thousand board feet to $465 in late August. It is interesting to note that this seasonal price trough is very similar to that seen in 2020 and 2021.

It remains to be seen whether this is a price trough or if it's simply the 'new normal'.

Though the situation in the solid wood market is pretty dire, there are some positive developments in other market sectors, particularly the energy wood market.

The massive increases in fossil fuel prices have increased demand for woodfuel substantially at the same time as supplies of energy wood from Russian and Belarus have been stopped by sanctions, whilst the supplies from Ukraine have been reduced by the war.

It is estimated that Russia supplied around 2 million tonnes of wood pellets to the global market annually, which primarily went to European buyers. This supply has stopped altogether, and it is estimated another 1 million tonnes produced annually in Ukraine and its hinterlands needs to be replaced as well. This is approximately 10% of Europe's wood pellet consumption, based on 2019 figures.

Prices for wood pellets have soared from around £200 per tonne in the UK to over £400. In central Europe prices have also doubled whilst in the Baltic states it is reported prices have tripled.

Increased demand over the late summer has already reduced stocks and producers are encouraging customers to stock up early.

It is of particular interest to note that in central Europe (Germany, Austria, Czech Republic) slow demand and low prices for side boards (12, 14 and 16mm) have led to sawmills adjusting cutting patterns to produce more woodchips as there is strong demand and good prices for these.

Firewood prices have also rocketed and reached a historical high of Đ125 per solid cubic meter.

The Ukrainian conflict sanctions appear now to be starting to reduce timber exports from Russia and Ukraine, which together amounted to $17 billion in 2021.

There are a number of impacts of the sanctions:

a) Finance, insurance and credit are restricted.

b) Russian and Belarussian timber is labelled "conflict timber" as opposed to certified or controlled wood.

c) Availability of shipping to carry export cargos is restricted.

d) Significant logistic challenges in redirecting timber from Northwest Russia to China.

e) Western timber companies closing or selling their stakes in Russian plants.

There is also impact further down the supply chain as furniture manufacturers in China will be unable to export Russian "conflict timber" to European, North American and Pan Asian markets requiring certified timber.

In summary, concerns about the Ukraine conflict and global recession fears have slowed demand for timber but in the longer-term supply constraints will increasingly influence the global trade patterns.

## The UK domestic situation

In the UK, the softwood market has continued its downward trend; there are high stocks of imported material on the quays whilst lack of customer confidence has led to the merchant sector operating on minimum stock levels, purchasing only what they need at the last minute.

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### £ per tonne delivered to customers in Wales and England (central and south): September 2022

| *Product* | *Lower price* | *Upper price* | *Trend* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Log 16 (Spruce Df) | £75.00 | £85.00 | = ↓ |
| Bar 14 | £65.00 | £75.00 | = ↓ |
| SRW | £55.00 | £65.00 | = ↑ |
| Fencing | £60.00 | £70.00 | = |
| H Wood firewood* | £75.00 | £85.00 | ↑ |

### £ per tonne delivered to customers in Scotland and England (north): September 2022

| *Product* | *Lower price* | *Upper price* | *Trend* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Log 16 (Spruce Df) | £70.00 | £80.00 | = ↓ |
| Bar 14 | £60.00 | £70.00 | = ↓ |
| SRW | £50.00 | £60.00 | = ↓ |
| Fencing | £60.00 | £65.00 | = |
| H Wood firewood | £65.00 | £75.00 | ↑ |

** £55 seems to be the norm for processor grade 10 to 40cm*

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

>> reducing prices to try and generate sales but has had the unfortunate effect of chasing the market down, so they sell the same volume of timber for less money!

In many instances, the importers are losing money on every load they sell. This has a knock-on effect on the domestic producers who are frantically trying to reduce production volumes to match demand. While this has stabilised prices in the past, we are not yet at the level where prices appear to have bottomed out.

It will be interesting to see what prices replacement imported stock can be purchased at as log prices remain high in Scandinavia and central Europe. Even at current levels, the high log prices in the Baltics mean that these mills cannot afford to supply the UK.

At some point, the impact of reduced import volumes due to bans on Russian wood, economic constraints on Baltic wood and higher costs in Scandinavia will surely bring supply and demand back into balance and arrest the downward price spiral.

As the UK sawmills take drastic steps to reduce their production capacity, this significantly reduces both their roundwood intake and their output of co-products such as woodchips, sawdust and shavings. These are a core feedstock of both the board mills (Egger, Iggesund, Kronospan and Norbord West Fraser) as well as the large industrial biomass users, so any significant reduction in supply has to be replaced with an alternative feedstock (roundwood or recycled fibre).

These are significant volume users so any change in their purchasing patterns has a noticeable impact on the standing sales market. In England and Wales roadside stocks of small roundwood have fallen quickly over the last month as biomass demand kicks in, and Kronospan look to increase roundwood purchasing to offset reduced sawmill co-product intake.

So currently we have falling demand and prices for conifer sawlogs, but also increasing demand for small roundwood. At the moment there are still significant volumes of windblown timber to be harvested in the northeast of England and east of Scotland, but further south there appears to be less timber on the market. Sawlog prices are falling but small roundwood prices are starting to creep back up.

## The UK hardwood market

The hardwood season is just beginning in the UK and the domestic mills are starting to look for supplies.

Oak demand is healthy and supply from Europe is still problematic so the outlook for the UK market remains good, provided consumer demand holds up. Hopefully the strong prices for UK oak seen over the last couple of years will be maintained.

The export market has had a torrid time during Covid, and the recent Ukraine conflict has caused significant disruption to shipping.

There are now signs that the situation is improving: shipping rates and availability have stabilised and demand in the Far East is improving as global sanctions start to reduce availability of Russian and Belarusian timber.

The demand for ash is strong, supplies from Europe are tailing off as the full impact of ash dieback is felt and buyers are increasingly looking to the UK for their supplies

Beech demand is also improving provided the quality is correct. A lack of beech parcels being offered to market so far this year has meant the export market has not yet had a chance to benchmark itself against domestic markets.

Poplar demand has been slow recently and really needs some new market options, which may be possible as the UK customs situation settles down post Brexit.

For hardwood owners and agents planning felling coupes this winter, it is important to understand that the export markets are a viable option but need some extra planning:

a) The markets are species specific.
b) The minimum quantity is four containers per species (100m³).
c) Access for artics and space to load containers is essential.

So, for a mixed hardwood parcel of ash, beech and sycamore there would need to be 100m³ or more of sawlogs of each species and space to measure and load them.

Firewood prices have steadily crept up on the back of this very strong demand.

The firewood market has been exceptionally strong this year. One major retailer has reported that his sales in August are three times higher than the same period last year, production is running flat out, and he is struggling to build stock. Local producers are reporting similar increased early season demand.

In areas where there are not large supplies of diseased ash, roadside firewood prices have increased significantly over the year and prices of £75 to £85 per tonne at roadside are now being achieved.

**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.

### Roadside hardwood sawlog prices (£hft): September 2021

| | 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 |

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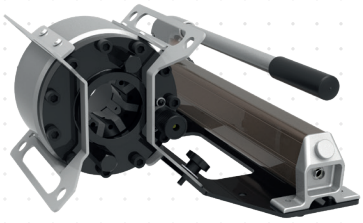

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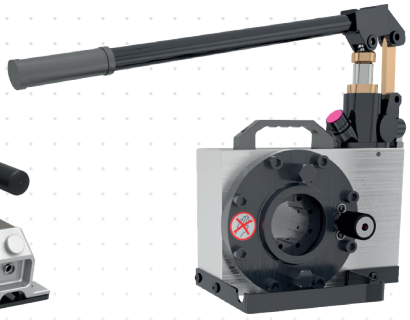

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# New trustees appointed at The Scottish Forestry Trust

The Scottish Forestry Trust is delighted to announce the appointment of three new Trustees from 1 January 2023.

**Professor Adam Kleczkowski** is a statistician and mathematician with over 30 years of experience addressing plant and tree health. His work is dedicated to understanding how pests and diseases affect UK and global forests and what can be done to prevent such devastating outbreaks as Ash Dieback or Emerald Ash Borer.

He firmly believes that we can only start to understand the links between forestry, ecology, economics and health by bringing together different disciplines and has written multiple popular science articles on epidemiology and statistics.

**Trefor Owen FICFor** is a chartered forester and senior leader in large scale sustainable land management and climate transition and adaptation. He is a strong advocate for sustainable resource use, multi-dimensional land management, skills & learning and further development of the bio-economy.

Trefor is also a member of Bangor University's Accelerator Advisory Board that supports science and technology start-ups in North Wales, to drive the growth of innovative businesses in the region.

**Dr Ian Willoughby FICFor** is a Principal Silviculturist with Forest Research and has particular research expertise in integrated forest vegetation management and early silviculture. In both cases his ethos is to deliver clear, practical solutions for forest managers, based on undertaking high quality peer reviewed science.

His research on early silviculture focuses on adapting forest regeneration to increase resilience to climate change and biotic threats.

Scottish Forestry Trust Chair Bob McIntosh welcomed the appointments: "The Trust is very pleased that we have been able to attract such a high calibre of new Trustees.

"Earlier this year, the Trust published its new 10 Year Development Plan, setting new strategic priorities and seeking to increase the funds available to support forestry research and education, which our new Trustees can help deliver."

# ICF launches leadership programme to help meet industry skills crisis

A lack of upskilling opportunities in the sector is hindering the UK's progress toward net zero and a future-proof forestry industry, according to ICF Executive Director.

