

Male: ... woods provide so much for everybody don't they? Motorbikes, cycling, rambling and wildlife, [...] as well of course timber and all those so-called ecological services ...

[...]

Male: Trouble though if we're expressing different users, [pointing to different members of the discussion group] yours is noisy, yours isn't and yours isn't and that's the objection to motorcycling I think a lot of us have in woodlands, obviously there must be some sites available to motorcycling but it's noisy...

[...]

Female: Yeah and just, one of the disadvantages of woodland is shared access or, I think probably more so from horses rather than mountain bikes...

[Gay Outdoor Club group 2]

Male 1: Hmm. Well, there are conflicts, aren't they? We've had a conflict today on a footpath where we met a horse.

Male 2: We did, yeah. But it was not a bridleway, she shouldn't have been there.

Male 1: And the dog chased the horse, but we didn't hear the horse-rider coming.

Male 2: The only thing I would say as a cyclist that really cyclists should be made aware they've got to let people know that they're on that path travelling at a much faster speed than people who can't, who are walking or perhaps are elderly. But that's just educating people, it's not the landowner's fault if you can't behave responsibly on their land. It's not the Forestry Commission's fault that someone's dog is off the loose and it's creating damage ...

Recreational use was often linked to individual woodland sites offering specific facilities, or woodlands with a certain combination of topographical and vegetation characteristics, or forests which are sufficiently large. For example, motorcycle-rallying and championship events relied mainly on FC land but also Ministry of Defence land, as these were the only owners with wooded areas sufficiently diverse and large (size is further discussed in section 5.4) to fit the requirements of the sport and willing to accommodate it.

[Intensive user group 2, Farnham] Male: ... we hire Forestry Commission land to run motorcycle events on [...] we run a championship throughout the year which covers the South East of England. [...] there's very restrictive pieces of land we can use and we can't go everywhere obviously, some woods they like to keep for cyclists and walkers, so we're restricted to about four pieces of land.

5.4 Facilities, size and characteristics of woodlands

Specific 'natural', silvicultural or site management characteristics of woodlands (be it the tree species, degree of openness of the forest stand, natural terrain or size of the woodland) were often associated with serving certain purposes or attracting specific user groups. Most discussion group participants expressed a **preference for mixed and deciduous native woodlands for their visits; conifer plantation forests were often less liked for personal use or to look at but usually recognised as important for timber/economic reasons**. Some discussion groups (e.g. business partners, intensive users, older rural) acknowledged the need to maintain a diversity of woodlands, management priorities and levels of facilities. This included family-oriented and educational woodlands, areas developed for specific interests (e.g. mountain-biking, cycling, Go Ape, music and other festivals, historical craft activities), woodlands left 'natural' with basic footpaths and those in remote areas for timber production. Some were not familiar enough with different types of woodlands to make a strict distinction.

[Intensive user group 2, Farnham]

Male 1: [...] I think, densely planted conifer plantations are pretty awful.

Male 2: They have their place.

Male 1: They have their place, yeah.

Interviewer: Where should they be?

Male 2: In Scotland.

Male 1: Yeah, in Scotland. [several laugh]

[Rural, 55+ group, Farnham]

Male: I like various scenery, walk through woodlands, beautiful, [...] I dislike plantation forests where you've got, where you're [...] growing a crop, you're planting pine trees for building materials and you have fire breaks and you can't see a thing apart from a few fire breaks.

Female: I'm not sure to me the trees what trees are there matter that much to me but I guess if they were all the same I'd be, I wouldn't like it but I don't go and think "oh this has got this tree in" or "that's got that tree in", I just go 'cause it's peaceful and it's fun.

[Business partner discussion group] Male: I think people like to go through woodlands that are broadleaf woodlands, that are not dark and dense. I think coniferous woodlands have been pushed a little bit on the back burner and I think we have to also create a timber resource and employment. Employment is really important, to employ people in the woodlands. We can't keep importing timber from abroad.

The group discussions highlighted an **awareness of multiple demands from forests**, even within the ‘recreation’ theme (section 5.3), and a wish to see the various needs accommodated (but allocated to different woods or segregated in different parts of the forest).

[Intensive user group, Farnham] Male (cyclist): I feel quite strongly that access should be available to everybody, I get quite frustrated sometimes when there are families with prams and people with dogs but I curb that because I think it should be freely accessible to everyone.

[Rural / semi-urban, Midlands] Female: I’d definitely decide on a day out, if I want, like we did go to the Sherwood Forest thing and the Robin Hood thing. We went there because of what it offered and there will be days out in the summer holidays that I take my daughter and a friend or something and go specifically for that. But other times you choose to have something different.

[Gay Outdoor Club group 2, thinking about different types of woodlands and facilities]

Male 1: I think if it’s a nice cafe or a pub then that’s okay, but I wouldn’t want anything too much around ‘cause otherwise it starts to spoil your ...

Male 2: Actually, large car parks and facilities like toilets and things, it then attracts a different set of people and would probably start to become unattractive to us because you then start getting ice-cream vans and ...

For many, one important sign of being allowed access and being encouraged to visit was the presence of car parking facilities. Furthermore, the size of the car park, and whether or not a charge applied, was often seen as directly proportional to the amount of facilities provided and popularity of the site, or indicative of targeting certain groups of the public (e.g. families with children).