The Institute of Chartered Foresters (ICF) has launched a leadership programme in a bid to address the forestry skills shortage and drive the industry forward.

The Emerging Leader Programme, developed in partnership with Clore Social Leadership and funded by the Defra Trees Call to Action fund, will develop skills that will ensure effective management of our trees, forests and woodlands in order to face planting targets, climate change mitigation, the biodiversity crisis and the rising demand for timber and wood-based products.

ICF Executive Director Louise Simpson said: "This is a pivotal moment for forestry. The industry is under huge pressure, but the workforce is chronically under-resourced and there is an acute shortage of skills.

"This has grave consequences for meeting the UK's climate responsibilities and we urge the new government to grow a strong and resilient forestry sector that delivers on its ambitions for net zero, nature recovery and the green economy."

Tree planting figures in the UK fall far short of government ambitions to plant 30,000ha of trees every year by 2025. This training has been launched in response to ICF's claim that it will be impossible to meet UK environmental goals unless the existing workforce is expanded and upskilled. Far more needs to be done if the UK is to deliver modern sustainable forestry on a large scale.

Louise continued: "We urgently need to expand, upskill and diversify our workforce and that needs to start in the classroom so that young people recognise it as an exciting career. It is also crucial to nurture the talent we have and foster tomorrow's leaders.

"We are delighted to be delivering a leadership programme which we hope will attract an exceptional and diverse cohort of future leaders which will in turn shape forestry in the years to come. This initiative will give them the confidence and courage to make real changes and deliver modern sustainable forestry that works for the UK environment, economy and society."

Applications are currently being considered and 35 successful candidates from across the UK will take part in the six-month scheme.

The first ever degree-level forestry apprenticeship scheme was also launched in September by a partnership between the ICF, the Forestry Commission and Cumbria University.

"These are gamechangers for the sector but more needs to be done," said Louise. "Forestry comprises many small organisations which don't have the resources to take on apprentices or offer work experience. Without funding, education, political leadership, and a coherent approach throughout the UK, it is very difficult to make any real progress.

"An understaffed and under-skilled workforce will lead to poorly planted and managed woodlands which will waste time and cost money."

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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.

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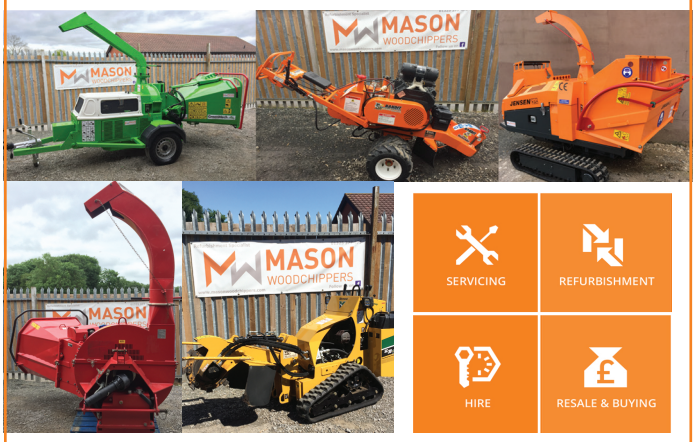


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# TIMBER INNOVATION making the move to a circular economy

Reused and reclaimed wood holds limitless potential for the circular economy, writes **Andy Leitch**, Director of Wood for Good.

Conversations about wood, particularly its use in construction, are often centred around its ability to store carbon and reduce the embodied carbon value of a building. But wood products can also promote circularity in construction – and reducing waste and reducing carbon emissions go hand-in-hand when it comes to fighting climate change.

## Circular versus linear economy

The linear economy follows the process of taking resources from the environment, manufacturing products, and throwing those products away at the end of their life.

By contrast, a circular economy seeks to limit the use of resources from earth, recover as much as possible and reduce and eliminate waste through re-use.

One of the key principles of a circular economy model is to circulate products and materials for as long as possible, rather than throw them into landfill.

Timber fits neatly into the circular model, with numerous options for repairing, reusing and refurbishing timber products before they finally biodegrade and return to the earth.

But some industry innovators are making wood go further by finding ways to make wood products last even longer.

## Taking reclaimed timber to the next level

It is already common to see upcycled pallets used as furniture, floorboards recycled from previous buildings, and products such as chipboard manufactured with recycled wood material.

Reclaimed and salvaged timber have long been a feature of garden and interior design, with reclaimed railway sleepers often used in garden projects and reclaimed scaffold boards turned into shelving.

Collectives and cooperatives around the country such as The Bristol Wood Recycling Project and Community Wood Recycling are taking these initiatives to the next level, providing a service to collect and store timber such as skirting boards, but also providing a workshop to turn some of the reclaimed timber into new products for sale.

> "EVERY YEAR AROUND 18 MILLION PALLETS ARE PRODUCED FOR THE UK CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY – BUT LESS THAN 10% ARE CURRENTLY REUSED."

## Cross-laminated timber made from recycled wood

Engineered timber products such as cross-laminated timber (CLT) are gaining popularity as sustainable structural alternatives to concrete and steel. However, most CLT is manufactured from primary virgin wood materials.

A project from Build-in-Wood looked at how to create CLT with recycled wood products. The practical experiments took discarded slats that had been cleaned and planed and glued them into five-layered CLT prototypes. On testing, prototypes showed positive results across a variety of characteristics including strength, adhesiveness and shear properties.

The research shows that recycled wood products can be used in mass timber products and systems and products such as CLT can become part of a circular economic model.

## Recycling MDF

Technology developed by MDF Recovery is designed to recover high quality wood fibres from waste MDF.

The technology separates fibres from the resin (glue) used in MDF production, thereby reversing the manufacturing process. This will allow the MDF manufacturing industry to access a new source of raw material, easing constraints

*continued on p46*

*continued from p45*
on traditional linear supply chains, reducing waste and keeping MDF fibres embedded in products for generations to come.

The recovered fibres are also well suited to the natural fibre insulation market and can be used to produce high quality loose, flexible and rigid products.

### Reusing pallets

Every year around 18 million pallets are produced for the UK construction industry – but less than 10% are currently reused. This is in stark contrast to the FMCG retail sector where pallet reuse is estimated to be around 98%.

To improve re-use of pallets in the construction sector, The Pallet LOOP is a circular economy deposit-based service with a nationwide collection network. Its range of distinctive green pallets have been engineered to last and with a deposit per pallet system, manufacturers and merchants are incentivised to retain and return the pallets so they can be re-used.

### Design for reuse

If we want to embrace circularity in construction, it's clear that we need to start reusing more, wasting less, and rethinking how we design our buildings. With the growing focus on sustainability across the built environment, architects are starting to design buildings that can be easily dismantled, and the materials reused.

And as more innovative ways to prolong the use of timber products emerge, wood is set to remain at the heart of the circular economy.

### Useful links

- The Bristol Wood Recycling Project *bwrp.org.uk*
- Community Wood Recycling *communitywoodrecycling.org.uk*
- Build-in-Wood *build-in-wood.eu*
- MDF Recovery *mdfrecovery.co.uk*
- The Pallet LOOP *thepalletloop.com*

# Grant applications now open to enhance tree seed sourcing

A £1.2m grant designed to boost domestic tree seed production, create green jobs, help meet the increased demand for trees and achieve ambitious net zero targets has opened for applications.

The Seed Sourcing Grant (SSG) is looking to enhance the quantity, quality and diversity of tree seed sources in England. Most tree seed planted in the UK is of British origin, but evidence suggests that British seed sources may struggle to meet future demand across all species and global shortages of tree seed are a growing concern.

Richard Stanford, Forestry Commission Chief Executive, said: "Seed sourcing is an essential part of tree production and one that can sometimes be overlooked. As planting rates increase, so too will the demand for tree seed.

"This funding will give a vital boost to domestic tree seed production, helping to create diverse and thus resilient woodlands across our country. This will both help meet our ambitious tree planting targets and ensure the resilience of woodlands so they can thrive in the uncertain future."

The SSG also aims to increase the range of species and provenances available in England's seed supply. As such, the scheme is open to proposals covering all species included in the UK Forest Reproductive Material (FRM) scheme.

However, the priority for financial support will be projects that align with the Tree Seed Species Strategies, developed as part of the Sustainable Seed Sourcing Project, which identify 23 priority tree species and provide suggested ideal approaches.

This will be crucial for creating diverse and resilient woodlands, which are better able to adapt to future climate conditions as well as pests and diseases. It will also reduce the need to buy seed from the international market, lowering the risk of importing harmful pests and pathogens.

Eligible activities include:

- Management of existing seed stands – the groups of trees in the landscape from which seed is collected - to ensure they are productive for seed collectors.
- Desk studies and field studies to identify and bring additional seed stands onto the National Register of Basic material.
- Planning and planting of new seed stands.
- Planning and planting of new seed orchards – which are planted using seed or clonal material from known parents outside of the natural landscape in an area convenient for seed collectors
- Some activities will take time to implement, and so multi-year funding will be available up until March 2025.

The SSG is open to any UK-based public, private, or third sector organisation and up to £400,000 will be made available each financial year between 2022/23 and 2024/25.

The final deadline for applications is 13 November 2022. Forestry Commission and Defra will host a webinar providing an overview of the grant and application process in October.

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# Call for woodland innovators

In September, a new three-year programme, Northwoods, was launched to bring areas of woodland into active management in Yorkshire and the North East of England. **Rosanna Curtis**, Northwoods Programme Lead, shares the scope of the initiative.

Funded by the Forestry Commission through the Woods into Management Forestry Innovation Funds (WiMFIF) as part of the UK Government's Nature for Climate Fund, Northwoods has been established to work with forestry businesses and woodland owners to bring woodlands that aren't currently being managed into management, and to work with companies and individuals who are currently looking to innovate or who are currently innovating in all aspects of forestry management.

Northwoods will use innovative approaches and technology across the forestry supply chain, markets, and ownership community to stimulate practical action in unmanaged and undermanaged woodlands, as well as improve biodiversity and sustainability. The programme will deliver events, webinars, networking, innovation demonstrations (including access to forestry sites) as well as canvas public opinion on woodland management.

Northwoods is managed by Alnwick-based low carbon heat and forestry consultancy re:heat, joined by a consortium of industry experts, including forestry charity Sylva Foundation, timber marketing service Timber Auctions, forestry management and training consultancy RDI Associates, rural development advisor Martin Glynn FICFor, and finance specialists Green Business Finance.

The launch of Northwoods comes as a result of a Woodland Management Focus Area Pilot (funded by WiMFIF Round 1 and also delivered by re:heat and the Northwoods consortium), that identified unmanaged woodlands in the wider North East and Yorkshire area with the lowest barriers into management, using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) integrated with Multi-Criteria Decision Making Analysis (MCDA).

The methodology defined barriers to and benefits of managing woodland including proximity to roads, water courses,

and designated areas. Unmanaged woodlands were identified using the Forestry Commission's Managed Woodland Headline Performance Indicator dataset. Each pocket of unmanaged woodland was designated a score depending on its proximity to the barriers and benefits.

Overall, it was found that most of the currently unmanaged woodlands in the North East and Yorkshire areas have medium to high suitability for management in terms of their manageability and the benefits derived from bringing these woodlands into management. As a result, the Northwoods programme will explore a raft of forestry innovation areas, including electrification of the forest, new and emerging markets, the rise of mapping technology, such as drones and satellites, and small-scale harvesting technology to bring these woodlands into management.

## A three-year programme of delivery

Over the course of the three-year Northwoods programme there will be an ongoing programme of services for participants. Some of the key activities include:

***Technology demonstration***

A major aspect of the programme will be to provide participating innovative companies with access to woodland sites in order to demonstrate novel technology, tools and techniques to stimulate action in unmanaged and undermanaged woodlands, as well as practical advice and insights to the market.

***Expert advice and one-to-one innovation support***

The Northwoods consortium is highly experienced and can provide a broad range of woodland management expertise. Participants in the programme will be able to access support through events, networking and one-to-one consultations.

***Events, networking, webinars and seminars***

Access events, webinars and seminars delivered by experts from the Northwoods consortium and guest contributors from across the sector.

These will cover business support, being investment ready, innovation support and wider discussion around highly topical woodland areas, such as electrification of the forest and timber supply chains, new and emerging markets and the rise of mapping technology. The programme will also provide excellent networking opportunities to link with new contacts in the sector.

***Stakeholder opinion survey***

The Northwoods programme will undertake a stakeholder survey to canvas awareness and attitudes to woodland management. The results will be reported and made available to drive forward positive promotion of the sector and the action being taken to actively manage our woodlands for environmental and economic benefit.

***Online tools***

The Northwoods consortium will develop a number of online tools that will help to inform woodland owners with site specific information on their woodland condition and woodland inventory. These tools will increase the awareness of the value of standing timber whilst also informing woodland owners as to how to sustainably manage woodlands.

## JOIN THE NORTHWOODS PROGRAMME TODAY

The call is now open for innovators, those active in the forestry supply chain and woodland owners to participate in Northwoods. Although the programme is primarily targeting the North East and Yorkshire, there is also scope to engage with businesses outside of these regions.

For further information, you can contact the programme team directly (rosanna.curtis@reheat.uk.com) and engage online:

- Website: northwoods.org.uk
- Twitter: @northwoods_wm
- Linkedin: Northwoods Woodland Management

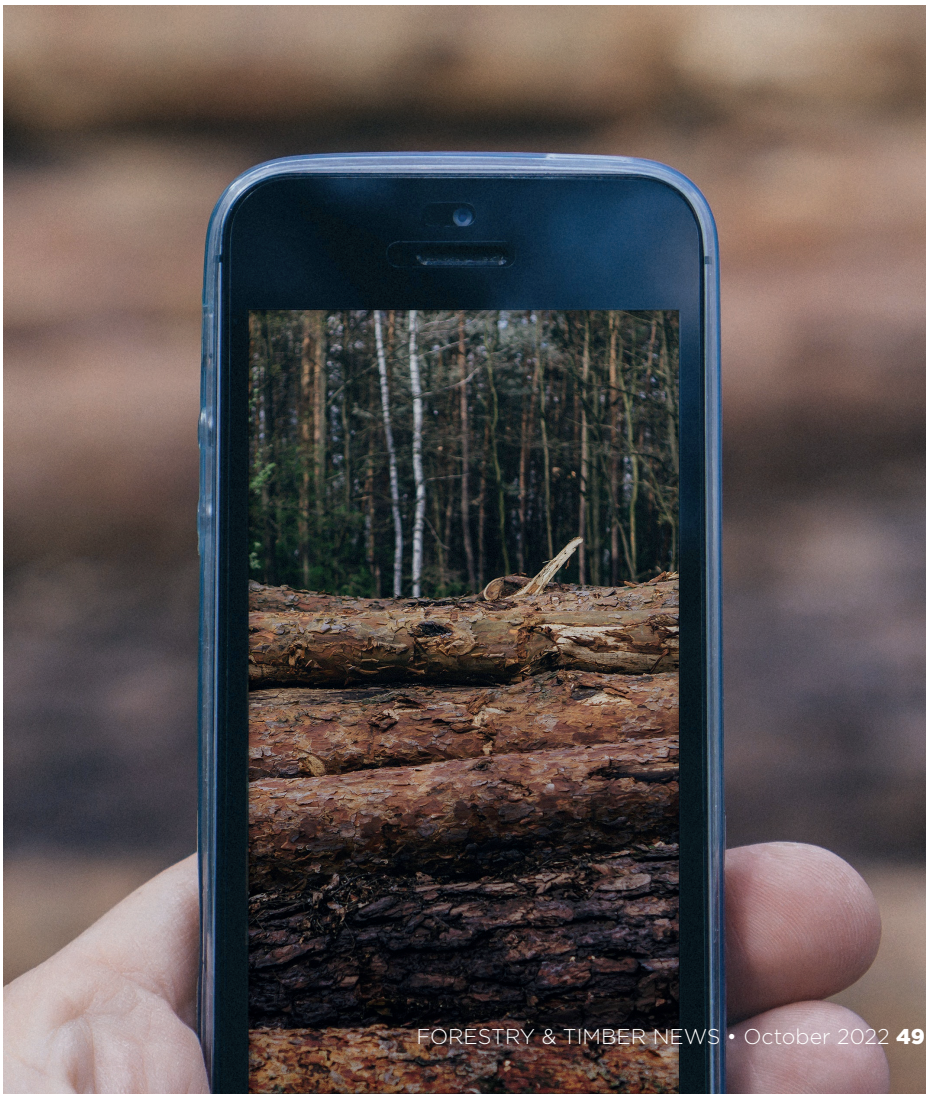
You can also scan the QR code to register your details directly with Northwoods. By doing so, you will receive updates and information on upcoming programme activities.

## Founded in forestry: a background to the original award-winning Northwoods programme

The Northwoods name is a revival of a woodland initiative that was first founded in 1998. The original programme existed to support the tree and timber supply chains in the North East of England – providing training, advice, information, and support to forestry companies and those working with woodland-derived products. This included tree nurseries, harvesting contractors, arborists, sawmillers, hauliers and wood fuel suppliers.

Northwoods was also responsible for developing and delivering the Ignite wood fuel training programme, which is still deliv-

*continued on p50*



*continued from p49*

ered across the UK by current programme consortium members, RDI Associates. The programme was widely recognised, winning a National Training Award for industry responsiveness, and was shortly followed by the Northwoods team producing the Biomass Sector Skills Analysis for the UK government, which continues to inform investment in skills and training across the industry.

The current Northwoods consortium includes previous Northwoods team members, Directors Neil Harrison and Ben Tansey, and Will Richardson of RDI Associates.

**The future of woodland management – why we need innovation to drive our sector forward**

The reasons for innovation in any sector are well known. It can encourage businesses to invest and grow, improve productivity and profitability, and help companies adapt to overcome the challenges of change.

It is this latter point that is particularly relevant to the forestry sector and the future of woodland management. As the climate changes, so must our approaches to forestry management and indeed the wider timber industry, supply chain, and markets. Climate change related challenges are and will continue to come in many forms: increased threats posed by changing weather patterns, drought, storm frequency and intensity and wildfire – alongside increased threats and risks from pests and diseases.

The WiMFIF pilot estimated there to be 71,000ha of unmanaged and undermanaged woodland in the North East and Yorkshire regions alone. As a result, Northwoods will apply the innovative technologies and methods brought forward under the project to increase levels of woodland management in the region's forests with climate resilience as a major objective.