[Gay Outdoor Club group 2] Male: I think I’d rather see lots more small car parks dotted around, because the number of times I’ve driven past somewhere and thought ‘that is so beautiful, I’d love to wander round’ and there is nowhere to stop, you just have to keep driving ‘cause there’s nowhere to stop the car.

[Low-income group, Farnham] Female 1: Probably in relation to the size of the car park [laughter] because if there’s space for more cars, there’s going to be more people wandering around. You expect, I suppose, slightly better facilities than if you’ve got a car park for three cars or a lay-by.

Opinions varied about the appropriateness or fairness of charging to access some sites and the particular charging system and tariffs in operation. There appeared

to be slightly higher concern over the frequency, amount and lack of transparency of charges in the discussion groups held in the South compared with those held in the Midlands.

[Disability group, Nottingham] Male: I think when we go to particularly Forestry Commission, it's not regularity you have to pay to park the car, sometimes they ask for a donation, something like that or there's an honesty box ...

[Low-income group, Farnham]

Female 1: I do find some of the car park charges a bit off-putting, like Alice Holt.

Female 2: They never used to have that ...

Female 1: It's the fact that the charges, it starts off so high [...] I quite often don't go because you only want an hour's walk and it's quite a ...

Interviewer 1: They also provide smaller car parks around it, just not in the centre, which is not charged.

Female 3: We don't know about those ones.

[...]

Female 1: I understand the need to get funds but I ... it stops you going for a more casual visit, okay there are other car parks but instead of just "I'll just have a quick walk over there".

[...]

Female 3: Maybe they're trying to price it so that you don't get short term people, you know that you're trying to get the longer stay people ...

Female 1: Encourage the families with children that are having a day out as opposed to the dog walkers.

[Business partners group, Farnham] Male: [...] take Bedgebury as an example [...] There's a kiosk, people pay a flat rate, £7.50 for the day. They're losing business from there because people aren't willing to pay £7.50 if they're coming for a two-hour dog walk; there's a kiosk which is manned part-time, which means that people take any opportunity they can not to pay. Whereas if you put a barrier system in for the sake of argument, they come onto site, they stay as long as they want to stay on site and pay on exit [...] they're capturing the revenue from everybody that visits sites. People are scared of charges, so if it's the first half an hour, 40 minutes could even be free, that encourages people ...

Enabling access and facilities for a wide range of users, including those with disabilities, was not only a theme in the 'disability discussion group' but also arose in several of the other discussion groups. Especially in the latter cases, most references were made to wheelchair users, and relatively few to members of the public with a range of other physical or mental impairments or disabilities. A key concern was to provide some access (suitable paths) and facilities (such as toilets, a cafe or an information centre and shop) that was suitable for people with disabilities in some of the woodlands.

[Low-income group, Farnham] Female: I think it's nice to have, around Fleet Pond they've got, you wouldn't want it everywhere but actually having a board walk so you can have wheelchair access, I think is quite important [...].

[Disability group, Nottingham] Female: It's nice as well if they've got a visitors centre there, if you take any child or an adult with a disability, there's most things in there that they can look at and you can tell them about, then they want to go more.

The disability discussion group also emphasised the need to (better) advertise those provisions (see also section 5.7.4) and that the path and access design mattered greatly. For example, gravel paths were experienced as difficult, if not unsuitable, for wheelchair and pram access, but neither was the extreme of using tarmac to provide a flat surface seen as necessary or attractive. One (elderly) participant expressed a surprise at the lack of benches alongside paths, especially when having natural features and timber to hand to provide such facilities.

[Disability group, Nottingham]

Male 1: [...] I know we've got people walking dogs, cycling, walking but I'm not familiar with the fact of whether or not you [referring to the Forestry Commission] cater for the elderly, i.e. seats every you know, I mean, if you get any dead trees fall down for instance, you could make seats [...].

[...]

Female: [...] not like a massive tarmac road through the woods! [laughs] But something that is accessible [...]

Male 2: It would be nice to have some different paths for different disabilities [...]. You wouldn't like it all to be disabled access or whatever ...

Male 3: But a lot of others, not just wheelchairs, there's people with unsteady feet, they stumble a lot [...] and they need flat surfaces.

Several participants observed that **large forests are desirable and necessary to provide the range of benefits and opportunities**, and recognised that **the PFE consists of more such large areas**.

[Rural / semi-urban group, Midlands] Female: We tend to think wow, Sherwood Forest, you go in and it looks huge and it is big I suppose but nothing like what it used to be. Now that's quite sad really.

[Rural, age 55+ group, Farnham] Male: ... talked about having a complete mix of different types and catering for all different people's needs [...] Now if you're going to do that you need large areas. Generally speaking, Forestry Commission packets of land are quite large compared to privately owned ones and that has this advantage, that you can provide a wide variety of different habitats and abilities of use, shall we say, and that's a good thing I think, for the Forestry Commission.

Their perception is supported by data from the FC National Inventory of Woodland and Trees showing that 90% of all woodlands in England over 20ha are in the PFE; and that the average size of an FC woodland is 145 ha compared with an average of 14 ha for all other woodlands.

Generally, intensive users of the PFE and FC business partners participating in the discussion groups expressed a greater awareness of the wide range of different types of forests and woodlands within the PFE.