An example of forestry innovation in action is myForest. Created by Northwoods consortium member Sylva Foundation, myForest provides comprehensive online mapping, digital tools and the latest resources to sustainably manage forests and provide unique support for the creation of new forests around Britain.

As one of the least forested countries in Europe (13% against the European average of 40%), Britain has huge potential to better fulfil its forestry potential to deliver for society, through biodiversity, climate and flood regulation, and timber production amongst other areas of woodland management.

myForest is a great example of advanced data and information technology supporting woodland owners to bring unmanaged woodland into active management using innovative techniques, and the Northwoods programme will seek to accelerate a broad range of technology into the forests of North East and Yorkshire.

# THE ONLY WAY IS UP

## Tree growing trial sees rapid results

Sitka spruce, Scots pine, Oak and Birch are among the tree varieties being grown in a vertical farm trial run by Forestry & Land Scotland (FLS).

The project, conducted in partnership with precision indoor growing technology specialist Intelligent Growth Solutions (IGS), has seen some seedlings grow 40-50cm tall in just 90 days – something that would take up to 18 months in a field.

Vertical farms are more commonly associated with growing herbs, leafy greens and vegetables but the hope is these trials will help facilitate transformation in the forestry sector and push the UK to meet its net zero targets faster.

Speaking about the trials, Kenny Hay, FLS Tree Nursery & Seed Resource Manager, said: "Planting more trees – both for timber and biodiversity benefits - is vital if we are to tackle the twin crises of climate and biodiversity. The urgent need to do so much, quickly, to mitigate climate change means that existing processes and supplies of high-quality tree seed are under significant strain.

"A vertical farming system for growing trees could allow us to grow many more trees – faster, more efficiently and with far less water - for planting out into the future forests of the UK.

"We are very pleased that we now have 'proof of concept' and we're excited by the potential of the system. There are very clearly significant potential benefits from using such a system so we will now look very carefully at how we might be able to integrate this into our normal processes."

FLS has already completed five growing trials at the IGS Crop Research Centre, based at the James Hutton Institute in Invergowrie, just outside Dundee. The vertical farm grown seedlings have been planted out into the ground at FLS's Newton Nursery near Elgin and have successfully acclimatised to the outdoors.

The so far observed benefits have included significantly more efficient germination rates, which FLS predict will result in fewer seeds being required, compared to traditional outdoor broadcast sowing, to produce the same amount of trees

The vertical farming system is also expected to produce a more consistent product which will then grow on for one or two years outdoors in fields, before planting out into forests. This is because the vertical farm controls all the conditions that matter to a plant such as temperature, light, water, wind and humidity to produce the optimum conditions for growth.

Significantly, IGS' vertical farms also recycle all the water they use and can be operated using rainwater harvesting, maximising efficiency and ensuring zero surface run-off.

IGS's CEO, David Farquhar, commented: "Working in partnership with Forestry & Land Scotland on these trials has allowed us to explore the potential applications for our technology and expand the portfolio of crops we can grow within a vertical farm environment far beyond the salads and herbs we started out with.

"We are delighted to see initial results indicating the seedlings are performing well outside the precision-controlled environment in which they started their lives. We believe vertical farming has a real role to play in supporting reforestation projects all over the world, and this is a very exciting step towards making that a reality."

A sixth trial is now underway and will aim to actually slow the growth rate of the seedlings down to achieve a thicker root collar, making the trees more suitable for planting in a restock forest.

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# NEW BULLET TECHNOLOGIES

Lead ammunition, long a staple of deer management practices, has in recent years been recognised as often causing more harm than good. **Ed Bewsher** of Edinburgh Rifles and Sporting Goods shares the other options available, and the progress being made to phase lead out.

The move away from lead ammunition for deer management has generated much discussion over the past few years. Efficacy, accuracy, availability, cost and whether some calibre/cartridge combinations will become obsolete have all been raised concerns.

Edinburgh Rifles is an independent Registered Firearms Dealer (RFD) in Scotland and has been working alongside a number of bullet and rifle manufacturers to develop lead-free solutions that solve some of the known issues with existing popular rifle calibre/cartridges and their use on UK deer species.

For ethical wildlife management, the primary concern is to achieve a quick humane kill on any animal or bird. Causing major damage to the heart, lungs and surrounding arteries leads to very rapid loss of blood pressure and supply of oxygenated blood to the brain and other vital organs. Causing major damage to the central nervous system (CNS) at the same time will result in an immediate loss of consciousness and thus the animal will fall on the spot.

With any animal or bird that enters the human food chain, it is important to minimise excessive damage and contamination to the carcass and to ensure the carcass is quickly recovered to the larder.

The "vital zone", comprising of the heart, lungs, major arteries, and major bundles of nerves connecting the central nervous system, is located in the front third of an animal's body, protected by the rib cage and shoulder bones and shoulder muscles. An appropriately designed rifle bullet (or in the case of birds, multiple shotgun pellets) passing through these vital organs will achieve a very quick kill.

On a small deer or fox, the vital zone is the size of a smaller smartphone; on a larger deer it will be nearer the size of an A4 piece of paper. With larger deer and wild boar, a bullet may also have to penetrate through several inches of skin, meat and bone before entering the vitals.

**There are new bullet and ammunition brands entering the UK market from South Africa (Peregrine) and Eastern Europe (Fox Classic Hunter), alongside the more established US and European brands (Barnes, Hornady, Federal). Pictured above is a Fox .308 bullet before and after firing, Note petals.**

## The Bullet

The traditional "cup and core" bullet was first designed in the late 1880s. A copper cup is swaged over a lead core, which is then squeezed through a series of dies to give an accurate shape and diameter.

Over the last century, there have been several different iterations to improve accuracy, ballistic and terminal performance, but the same basic design has remained. There are even "lead free" variations that replaces the lead core with less toxic tin or zinc.

The "monolithic" bullet is the industry standard for non-lead bullets. These are solid copper, or copper alloy, usually made on an automated lathe from bar stock. In the last decade, there have been a lot of advancements to make monolithic bullets work at all velocities and on all sizes of animals – particularly European deer species.

Fundamentally, there is no difference between cup and core and monolithic bullets in terms of accuracy and ballistic performance in normal deer stalking ranges. Both shoot well within accepted requirements and the effect of distance and wind out to 250-300m is minimal.

However, the Deer Act in Scotland and England & Wales prescribes minimum calibre/weight, and in some cases muzzle velocity and muzzle energy when choosing a bullet. The limits of some cartridges in the twist rates of the barrels makes it hard to conform to the Act when using non lead. Notably .22-250 50gr, .222 50gr, .243 100gr in standard twist rates.

These cartridges are very popular for small deer and the .243, being the minimum calibre for large species and often recommended as a first cartridge for Fire Arm Certificate applicants, is extremely popular. Until recently a 100gr non-lead option was not available, though now available in the Fox and Peregrine brands.

## Terminal Characteristics

The variables involved in a bullet killing effectively are numerous, but the main cause of death is through blood loss, organ destruction and/or CNS disruption. Most hunting bullets are designed to expand on impact and change from being a sleek, pointed bullet into a wide, flat-headed projectile, two to three times the bullet diameter.

The projectile creates a large void in the body as it passes through, drawing in air and creating a pressure wave that significantly damages organs and the CNS. The effect of the shockwave on the major nerves in the spine and/or the shoulders, and at the junction of the heart and lungs will render immediate loss of consciousness.

It is on this impact we see the biggest differences in monolithic bullets compared to cup and core.

When a traditional bullet hits, the lead >>

**Point of entry: A typical roe deer cup and core wound (far left) and a monolithic bullet wound (left).**

core starts to peel back rapidly and the bullet mushrooms in shape. A significant proportion of the lead core will fragment or melt into a spray of lead particles that pass into the carcass causing wider damage. Imaging technologies have shown that bullet particles, many of which are microscopic, can travel up to 50cm from the point of impact.

These lead particles then remain within both the meat, which goes onto human consumption, and the gralloch (the internal organs), usually left in the field to be consumed by scavengers and predators. A bullet weighs between 6-12g and typically loses 50-70% of its weight as it passes through the carcass, leaving 4-9g of lead as very small, difficult to remove fragments.

Additionally, lead is a soft material and if a bullet hits a major foreleg bone or shoulder material with too much velocity, it can easily fragment completely within the shoulder muscle, ultimately failing to adequately penetrate the vital organs. Many different types of cup and core bullets try to control the expansion, but they all leave lead fragments to a greater or lesser extent within the carcass.

Most monolithic bullets work very differently. On impact, the nose of the bullet opens into a flat flower shape which spins at high rotational velocity.

Copper is far less malleable than lead, so the bullet remains intact as it passes through. Because the bullet doesn't lose mass, it maintains velocity. As a result, the cavitation bubble and pressure survive for a much greater percentage of the wound tract, compared to a fragmenting bullet that is slowing down.

Recovered bullets are typically 95-99% of their initial mass. If any petals do break off, they are large enough to be seen by the naked eye or are big enough, with sufficient energy, to exit. The monolithic bullets leave a much cleaner carcass, with little bruising and minimal meat damage either side of the wound channel.

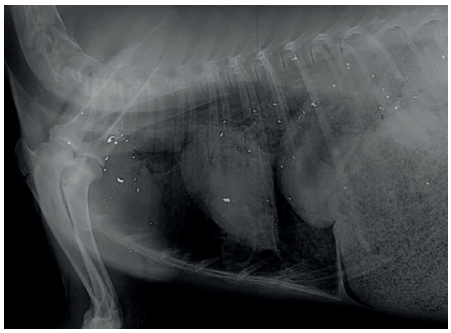
There has been a lot of debate regarding the efficacy of monolithic bullets and animal welfare considerations. Major deer management agencies have conducted their own research before adopting the new technologies.