Almost all participants expressed the wish to have more native and broadleaved woodlands and the need to protect and expand forest cover.

Increasing woodland cover was sometimes seen as a counterpoint to past/on-going urban development (see e.g. section 5.1) or connected with and justified in terms of climate change.

[Disability group, Nottingham]

Male: Creating more forests for the future.

Male: What kind of forests?

Male: All types of forest, you know.

[...]

Female: I think also with the climate change and things like that, it needs to be done ...

Male: Of course it does.

Most responses were based on participant's own experiences and perceptions of woodlands 'on their doorstep'. The widely expressed dislike for conifer plantations, mentioned above, was tempered by many who found dense stands acceptable as long as paths were provided, along with some attractive scenery or benefits such as fresh air and peace and quiet. It is important to be able to link values and benefits more clearly to different woodland types and facilities. **A typology of different types of woodlands**

in terms of ecology, area, silviculture and site facilities would be useful to enable understanding of the connections between benefits or values and different woodlands.¹⁵

5.5 Wildlife, sustainable woodland management and carbon

Woodlands are widely recognised as an important habitat for wildlife and to maintain biodiversity (see also the PFE survey result, [Figure 4.3](#)). **Wildlife and biodiversity emerged as a key theme in all the discussion groups**, concerning the pleasure of being able to see different wildlife in woodlands or in connection with maintaining biodiversity and improving habitats for wildlife into the future.

[Low-income group, Farnham] Female (young person): That's half the point of going to the woodlands, to see the like wildlife and natural habitat and things.

[Intensive user group 1, Farnham] Female (talking about woodland visits): As a place to go, it's a very rich landscape, it changes as you move through it from scrub to trees, you have lovely experiences of coming across different wildlife...

[Rural/semi-urban group, Midlands] Female (in response to what is most important about public woodlands): Quantity and diversity, [...] you have the potential to do something about forests and about the land...

Comments about different demands and objectives in woodland management, and thinking about management objectives of private and public woodland owners sometimes resulted in participants mentioning a **need for sustainable forest management**. This was seen as equally important for both private and public woodlands, but better control and guarantees were associated with woodlands in public ownership (see also section 5.7.3).

[Business partner group, Farnham] Male (talking about expectations of private woodlands): I'd expect it to be managed to a standard but whereas the Forestry Commission used to have something called the Woodland Grants Scheme, it's now the English Woodland Grants Scheme, where you would have to, if you went under the Woodlands Grant Scheme, you would have to manage the woodland to a certain acceptable standard and you would be given an amount per hectare, per year to do that.

[Rural/semi-urban group, Midlands] Female: I think if they sell it to people that are going to manage it in a better way than it's not a negative thing. But if the government are not as good at managing it, or it's not going to be sustainable, then if they're handing the control over to someone that's going to be able to do it in a more sustainable way, that's

¹⁵ SERG is currently developing a typology as part of its work towards a systematic framework for social forestry research.

going to serve the community better. It can't be a negative thing but then I guess it's hard to judge who are going to be good people to do that for.

Climate change and/or necessary steps for moving towards a low-carbon economy were raised in some groups as a sub-theme in response to the benefits of woodlands. However, few explicitly raised issues of increasing the use of timber as a building material or as a fuel to replace existing high carbon fuels. A few, including two participants working with/in the forestry sector raised **carbon storage** (trees' capacity to help balance atmospheric emissions) and the need for **increasing timber production** to reduce imports.

[Urban group, Nottingham] Male (in response to 'What is important to you about woods?'): Takes all the carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere doesn't it, that's one of the main things.

[Intensive user group 1, Farnham]

Male 1: I think it's very much like the old mills, there used to be a wonderful mill industry in this country and suddenly it just suddenly stopped. In the same way, the wood side or the production of wood is stopping at the Forestry Commission.

Male 2: It kind of is but we do... There is the issue of climate change and carbon storage now, which is going to become more of an issue.

[Rural, age 55+ group, Farnham]

Male 1: [...] I think we've probably got too much farming land at the moment, I think some of that that's being left fallow, actually could be turned back to woodland.

Male 2: A lot is, as you walk around here, there are swathes of fields which are now being wooded over. You'll find a big field with a huge perimeter area which is just grass. But that's rather sad. I sometimes purchase things from an organic shop, they'll put a label on something saying, "peas from Egypt, 5lb of carbon emissions for 5lb of peas, we grow our own zero emission as regards carbon". So we're importing all these foodstuffs ... and woodland, we're importing all this stuff on ships and planes, all of them spewing out carbon as they're going along; are we supposed to be lowering our carbon footprint?

[Business partner group, Farnham] Male: I think one of the most important roles is timber production, we can't just keep chopping conifers down because people don't like them, it's a timber resource, we need the woodland, we need timber.

There appeared to be a strong link between the themes of environmental/wildlife conservation and woodland creation or conservation and a weak, but emerging, link with carbon/low-carbon economy. The majority of participants expressed strong support for wildlife conservation and sustainable woodland management, but fewer seemed to be aware of the potential scope of woodlands for climate change mitigation and adaptation that involved certain woodland management approaches and selected harvesting, in addition to creating new woodlands and forests. Deforestation and timber harvesting was described in terms of reducing wildlife and their habitats and thus as damaging to the environment, even though trust was expressed in woodland managers as experts in knowing what they are doing and why (especially the FC and those specialising in timber operations).

This may be partly due to the much longer period of time that wildlife and woodland conservation issues have been lobbied for and on the policy agenda (and thus in the public's mind) than the relatively recent emergence of climate change related environmental management challenges. Thus, the connection between sustainable environmental/woodland management and woodfuel / timber as a low-carbon material has not yet widely been picked up.

5.6 Education, learning and play

Discussions showed the **importance of using woodlands, and especially the PFE, for education, learning and play**. Woodlands are seen as an inspiring and rich resource. This can be reinforced through offering a range of information, events and projects to help children and adults become aware of, engage with, and learn to care for woodlands - and the environment more generally. Participants working with children or adults with disabilities, and those with a keen interest in outdoor activities and/or nature conservation felt particularly strong about this. Even those who preferred using woodlands to find peace and quiet often acknowledged the benefits of having specific sites with attractions and educational facilities for (families with small) children.

[Rural / semi-urban, Nottingham] Female (children's nursery employee): From my point of view they [woodlands] are really exciting 'cause when you take 20, 24 very young children between 2 and 5 into the woodlands, it's just "wow, what can we do, what we can we see, what can we hear?" And they usually end up with great big branches that they're trying to lift and drag around and looking at trees that are fallen down. Just the awe factor of what happens in there is amazing. It's different every time you go so from a learning/education point of view, that's brilliant for them. There's just so much of the curriculum they can actually access while they're in there.

[Intensive user group 2, Farnham] Male: Well, the public estate I think public, that includes the charitable end, is far better on education because I don't think many privately owned woodland owners would consider education to be anywhere on their list of priorities.

[Business partner group, Farnham] Male: Even in my local paper now, I do see some educational bits in the back of the paper which is a free paper. That's great but it needs to be a lot more than that because children, I think this is a wonderful place for kids. My daughter loves it, she's 3 and she'll come up here [Alice Holt Forest] every day and wouldn't want to go home.

5.7 Public attitudes on the future of the PFE

Often, even without prompting, participants in the meetings commented on and sometimes discussed in more detail the future existence, extent, maintenance and management of the PFE, and woodlands in public ownership more generally. Participants frequently expressed strong concern about any possible reduction in the size of the PFE. They sometimes pointed out that they had not previously given a lot of thought to the matter, but that **discussion around questions of ownership, access and cost had prompted deep concerns about the need to maintain forests in public ownership.**

5.7.1 Existence and extent of the PFE

Social and environmental arguments for maintaining and increasing woodlands formed a significant part in every discussion group, and most groups also briefly considered and discussed economic aspects (especially timber production and revenue from leisure activities and charging for certain facilities). There were very few who expressed support for having more woodland in private ownership. The few who did expected private owners to be more business-minded (see section 6) or to specialise in specific (and enforceable) management objectives - be it predominantly environmental or based on a mixture of environmental, social and economic benefits. **Most expressed a wish to keep the existing *status quo*, or, if anything, to increase the extent of the PFE.**

[Disability group, Nottingham]

Interviewer 2: ... how would you feel if the government started to sell off some of its forest?

Male 1: I think it would be scandalous. [Murmurs of agreement]

Male 2: Yeah, all wrong.

Male 1: It would be all wrong.

[Rural, age 55+ group, Farnham] Female: I do think the same, I wouldn't like to see big swathes of Forestry Commission departing into private ownership because of the lack of control. One wonders if that happened, what the purchasers, owners are really buying it for? What's their purpose?

[Intensive user group 2, Farnham]

Male: I think it's selling the family silver really, it doesn't really belong to the government, the Forestry Commission belongs to us, not to one particular government to use for their own political objectives. It's not us actually, it's us and our children isn't it, our grandchildren.

[...]

Female: Just playing devil's advocate and not necessarily I think this but if you did sell off areas, would it not possibly lend itself to having more local community involvement and interest expressed? But to the detriment of the current national strategy?

Male: Who would pay for it? How would the local community ...

Female: I think the ideal would be to keep it in national ownership and make sure that it's managed with a local involvement, that would get my ideal because one of the dangers, a bit like the railway isn't it, you parcel it off and then nobody knows how to get from one place to another and you can't get a straightforward answer. To me it's the same with the forest.

5.7.2 Cost of PFE

Some discussion group participants asked about the cost of managing the PFE, either because they assumed that a profit was generated from timber or because they had become newly aware of the range of benefits offered. Many participants showed surprise at the net figure (£15 million or 30p per person per year) quoted in the public consultation document, and expressed the view that this was 'amazingly good value'.

[Intensive user group, Farnham]

Female: ... £15m, it's nothing, absolutely nothing.

Male: This other figure which really amazed me, do you know how much it is per person, per year, to each person in England, the government spends? 30p, that's the £14m divided into, 30p, so if we were all willing to spend 60p [laughs], you could almost, it's almost having a little box in the village shop where people come in and say "put my 10p change into the charity box". It's such a trivial amount, yet governments for years have agonised over and said the Forestry Commission, the cost, it doesn't make a profit but 30p for free access to Alice Holt and your motorbikes and your cycling and ...

In addition to gaining personal benefits from woodland use, many participants also recognised wider environmental benefits of woods. They expressed the **need to put more public money into creating and maintaining the resource**. Usually, two kinds of reasons were given: a focus on improving local access; and pressures on the natural environment from development and global environmental/climate change.