A National Forest Agency conducted a study using Fox Classic ammunition in conjunction with Edinburgh Rifles. 500 rounds were used to cull deer through a six-month period across three species. For each deer, sex, species, range, shot placement and angle, awareness, reaction to shot, and distance run were all recorded.

There was no significant difference between shooting deer with traditional ammunition versus lead-free. In fact, the same data for some brands of lead bullets did not perform as well. However, the monolithic bullets resulted in significantly less damage to valuable meat.

Most ammunition brands are now loading monolithic copper bullets in a variety of loadings and calibres. Ammunition loaded with monolithic bullets is now available for the vast majority of deer stalking rifles in everyday use within the UK. For the common cartridges, there is a good choice of different brands and bullet weights and types to choose from.

The uptake of lead-free ammo by UK retailers is slower than it could be as product purchasing is not always lead by customer demand.



**Radiograph of a roe deer shot with a single unbonded lead rifle bullet, showing the extent of the bullet's fragmentation and the distance of fragments' spread from the entry site. Most of the small fragments would not likely be removed prior to butchering and retail sale, thereby exposing the consumer.**

Photo credit: Oliver Krone, Leibniz Institute for Zoo and Wildlife Research, Berlin.

### What is the Problem with Lead and why remove it from ammunition?

As noted by the World Health Organisation: "Lead is a cumulative toxicant that affects multiple body systems... There is no level of exposure to lead that is known to be without harmful effects."

Lead is no longer used in paints, petrol, water pipes, solder or other products where there is potential for human interaction. Ammunition manufacturers are aware of these dangers and most ammunition packaging contains warnings about the dangers of lead, albeit often in small print.

Venison and other game should be a valuable co-product from woodlands, forests and marginal land. It is treated by many restaurants and retailers as a premium product that is organic, sustainable, low in fat and healthy. Yet when a deer is shot with a lead bullet, or when game birds are killed with lead pellets, the meat is contaminated.

Such meat has to be treated as biological waste, it cannot be used in pet food, and the cost of disposal is a significant burden on food processors.

Ingesting lead can give rise to many health complications, from changes in behaviour to fatal poisoning. The real challenge is the cumulative effect over a lifetime and how even very low levels can have serious implications.

A US-based study in 2009 showed that pigs fed with contaminated lead-shot venison show a rapid rise in lead levels in the blood. Further studies of indigenous US hunters who survive principally on hunted meat shot with lead bullets have significantly elevated blood lead levels.

Further, a strong correlation between patients diagnosed with acute myeloid leukaemia (AML) and elevated levels of heavy metals, in particular lead and cadmium (albeit at levels far lower than normally considered toxic), has been shown in research at the MD Anderson Cancer Clinic in Texas.

In the wider environment, not all game birds or deer shot will be recovered. There have been numerous post-mortem studies on dead birds of prey that appear to have died from natural causes showing that the majority have significantly elevated levels of lead in their blood.

The only widespread source of such contamination is from carcass remains of lead shot animals and birds. These studies have been carried out in Europe, the US, and here in the UK.

**Useful links**

- Edinburgh Rifles and Sporting Goods: *https://bit.ly/3SjRIBT*
- Setting maximum levels for lead in game meat in EC regulations (2020): *https://bit.ly/3RA8jAB*
- Lead poisoning (WHO): https://bit.ly/2tplBqS
- The impact of lead poisoning from ammunition sources on raptor populations in Europe (2022): *https://bit.ly/3UOPvjR*

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# THE GREEN REVOLUTION

## CREATING SUSTAINABLE COMPOSITES FROM SAWDUST

Societal concerns around climate change and decarbonization are driving what industry and policy makers are calling the Green Revolution, a movement in manufacturing from black petro-sourced carbon to green bio-sourced carbon, writes **Miranda Lindsay-Fynn**, Commercial Director at Bio-Sep.

Carbon is the backbone of so many everyday materials and products that the chemical industry producing these products accounts for around 6% of global petroleum use.

Global brands including Unilever, PepsiCo and L'Oreal are investing billions of pounds to remove fossil-derived ingredients from their products and packaging over the next 5-10 years, significantly increasing demand for bio-derived alternatives. However, with natural resource depletion, increasing strain on global supply chains and an ever-growing global population, there are significant sustainability concerns regarding the use of food crops in chemical production.

Focus instead is shifting towards the use of low value co-products from agricultural and forestry operations as a more suitable source of biochemicals.

Against this backdrop, Bio-Sep's mission is to maximise the value of underutilised resources. To achieve this, Bio-Sep have developed an award-winning low-energy ultrasonic process to convert woody biomass into chemicals. The Bio-Sep process generates almost zero waste, is water-use neutral, and produces three high-value products: cellulose, sugar syrup and lignin.

### Wood: Nature's composite

The fibrous or woody component of plants and trees is called lignocellulose. The word derives from 'Lignum', the Latin name for wood, and is essentially nature's composite. Wood consists of three components: cellulose fibres together with hemicellulose form a matrix, which in turn is bound together by an aromatic biochemical called lignin.

In nature, this complex chemical structure of three biochemicals results in a solid cell wall that is resistant to wind, water, pests, and sunlight. When separated from each other, these biochemicals are known as bio-based platform biochemicals and have wide market potential.

For many years, cellulose has been extracted from wood for the pulp and paper industry. Bio-Sep's ultrasonic process produces a crystalline cellulose which is a high value speciality chemical with applications in food and beverages, cosmetics, and performance composites.

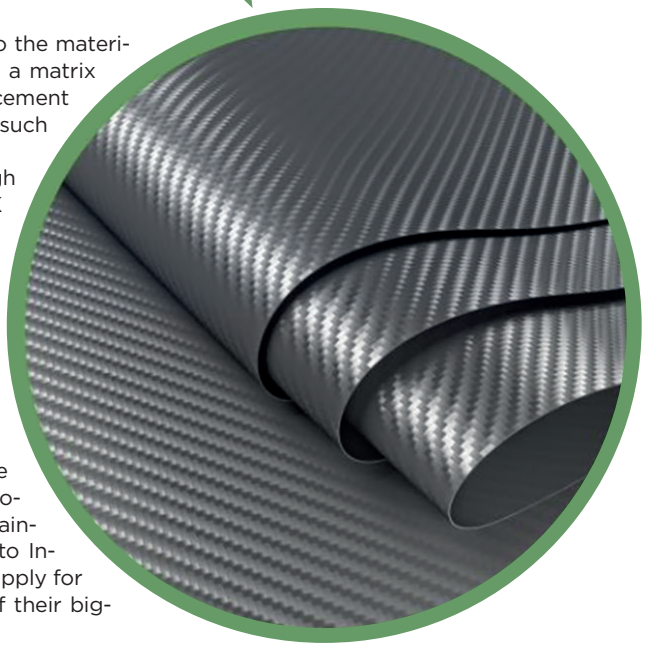
Lignin is the world's second most abundant biopolymer after cellulose. It is nature's binding material, the substance that gives plants and trees their structural integrity and strength. Its aromatic structure makes it the most suitable biochemical to replace a toxic petrochemical called phenol, which is commonly used in resins, composites, coatings, and adhesives.

Fluctuations in the price of phenol due to changes in oil price, and concerns about the toxic exposure of workers to phenol during the manufacturing process, make lignin an attractive bio-derived alternative. Natural lignin could be used for a phenolic replacement to make sustainable resins for use in, for example, the chipboard industry; the chips of wood could be held together with a resin made from lignin.

Lignin as an eco-substitute not only reduces the carbon footprint and toxicity for manufacturers but also provides additional performance benefits, such as fire resistance and UV protection.

### The UK's composite challenge is an opportunity

Humans have been making composite materials for years, starting thousands of years ago with bricks made from mud



and straw. That evolved into the materials of today, like concrete - a matrix of small stones bound by cement and lightweight materials such as carbon fibre.

Composites are a high growth industry in the UK across sectors such as construction, aeronautics, and now renewable energy with wind turbines being made domestically. Composites UK estimated the UK composites industry at a value of £16.64bn in 2020. Added to this, UK composites companies are increasingly focused on biomaterial use for their sustainability strategy. According to Innovate UK, a lack of local supply for these biomaterials is one of their biggest challenges.

Supply chain issues over the last few years combined with the environmental footprint of shipping means that the industry is clamouring for a 'reshoring' of their input materials. This challenge to the composite industry presents a huge market opportunity for suitable platform biochemicals. This includes lignin and cellulose produced in the UK from available biomass sources, the most abundant of which is sawdust from the forestry industry.

## R&D for a new forestry-based performance composite

Bio-Sep has just embarked on a Joint Industry Project together with iCAST (The Innovation Centre of Applied Sustainable Technologies), the National Composite Centre (NCC), and the University of Bath for the production and testing of bio-based composites from cellulose and lignin. Market testing will be undertaken by Scott Bader, a global manufacturer of resins and composites.

The NCC are looking to enhance their experience and understanding of the properties and manufacture of novel, sustainable materials. For this project, they will be testing the mechanical properties and performance of Bio-Sep produced lignin and cellulose blends as a composite binder/matrix material.

The University of Bath will be producing and testing concrete materials incorporating Bio-Sep's products as admixtures. Early results from the project are looking promising with demonstrable performance benefits and carbon reduction potential.