[Rural / semi-urban group, Midlands] Female: [...] we need land for forests because we need all the things that they bring with that, that is clean air, animals, bees, all that ecosystem that they bring [...] I think investing in forests is something that is necessary

...

Several groups raised the issue of charges for car parking as a source of revenue (for more details see section 5.4). While some resented compulsory charges, many more expressed the view that as long as a 'fair' charging system was in place and use of the money explained, they were happy to pay for using woodlands that had a range of facilities and activities on offer.

5.7.3 Governance and public involvement

Thinking about the cost and labour required for maintaining the PFE led some participants to consider that governance and management of the PFE may require more public involvement in the future. Few had been involved to date: three had participated in consultations (one in a professional capacity as local councillor and two as representatives of stakeholder or lobby groups), and one had been connected with the early stages of setting up a community woodland when living in Scotland.

Most participants seemed **happy to entrust the sustainable management of the PFE to the FC**. Few had detailed knowledge of woodlands and their management, and the great majority recognised that they had not really thought about it before. In discussing woodland management some realised that woodlands may need more local support and, in order to make some forests pay for themselves, felt that greater autonomy and flexibility would be required in decision-making. One business partner perceived the FC as overly bureaucratic and wished it to be more entrepreneurial and efficient (see section 6), and thus saw good reasons for more private woodland ownership. Other participants also saw benefits in having some woodland in private ownership, usually based on the argument that **a mixture is good and different owners may have strong points in different areas**. For example, some charitable organisations are seen to be particularly good at wildlife and woodland conservation, some land managers at producing timber and other private and membership-based trusts at offering a range of social benefits and special uses or events.

[Intensive user group 2, Farnham]

Male 1: [...] I don't think that you can really have local community involvement to any meaningful way in private woodland, but that's an advantage of retaining the public forest estate, because you can have that local public involvement, which I think we all want, which if you sell off half of Alice Holt, you can't expect to have continued public involvement in it so I think that's an advantage of the public forest estate against the private estate.

Male 2: Having said that, is anyone familiar with Coed Llandegla [...] near Wrexham? Which is owned by Tilhill economic forestry group. I tell you what, if they were to take over the forest estate, I'd go – and I'm sure you would if you'd been there, go "bring it on", because they are just fantastic. But I'm not saying all owners of land would be like that. [...] They are trying to make a point [...] in terms of anything you can think of.¹⁶

[Low-income group, Farnham]

Male: If there was a forestry management team and they made decisions, obviously educated decisions to manage areas, why do they need my approval? Why should they worry about offending the local person who's actually ignorant and thinks that we're cutting down trees for fun? Surely they're the educated people, they know better, they do what they have to [...]

[...]

Female: But it would be nice to know where to go to find out why they've done it, not say "that's wrong, I don't agree with what they've done" but at least to be able to show an interest in why is it being done like that? I remember when I joined a conservation group years ago and we used to go out clearing scrub and someone said once, "when I joined the conservation group, I expected to be planting things, not cutting them down". Well, obviously, we learned why things were being cut down.

The discussion groups highlighted a range of levels of knowledge and understandings amongst participants concerning the current governance and management of woodlands. Some participants talked about the change that had occurred over the past years in the management of the PFE towards a strong social and broader environmental focus, alongside timber production. Others still perceived the FC as a timber-producing agency and were more in favour of visiting woodlands under other public (especially local authorities such as Hampshire County Council) and certain private owners who to them appeared to demonstrate obvious wider social and environmental management objectives; conserving and increasing woodlands was another strong theme voiced by those participants. Four participants indicated more detailed knowledge about timber production and the complexities involved in current multi-purpose woodland management. Only this latter group made the connection and expressed the need for increasing timber production in the UK for moving towards a low-carbon economy.

In each of the two discussion groups with intensive users the suggestion was made to change the name of the FC (e.g. to 'Forest Commission') to reflect this change towards wider social and environmental priorities alongside silvicultural aspects.

¹⁶ Coed Llandegla Forest is owned and managed by UPM Tilhill and is their flagship site for providing public access. It covers 650 ha and is the largest privately owned recreation facility (principally mountain biking) in North Wales.

[Intensive user group 1, Farnham] Male: I think there's lots of areas where the FC could be effective and efficient. They are very good at doing what they do, as long as they're given the right instructions, to be land managers for the state but if you're almost cursed by what's written on the can, that word "forestry" and thinking yourself as, "we are the managers of the public estate in South East England for a wide social objective". Well trees might be part of that scene, well they definitely will be part of a scene but there's lots of other things that can be done and going back to the New Forest, since that's where I live and where I love, the majority of that is not currently trees. It delivers vast amounts of public benefit and where the active tree planting is going on, that public benefit is being diminished. So let's think of FC, find yourself a fresh name to repackage for a new culture, to maintain the state land holdings.

Representatives of recreational organisations and business partners expressed a need for more active engagement. Some perceived past/existing consultations as seeking comments on plans that had already been decided, but preferred **meetings / regular exchanges where different options can be discussed and viewpoints aired and explained and suitable solutions negotiated.**

At the end of the discussion groups, many participants expressed gratitude for the opportunity to think about woodlands and their management. In particular, the group of business partners, the two groups of intensive users, one group of frequent semi-urban users and the group of older rural (predominantly) woodland users appreciated the opportunity to air and discuss views and concerns. The two groups of intensive users emphasised the benefits of being able to have good dialogue between FC and stakeholders or user groups (as already happening in several cases), and to negotiate access for different uses and management priorities. Such communication was felt to help balance different demands and increase understanding of the complexities of managing the resource well for current and future benefits.

5.7.4 Communication

The group discussions helped to elaborate on ways in which people find out about woodland ownership and management, FC activities and what they would like to see. Several made an explicit contrast between the FC and membership organisations that have a duty to keep members informed, e.g. through newsletters and event programmes. Few knew where to find this information for the FC, nor accessed the website. In about half the discussion groups, participants mentioned examples of County Council woodlands and/or environmental trust land, and how useful they found the available information boards, or leaflets or information on their website. For some, lack of information on access rights and available paths/routes means that they do not have the confidence or incentive to visit those woodlands. **Many participants across all different groups mentioned that they would like to see more information provided by the FC about the PFE and especially local woodlands and facilities.**

This was more strongly expressed by people interested in exploring and finding out more about their surroundings (e.g. members of walking clubs, those whose job involves organising outdoor visits), those working with disabled people, and those who currently rarely or never use woodlands.

[Urban group, Midlands] Female: ...growing up, especially as an ethnic minority, my parents obviously came to England, they didn't really know much about woods, they didn't know about accessibility, we didn't actually start going to woods at all or anything 'cause my parents didn't know if you could go in without paying. There's not enough information like for other people so they know if you can or cannot go onto the land.

[Disability group, Nottingham]

Female 1: But I think people need to know about these places, I think there is a lot of places where people with disabilities and with hearing and visual impairment can go, but it's not necessarily broadcast is it really?

Female 2: Not advertised well, are they?

Male: [overtalking] ... produce like a map with these woods and forests were marked for like disabled access and ... if we knew more about it, we perhaps could travel a bit further afield. [Murmurs of agreement]

[Low-income group, Farnham]

Female: Yeah, that is something that will stop me going into areas, if I don't know it and you can't just wander off because you don't know where you're going, so to be able to [overtalking] ...

Female: I was once in Alice Holt with my three children and I started panicking, "I'm going to be here all night", that was a bit scary, started to get dark.

Some participants highlighted the usefulness of signage at car parks, information boards and visitor centres as the main ways to make people aware of woodland ownership and management; but to others this did not matter or seem attractive (e.g. some cyclists, those who preferred visiting low key sites).

[Rural, age 55+ group, Farnham] Female: It isn't always very obvious because a lot of these places, you can approach them from different places, if you're lucky to approach it where there's a sign, that's fine but often you don't, you'll come on at sort of further down the line and there won't be anything to say who owns it or you know, who it's managed by.

6 Business partners' views

SERG was specifically requested to include business partners as one of the target groups for the group discussions. Despite intensive efforts to recruit a group of 8 to 10 business partners associated with the Alice Holt woodland site, only five agreed to participate, of which three attended. This was due to time constraints and the difficulty of finding a convenient location to hold the meeting as some business partners are located far away from the site. Those who attended represented a range of interests: bicycle hire; cafe and forest shop provisions; and training for woodland related skills and activities. While the first two participants only had experience of the business partnership situation at the FC sites where their business was located (i.e. Bedgebury and Alice Holt), the third participant had past/existing business links, and hence was familiar with, a wide range of sites. This included a variety of forests owned and managed by the Forestry Commission as well as sites under private and other public ownership across England, and also Scotland and Wales.

The main reason for entering into partnership with the PFE appeared to be the range of facilities offered and ability to attract large number of visitors.

Bedgebury is a larger site, it's more developed although I believe it attracts a fewer number of people [than Alice Holt]. The demographics are slightly different so from what I can understand here, it's very young children, predominantly women which largely bike in the summer holiday. Bedgebury is family oriented, [...] it has a different type of mountain biking trail so attracts a wide diversity of people for the mountain biking element, it attracts across the spectrum because there's a jump area there, skills area, single track, as well as the family route. [...] Type of site is very important and infrastructure within the site, so if you compare for instance this site and Bedgebury, basically we've got full changing facilities, showers, [...] here, there aren't any showers, people aren't getting cleaned up after a muddy grind, there's insufficient services for the volume of people coming onto site and those services need updating.

The FC business partners who participated in the discussions found partnership working positive in principle but all identified some barriers relating to perceived lack of transparency and consistency, bureaucracy and associated time delays in decision-making, insufficient communication and lack of long-term strategy, as the range of following excerpts illustrate.

Male 1: [...] it would be great to have an orientation day with the Forestry Commission to say who does what, what is the chain of command, how do we get things done? Because it's not easy, it's not easy working with the Commission, to get anything done, who do you talk to, how do you ... like approach this and what is the format and the procedures to put in place because they seem to change with the personnel. It would be

good to have more open communication with them as well because I don't know what they're thinking about, I don't know what they do and I don't know what objectives they have to achieve and how they are measured against that. For me, it would be really interesting just to have that orientation, it would make life a lot easier for me. [...] I haven't really made any firm commitments or contacts because we don't know what they're going to do next, they can change so, so quickly and their direction will change as well.