This project will enable the identification of construction and composite applications for lignin and cellulose extracted from UK grown sawdust (generously supplied to Bio-Sep by James Jones & Sons).

With tried and tested performance characteristics, the high growth UK composites industry could make use of these low carbon, renewable materials to displace petrochemical materials, create a local biochemical supply chain, and enhance the sustainability of their products.

# Q&A

**Andy West**, Chief Chemist at Bio-Sep

**Q How do you see biorefining contributing towards net zero in the next 10-30 years?**

The world needs chemicals, plastics, composites, and household goods that are not derived from crude oil, with its unsustainable impact on the environment, or from food crops. Instead, we need to look to sustainable sources such as forestry.

Biorefining will enable a shift from fossil to renewable green carbon resources, helping decouple chemical production from fossil resources and reducing $CO_2$ emissions.

**Q Is there an appetite from manufacturers to shift processes to using natural biochemicals?**

Absolutely. Manufacturers cannot see a future without sustainable chemicals. Consumer behavior and government regulations like carbon taxes will drive the change.

In the future, it is unlikely that chemicals will be purchased without a life cycle analysis, carbon footprint analysis and traceable supply certificate.

**Q What of Bio-Sep's current work are you most excited to see the results from?**

I am really looking forward to seeing the results from the aforementioned industry project where we will be producing and testing a composite product. We also have another project in the pipeline which will look deeper into lignin as a coating.

I can see a future where we produce a waterproof, fire-resistant composite out of 100% forestry produced biochemicals that can then be recycled again by our process at end-of-life to create something new, resulting in truly circular green materials.

# KEEPING THE HEAT ON

With colder temperatures drawing in, firewood suppliers may be looking to machinery solutions to meet demand says **Andrew Smith**, Forestry Lecturer at Scottish School of Forestry, UHI

I trust that you have a had a good summer and enjoyed the lovely weather, and not suffered in the heat. By the time this edition of Forestry and Timber News arrives through the letterbox, schools will be back and there might even be mention of the dreaded 'winter'. It would be surprising if there hasn't been at least a dusting of snow on the highest hills in Scotland.

Many of you will also have made the journey to the APF, an opportunity to catch up with acquaintances and to view the latest offerings from the various equipment and machinery suppliers so perhaps your wallets are now empty!

I must admit that I was running a little late with this month's article, but I do now know who new Prime Minister of the UK is – Liz Truss. One of the priorities she has set out is to tackle the cost of living and energy crisis. I suspect most of us will have been involved in conversations recently about rising energy bills, be that for vehicle fuel, electricity, or household fuel bills.

As I recently heard about a quite astonishing increase in electricity costs for a local timber processor, it is not an issue limited to the home, either.

Many are now starting to give log burners serious consideration, mainly with an eye to reducing heating costs and not being reliant upon them as either their sole source of heat or for heating water.

A high number of my friends and colleagues have a log burner installed, be it in older properties or more modern houses. For some, it was the only real option whilst for others it is perhaps a luxury not just for heating, but as a focal point in their home. I also have one, which supplies both heat and hot water.

This increase in log burner ownership and use has also resulted in a surging demand for firewood. I am aware of several local firewood merchants who are unable to take on new clients at present due to demand, and others who are currently delivering far more than they would expect to at this time of year.

In the north of Scotland, our biggest issue is availability of hardwoods, and consequently a lot of softwood is burnt here.

For those who are in the firewood business and didn't empty their wallets at APF, it may well be time to think about upgrading your equipment to meet demand.

This is not an exhaustive list, and there are several other well-known brands out there, but these are some of the offerings available from the sector's machinery manufacturers.

## PALAX

Palax offer a range of firewood processors with either a circular saw or chainsaw method of crosscutting. Both have their benefits and downsides, and both have their fans!

The three models in the circular saw range feature maximum crosscutting capacities from 30-40cm with splitting forces ranging from 6 tonnes to 16 tonnes on the largest capacity C1000. The C1000 utilises a 1,000mm diameter sawblade to achieve its maximum crosscutting potential. Product length can vary between 25-55cm, and a variety of splitting wedges are available.

On the chainsaw side of the range, capacities range from 360mm on the KS360 up to 450mm on the KS45St, and splitting forces of up to 18 tonnes on the largest KS45S model. The 450mm crosscutting capacity on this model is achieved by using a 20 inch (500mm) saw bar. Again, a variety of splitting wedges are available.

The Palax range of processors are available with several power method options – PTO, electric or both. The Palax range is supported by a range of equipment which helps to make the task easier, cleaner and produce a better product. These include a selection of log decks, sawdust extraction equipment, and log cleaners to remove the detritus sometimes created during processing.

## POSCH

The Posch range of equipment is well-known and well-proven in the UK. Though we maybe typically think of firewood

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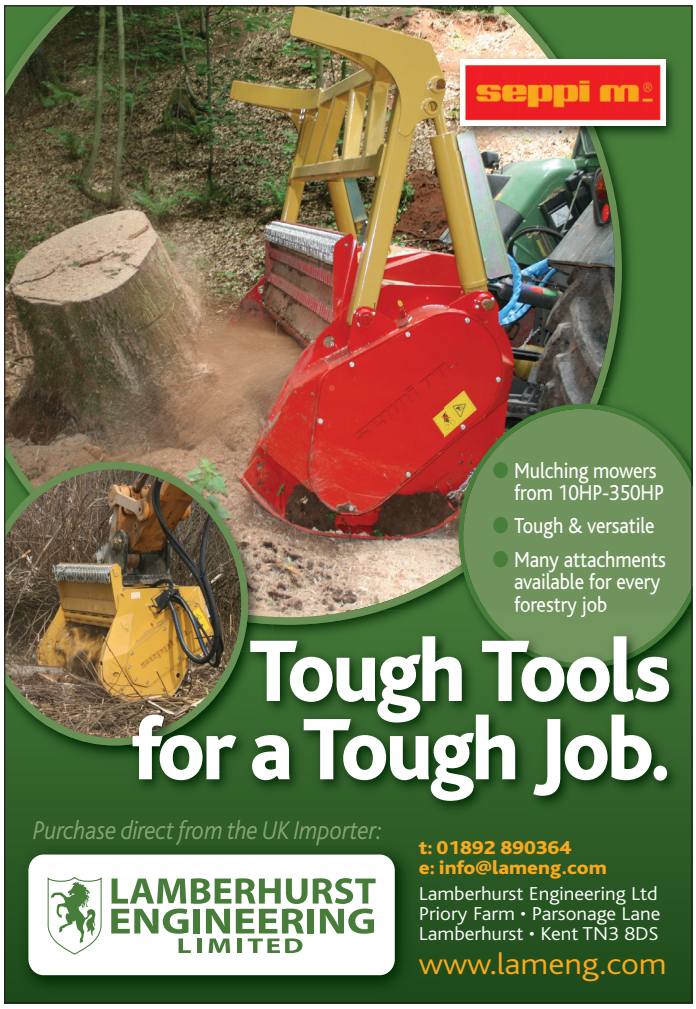
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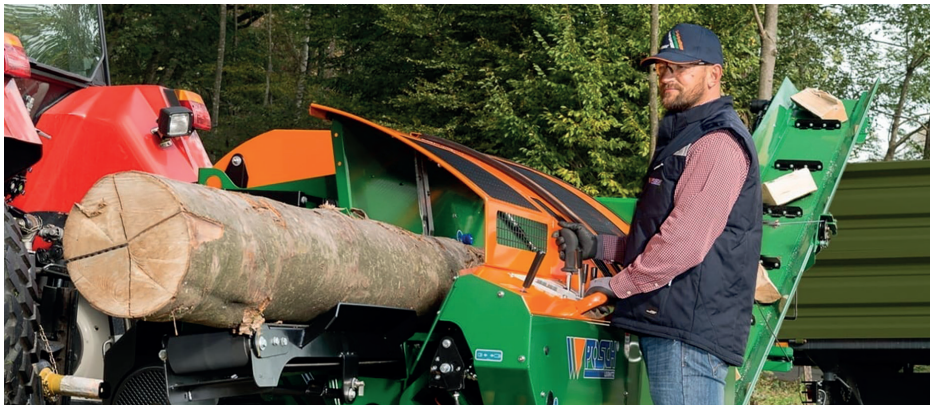

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equipment as coming from Nordic countries, this Austrian manufacturer has gained a bit of a cult following in the UK.

The range again consists of both circular saw and chainsaw models, with the highest crosscutting diameters being achieved by the chainsaw models. Capacities range from 375mm up to 700mm. In particular, the Spaltfix S-375 and 415 models have proven to be very popular in the UK.

The 415 is available as either a S model (circular saw) or K model (chainsaw). Towable variants are available on both models, making them suitable for processing at a variety of locations – perhaps contract processing is in your remit!

Moving up the scale are the K540 and K650 models. These are large mobile processors with crosscutting capacity up to 650mm. The splitting mechanism on these models is similar to that found on the Posch Kindling machines, and continuously cycles as logs move along the conveyor rather than the conventional splitting system we associate with processors.

Lastly, the K-700 Vario and 710a Vario are serious producers. These machines are designed for high output. Whilst they are available as stationary or static machines, the initial units are set up as static units in large sheds. They are, in reality, self-contained firewood factories and will need an efficient operating system to maximise their potential.