Male 2: I'm slightly different in the relationships I've got at Bedgebury are very, very good, I've got a very positive experience, I have to say, there is a will to move things forward and to develop the relationships. I believe I've got a relationship with the guys here but it's quite a bureaucratic organisation and it does take an awful long time. So if we take the Bedgebury site again, the previous franchisee who was there for a year without a lease, I've been there for two years and we've just got it sorted, so three years without a lease they've been operating.

Male 3: There's a lot to say for personal relationships with people ... but it doesn't work when you go nationally from Devon to Derby, it doesn't work then because it's all lost in the bureaucracy. [...]

Male 1: There's a 50 year plan for the Forestry sites in terms of the management of the woodland, they need to somehow transfer that across to the other aspects of their business [...].

[...]

Male 3: From my point of view with the Forestry Commission, if they could simplify the, if they had a database of training providers and had all the details, public liability insurance etc., qualifications, everything, generic risk assessments, site specific risk assessments, if they had a national database of for want of a better word, authorised training providers, then each concern could go onto the database and say, "yeah, so and so's a registered training provider with us, he's given us all the information, we know the instructors he uses are all qualified and up to date, otherwise he can't deliver the training course using those guys", it would streamline the whole process so much better than having to produce all the information for every single forester or permissions officer, countless times. [...] I'm perhaps being very negative about this but my whole dealing with the Forestry Commission is quite good, working relationships in certain areas are very poor, nonexistent working relationships in certain areas so the Forestry Commission, woodland managers don't want us on site because it's hassle, simple as that.

[...]

Male 1: It's [the FC] a very big organisation. For us we're very small, [...] for me there are more good points than bad points. I really do enjoy coming here and running a business here 'cause it's really good and it's so diverse and it's so different, every day is different but it could be made just a little bit easier, that's all.

The current advantages of the PFE versus a private site came out in the following statement:

I was about to say for me it's a double edged sword [...] the attractions of private site would be direct contact, less bureaucracy, the speed at which things get done and in all probability a much lower rate. The downside or the attraction to the Forestry Commission site is that you have that infrastructure typically there and there's more significant investment than private [...] [talking about private land]there wouldn't be the infrastructure and investment available to make that site work properly, that's key for us when looking at sites, it's what's there, the diversity of the site [...]

Business partners with a franchise on specific sites would like to see greater long-term security of partnership terms (e.g. the lease) to be able to invest in and develop provisions.

Male 1: Yeah, likewise we've been looking at the purchase of woodland, the same thing, because we can get other revenue streams. The problem I have as a franchisee is that my business isn't worth anything, the policy has changed for an automatic renew of lease so in however many years' time, I'm sitting there, "am I going to get it renewed, am I not?" That's uncertainty, I can't sell it so the only thing I can sell realistically is goodwill and the business isn't worth anything.

Male 2: There's quite a lot of sites for sale which are anything between 250 and 1200 acres.

Male 1: And that's my big concern, moving forward and for me, I'd rather be looking for some sort of security I guess from the Commission [...]

Male 3: It all depends on the term of the lease, our lease was three years and the three years is coming up in April, so we have to tender again. It doesn't give you, you need to be able to, as a businessman, be able to plan and you cannot do any planning when you are uncertain about your own future. And I also think that because we weren't told this at the beginning. We were told that the leases were able to be transferred over, okay it might be for 18 months or two years or three years or however but now it's all changed [...].

7 Conclusions

The PFE is perceived by the majority of those who participated in this study as providing a public, nationally and globally vital, resource that is open to all. It is valued and widely supported for personal access and recreational use, for societal benefits (e.g. education and learning; reducing air and noise pollution; economic gains and timber production) and wider environmental benefits (e.g. biodiversity conservation; improving habitats for wildlife; help tackle climate change issues).

Of the adult public (those over 16) 85% can name benefits they want to see provided by the PFE. Even people who do not use the PFE (or are not aware that they are using it) are very positive about its existence. For all current values, and preferred future benefits, scores are higher for public forest than for private (with the single exception of expectations of woodfuel production from private woodlands). **Forests and woods are valued highly for access, recreation, facilities, wildlife and learning/education.** The productive and supporting ecosystem services (such as air, soil, water) benefits were also valued but less prominently. Implications for moving towards a low-carbon economy (e.g. increased use of timber as a building material, woodfuel to replace high carbon fuels) were not yet on the public radar, but carbon storage (trees planted and managed to help reduce climate change) and the need for increasing timber production was raised by some, including two participants working with/in the forestry sector.

Differences in value associated with different forests and woodlands is not simply a reflection of ownership (e.g. public versus private) but reflects a wider and more holistic set of criteria, including the natural and management characteristics of different sites.

The PFE survey showed differences in opinion and concerns for woodlands under public versus private ownership. Furthermore, the qualitative data showed that **a substantial part of the public consulted in the discussion groups attached a deeply-held significance to public ownership.** This was largely expressed in terms of guaranteed access and, to a lesser extent, 'ability to influence' their management. It was also sometimes expressed in terms of woodlands being an essential part of life and important national resource, which (large parts of it) should be in public ownership. **A distinction was made between the PFE and other publicly owned woodlands and forests in terms of the Forestry Commission's special expertise in silviculture and multi-purpose forestry approach.**

Personal experiences appeared to strongly influence people's opinions and contributions to the group discussions. Statements made, while not always factually accurate, illustrate the strength of feeling and the meanings people associated with trees and woods. Qualitative data plays an important role in raising awareness of and respecting the fundamental values that members of the public associate with woodlands and particularly the PFE/public ownership. A mixture of different types of woodlands and ownership was widely regarded as suitable to allow for 'business' development and creativity as well as achieving a wide range of environmental, social and economic benefits.