Along with decks, dust extractors and log cleaners, the Posch range of equipment consists of a variety of other equipment such as splitters, circular saws and packaging equipment. A real one stop shop, with a method of processing virtually any piece of timber!

## HAKKI PILKE

The Finnish manufacturer produces a range of six firewood processors, from the Raven 33 with 330mm crosscutting and 6 tonnes of splitting force, up to the Pro 55 with 550mm crosscutting capacity and up to an incredible 40 tonnes of splitting force.

Coincidentally, increasing capacity also comes with more refined operating methods.

In between these two models we have the Falcon 35; the Pro 38; Pro 43; and 50 Pro. Crosscutting capacities are 350mm; 380mm; 430mm; and 500mm respectively with splitting force ranging between 8-30 tonnes  Power sources are PTO, electric and combination.

Unlike other manufacturers, Hakki Pilke only offer chainsaw models of firewood processor.

## FUELWOOD

Though Fuelwood are agents for the Japa range of firewood equipment (not covered in this article), they also manufacture their own firewood processor: the Fuelwood Factory.

The Fuelwood Factory is a customisable machine and is built around the Woodcutta 400 chainsaw crosscutting system, before the log is transferred to the splitting system. The splitter can be either a Kindlet Pro; a Splitta 360 or a Splitta 400 to suit the end user.

When using the Kindlet Pro, maximum capacity is 200mm. That can go up to 460mm when equipped with the Splitta 400. Power for the factory is by means of 3-phase electric.

The machine features several novel features, such as ejecting the last short piece of timber so that all the product is a consistent length – of particular use to those who bag their firewood. As usual, items such as decks, dust extraction and bagging equipment are also available to suit.

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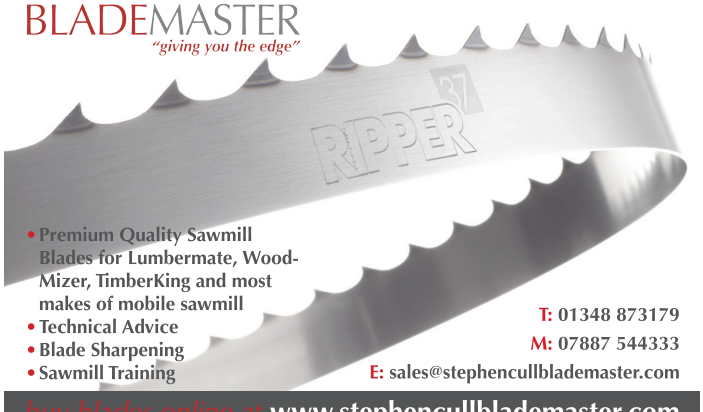


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# THE DRIVE TO NET ZERO
## DECARBONISING TIMBER TRANSPORT

The Timber Transport Forum has commissioned a study to examine the potential for installing alternative-to-diesel infrastructure in remote, rural parts of Scotland, writes **Paul Boobyer**.

Targets to decarbonise road freight to avoid the need for new diesel HGVs by 2040 were announced by the UK Government earlier this year. Scotland is shooting for a target of 2035.

The current annual timber harvest from Scottish land is around 7m tonnes, mostly moving on 44-tonne lorries on public roads, all of which will need to be transported by net zero vehicles within the next 13 years. New infrastructure installations such as EV charging and hydrogen fuelling points will be a requirement to achieve this.

### Scotland's Zero Emission Truck Taskforce and developments in net zero truck technology

In order to explore the hurdles and opportunities to decarbonising the road freight industry, Transport Scotland has established a Zero Emission Truck Taskforce, chaired by Scotland's Transport Minister and comprising leaders across manufacturing, energy, finance, and road haulage and logistics to identify the necessary measures and milestones to achieve zero emission trucks.

The Taskforce met for the first time in May 2022 and has since discussed net zero trials, data and the supply chain, and infrastructure. In October it will focus on financial models.

Zero emission truck technologies are developing rapidly. The developments have mostly been in EV technology to date, and some are now market-ready, but hydrogen trucks and EV/hydrogen hybrids are currently being trialled in various countries.

However, real-world data is not yet available for operators to assess which vehicle type they might buy when replacing diesel vehicles in their fleets, and there is very little information on where these vehicles might be charged or fuelled during their duty cycles.

### The challenge of transitioning to net zero faced by the timber transport sector

For the transition to net zero trucks to take place, charging or refuelling infrastructure will be required either in a depot or at appropriate points enroute. It is likely that in many cases, both will be necessary.

The initial focus for infrastructure across Britain is inevitably on the main freight routes – the motorways and major trunk roads. It will be necessary to ensure there is sufficient recharging and refuelling provisions in place to serve rural freight.

Given the UK and Scottish Governments' commitment to phase out diesel-powered

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HGVs by 2035/40, the energy demand for timber transport and possible locations of EV charging and hydrogen refuelling infrastructure will need to be considered in the context of the geographical challenges posed by transporting timber in remote locations.

### The Timber Transport Forum's net zero infrastructure pilot study

The Zero Emission Truck Taskforce is encouraging trials that focus on net zero infrastructure, and the Timber Transport Forum (TTF) has consequently initiated a pilot study that aims to provide data on where this infrastructure might be located along key timber transport routes in rural Scotland.

The study will be carried out by GeTech, which has decades of experience and a broad range of capabilities in GIS analysis and location-based energy modelling. They have offices in Leeds, London, Edinburgh and Houston, and have undertaken a detailed analysis of the UK freight rail network to identify and rank potential locations for hydrogen production and storage/refuelling facilities. Additional analysis will pinpoint potential hydrogen storage sites in Scotland, based on multiple criteria that are very similar to the TTF project.

The locus of the project being done for the TTF will be the Argyll and Borders timber transport group regions. A pilot study of these two regions should provide information that can be extrapolated to other regions.

"LOCATIONS OF EV CHARGING AND HYDROGEN REFUELLING INFRASTRUCTURE WILL NEED TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE CONTEXT OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL CHALLENGES POSED BY TRANSPORTING TIMBER IN REMOTE LOCATIONS."

### The scope of the study

The scope includes:

- Exploration of the energy demand for timber haulage over the period to 2045, and its spatial distribution over the pilot area.
- Quantification of the demand needing to be serviced by new refuelling/recharging infrastructure.
- Identification of suitable locations/opportunities for refuelling/recharging infrastructure.

To complete this work, GeTech will focus on four key tasks:

1. Data gathering and processing.
2. Creating heat maps using GIS of timber haulage routes to determine which are most heavily used.
3. Estimating current charging and fuelling infrastructure requirements (based on historical/existing data).
4. Estimating future requirements (based on future predictions of harvest patterns and locations of timber trucks entering the public road network from forests).

### The deliverables of the study

The key deliverables will include:

- A detailed report.
- A map produced using GIS displaying timber haulier/processor locations and haulage routes.
- Details of the power output required per refuelling/recharging location.
- Space requirements and charging/refuelling time required for the locations.

These outputs will be achieved using data from the National Forestry Inventory's 25-year projections of timber availability, the Forum's exit point data, the TTF's GIS data of timber processors and ports where timber is exported, data from the Forum's Agreed Routes Map, and GIS data of the locations of timber hauliers.

A road haulage decarbonisation overview report produced for the TTF by Creel Consulting earlier this year, which can be viewed on the Decarbonising Timber Transport page of the TTF's website, discussed in detail the barriers and opportunities of transitioning the timber haulage by road to net zero.

The study being carried out by GeTech will provide further information to our sector and will inform other road freight sectors that will probably use the charging and hydrogen refuelling infrastructure. Installing this infrastructure is a huge task but this study will assist in one small step of that process.

# Scottish Forestry hits milestone in tree health efforts

Over one million hectares of forest in Scotland have been surveyed for pests and diseases by the body's tree health team in 2022

As part of Scottish Forestry's efforts to monitor the health of woodlands in Scotland, tree health experts have reportedly surveyed over one million hectares of forest this year.

In addition to keeping alert for a range of other tree pests and diseases, the agency has been particularly monitoring larch trees for signs of Phytophthora ramorum.

This disease was first found in Scotland in 2002 on a range of species in horticultural settings. Since 2009, it has increasingly affected forests containing larch in the south and west of Scotland, where the wetter and warmer climate is known to be favourable for the disease.

As a result of the actions set out in the current P. ramorum Action Plan, the disease appears to be under control across most of Scotland.

James Nott, Head of Tree Health for Scottish Forestry, said: "With over two thirds (over 40,000 hectares) of Scotland's larch resource still unaffected by P. ramorum, management efforts will continue to be concentrated in the Priority Action Zone (PAZ) of eastern and northern Scotland. Surveys in these areas have demonstrated clearly that swift felling of affected trees is an effective and realistic control method."

As reported in the previous issue of Forestry & Timber News, Scottish Forestry announced plans earlier this year to fell all larch trees on their land in southwest Scotland in an attempt to manage the spread of the disease.

"In the areas of the south and west of Scotland, where the disease has been established for a number of years, forest managers are taking a more strategic approach to managing the disease, and are encouraged to use proactive management through the forest plan process," continued James. "The efforts across the sector in tackling this disease is a credit to the range of professionals involved."

The main surveillance programme is run by Scottish Forestry with the support of Forestry and Land Scotland and Forest Research. However, citizen science is also proving to be very useful with nearly a quarter of the survey sites in the Priority Action Zone being reported to Scottish Forestry by foresters and interested members of the public. This continues the trend of increasing numbers of reports from previous years.

Across Scotland, a total of 613 larch sites have so far been identified for field survey in 2022, with 67 reports from forest owners and managers.

After review by a group of stakeholders and scientific advisers, including representatives from Confor, Forest Research, Forestry & Land Scotland and Scotland's Chief Plant Health Officer, the current controls set out in 2020/2021 will remain unchanged.

James added: "We can all do our bit to help stop pests and diseases spreading, whether you are a forester or a member of the public. Tree diseases can be spread on machinery, vehicles, clothing, bike tyres and even on dogs paws, so everyone should Keep it Clean before visiting a forest."

More information, including the updated map on disease spread and a link to the larch action plan can be found on the Scottish Forestry website.

# Leading Scottish tree nursery to change hands

Christie-Elite, one of the best-known UK growers of commercial tree species, has been offered for sale.

Specialising in broadleaf varieties as well as conifers for timber production, the Moray-based business is the only nursery in the UK producing both bare-root and cell-grown saplings. It is also one of the only nurseries in the world growing native Scottish montane species.

Tom Stewart of Galbraith, who is handling the sale, said: "Christie-Elite is renowned for the quality of its trees and has an outstanding reputation based on over 200 years of experience.

"For sale as a going concern, this is a rare opportunity to acquire a successful business in the flourishing forestry sector. Timber is in huge demand globally and in the UK we currently import 80% of our timber, so there is enormous potential to meet domestic and international demand.

"Christie-Elite has a significant range of bespoke buildings, plant and machinery in addition to the landholding, which is highly productive. The purchasers could potentially further develop the business, subject to the necessary planning consents."

Established in 1819, the business produces and ships millions of finished trees each winter to clients across Scotland, the UK and Europe for forestry, woodland and hedging.

The nursery holds significant built assets on site, including a range of heated and equipped polytunnels and stores used in connection with the growing and storage of the tree crop.

The landholding extends to about 53.3 acres of freehold land and about 109 acres leasehold.

SMALL WOODLAND OWNER

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# Great tree collections

## Visits to great gardens hold the key to silvicultural inspiration

Small woodland owners have much to be thankful for, as indeed do all of us do in the forestry sector: one such is the investment of time and effort by past generations to create the arboreta, botanic and forest gardens we enjoy today.

In Britain, we are blessed by more such tree collections for our size than any other country. Mitchell's Field Guide to Trees of Britain and Northern Europe lists well over 100 in the British Isles that are open to the public.

These thoughts have been prompted by visiting The National Pinetum at Bedgebury in Kent. It is one of the crown jewels of the Forestry Commission, if less well-known than Westonbirt. This world-class collection has more species and varieties (taxa) of conifers than anywhere else – and by that I mean more than anywhere else in the world!

In three years' time, it celebrates its centenary from when Royal Botanic Gardens Kew and the Forestry Commission began the collection in 1925, deliberately located on infertile, very acidic soils far from the fog and smog of London. It is now entirely under FC (Forestry England) auspices.

As with all tree collections it allows us to see what grows well and what doesn't. For generations this has been the first stage in screening potential species, which has been so helpful to British silviculture with our impoverished stock of native trees, not least of conifers with just Scots pine, yew and juniper naturally occurring within our shores.

I won't need to remind readers that Sitka spruce and Douglas fir come from North America, or that many species now being considered for the future owing to climate change come from the Caucasus, from Japan, from Chile, or from the mountains that 'encircle' much of the Mediterranean basin. You can see these conifers growing at Bedgebury.

For the small woodland owner, wondering perhaps what to plant on half an acre, visiting an arboretum or a well-furnished National Trust garden might seem OTT. Even if the sheer joy of being among great trees is not reason enough, ideas and possibilities will come aplenty. Of course, tree nurseries may not have the exact species you would like to try but starting the journey of diversifying can only be for the good.

So do visit one of our country's great tree collections!

At Bedgebury, the second stage of species evaluation also featured strongly in the past – the forest plots. One-tenth hectare plots of many of the more promising species were established and mensurational data collected. By the 1970s there were over 130 with 107 species represented.

Sadly, the great storm of 1987 wrecked many and this year's Storm Eunice a number more, but this just highlights the point. Our long-time scales, our changing climate is making silviculture more fickle, less predictable and underscores the need for greater variety to hedge bets. Add to this mix new pest and diseases – and the fabulous Bedgebury Pinetum is far from immune – then we must keep trying new species to help us grow productive woodland in the future.

I've kept the best 'til last! If you visit Bedgebury you will find specimens of some conifers now extinct or nearly so in their native habitat. This great tree collection is helping us meet our international obligations in conservation of endangered species both now and, it is to be hoped, far into the future.

Sorry if this all sounds a bit like an advertorial – I guess it is because the National Pinetum is truly one of our great treasures.

# Funding secured for tree planting in Northumberland

A portion of the Government's Nature for Climate Fund has been allocated to enrich Northumberland woodland.

The Great Northumberland Forest has received £725,000 to support the planning and planting of more trees across the county.

The funding, which comes from the Government's Nature for Climate Fund, will help landowners in Northumberland create well-designed and more diverse woodlands by combining trees and shrubs with crop and livestock farming - whatever shape and size.

This additional support will allow The Great Northumberland Forest team to improve what is possible from existing funds and help landowners plant in in smaller areas which would not normally qualify for the Forestry Commission's English Woodland Creation Offer fund.

More trees will help mitigate flood risk in vulnerable areas of the county and provide more places for nature and biodiversity to thrive. Also, as trees are fantastic carbon absorbers, this will also help Northumberland County Council towards its carbon neutral targets.

Mark Child, Programme Director for the Great Northumberland Forest, commented: "This is fantastic news. For the first time, we can help the landowners who want to plant at all scales.

"We will continue to help on the larger scale projects, but we now have the resources to help landowners plant in smaller parcels, whether that's community orchards, shelter belts for farmers or getting diverse forestry projects off the ground.

"If you have land and are interested, please get in touch and we will work with you to develop your planting proposal."

The fund works in two parts and follows Defra and Forestry Commission's principles to ensure new planting is in harmony within its setting.

The first part specifically supports the planting of trees, and the second part supports the surveying, consultation and design work needed when planning a small new woodland.

Council leader Glen Sanderson added: "It's great to see this kind of investment coming into our county. If done with care, combining trees in farming landscapes can bring enormous benefits.

"Being a farmer myself, I get to see firsthand the benefits that trees bring to our lands and our country as a whole – from enriching soils, giving shade to livestock to creating beautiful green spaces and of course, improving our air quality."

Each application considers how planting can enrich existing ecosystems which is vital as Northumberland hosts species and habitats which are struggling, such as the red squirrel, curlew, and peatlands.

# Foresight Sustainable Forestry and Virgin Money join forces to support carbon reduction

Foresight Sustainable Forestry, an LSE-listed company which invests in new and existing forestry, has entered a multi-million-pound deal with Virgin Money to support sustainable forestry and carbon reduction measures.

Virgin Money has provided a committed Revolving Credit Facility (RCF) of £30 million and an uncommitted accordion facility of up to an additional £30 million as part of its Environmental Social and Governance (ESG) strategy.

This latest deal with Foresight furthers the bank's reputation and commitment to carbon reduction lending.

Keith Wilson, Head of Energy & Environment at Virgin Money, said: "This transaction represents an important milestone in the development of our business. With an established energy lending product offering and an ambitious ESG strategy, we are increasingly focussed on growth through diversification.

"Sustainable forestry has the potential to make a significant contribution to Net Zero and I am extremely pleased we have been bold and made an early move into this market."

Richard Kelly *(pictured)* and Rob Guest, Co-Heads of Foresight Sustainable Forestry, added: "We are delighted that the RCF funding can be deployed into our exciting pipeline of forestry and afforestation assets, further enhancing the growing impact of Foresight and the contribution we are able to make in the twin fights against climate change and biodiversity loss."

The RCF has a three-year tenor and two one-year extension options. It will enable new investments to be made with certainty of funding and on a timely basis, reducing performance drag associated with holding cash balances.

The interest margin chargeable on the RCF is linked to certain Sustainability and ESG targets, including a year-on-year increase in the total number of hectares of land acquired for carbon sequestering activities, and an annual rise in participants in Foresight's Forestry Skills Training Programme.

Performance against these targets will be measured annually, with the interest cost of the RCF being amended accordingly in the following year.

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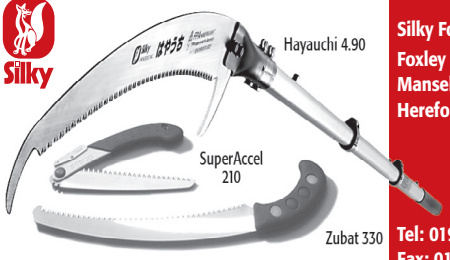


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## FORESTRY IN PICTURES

Forestry England's Craig Harrison won the coveted Beacon Bowl at the 2022 Foresters Golf Day, held on 29 September at the Whiteleaf Golf Club. Please contact John Clegg at Tustins Group Ltd (johnclegg@tustins.co.uk) for information on next year's event.

*The winning team (left to right): Iwan Parry (Tilhill), Craig Harrison (Forestry England) and Dougal Driver (Grown in Britain).*

### 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 **ftn@confor.org.uk**. 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 DECEMBER 2022 – GET INVOLVED

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 December FTN is 10 November 2022. If you would like to pitch an article idea, please do so by the end of October 2022.

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