Most participants expressed a wish to increase forest cover, especially deciduous / native woodlands, while some emphasised the need to increase timber production. Most

discussion group participants believed that public ownership would best guarantee access for the public and sustainable woodland management into the future.

7.1 Values and expectations amongst different parts of society

Experience and knowledge of the PFE, and ways in which it is valued, vary within British society. Overall, the PFE appears to be better known and more widely used by members of the public in middle and higher income groups. Prominent user groups are male white recreationalists, women/families with young children, and walkers/dog-walkers.

The discussion groups highlighted the multiple benefits and provisions that woodlands can provide, and recognised that the multiple demands need to be negotiated and managed. **The PFE was seen as particularly suitable in this regard, and perceived as under an obligation to serve a wide range of environmental and social, alongside economic, objectives.**

The PFE survey results and discussion groups indicated that there are some regional differences in woodland use. **Use and provision of 'recreational' forests are generally higher in Southern parts of England (except London) and lower in the Midlands and some Northern parts.** This mirrors the spread, size and type of PFE woodlands in those areas. For example, in the South East, the PFE contributes heavily to accessible natural greenspace provision (35%, this being 97.5% of all FC land in the region).

The right to access woodlands was a key concern. Improving the maintenance, signage and publicity of woodland paths was a prominent concern for improving the PFE for personal use. This was strongly expressed by those coming from ethnic minorities, those belonging to walking clubs, or working with people with a range of disabilities. Other improvements to the PFE raised by some intensive users were providing small car parking facilities and less formal paths for more remote and less frequented sites.

In terms of societal benefits, expectations often focused around three aspects.

1. Increasing woodland cover, in particular deciduous and mixed, was viewed as important for social and environmental benefits
2. Increasing formal and informal educational use of woodlands was highlighted as key to raising environmental awareness amongst children and adults
3. Strong support was expressed for maintaining the sustainable management of the variety of woodlands, ranging from highly developed and popular sites to more secluded and quiet ones.

A significant proportion of group discussion **participants signalled a strong wish to conserve woodlands and increase woodland habitats.** This was a priority

particularly strongly supported by older participants in both the PFE survey and in the group discussions. Improving the environment and social well-being was perceived as preserving and increasing the area of broadleaved woodlands. Felling trees or increasing timber production was seen by many as reducing rather than maintaining or improving these benefits.

It appears that **few had come into contact with or knew about the forest industry or woodland management, or had made the connection that harvesting timber could also 'improve' the environment, when used to replace higher carbon products**, be it in terms of fuel, construction materials or other low-carbon economic uses. There is thus a clear role for the Forestry Commission along with other public and private woodland owners to **communicate or to engage wider society in discussions about the complexities of carbon management and the role that forestry and wood products can play towards achieving a low-carbon economy**.

7.2 Benefits of the PFE compared with those under other ownership and management

The Forestry Commission is recognised as an effective manager of woodland resources for multiple benefits. Intensive users and those more familiar with the PFE especially acknowledged the range of social, environmental and economic provisions that form part of FC's sustainable management goals. Many participants felt that the PFE was run cost-effectively; some were surprised how little public resource was actually used, while others found it difficult to comment as they did not know how it compared with other owners or sectors.

Even those who do not use woods, or more specifically the PFE, tended to value the societal and environmental benefits. This was the case amongst all age groups and people from different socio-economic backgrounds. A richly expressed sense of connection with trees and woodlands means that **many regard the PFE as a national natural resource to which society has a right**.

Some expressed **high levels of trust in public ownership and management** and saw woodland creation and conservation as one way to act against further losses of forest cover and the gradual erosion of urban greenbelt areas. Key advantages of public ownership that were valued are direct management control and responsibility for sustainable forest management.

Few people thought that private ownership would improve the efficiency and quality of woodland management; most wished to maintain and increase woodlands in public ownership. The creation of new woodlands was thought necessary, especially near urban or on brownfield sites and surplus farmland.

Some representatives of groups with a specific interest in woodlands voiced a wish for the FC to initiate **earlier and more open communication on planning and management options** that involves their staff and key stakeholders.

Business partnerships can work well for both sides in providing facilities or attractions and providing a stream of revenue for the Forestry Commission. The **main suggestions for improving existing partnerships** were:

- **clearer lines of communication** and **more liaison** (stable contact point and less bureaucracy)
- a more **business-like structure to charges** (set nationally or transparently across the FC; and again, less bureaucracy)
- a **longer-term perspective to issuing leases** to allow more investment and reduce risk to partners.

7.3 Benefits and expectations of different woodland resources within the PFE

People value a wide range of forest types. Native broadleaved forests are particularly highly valued. Conifer woodlands were perceived by many as unattractive, but some expressed that the type of woodland (as long as there was some variety) did not matter as much as having access through them. More work is needed to develop a typology within the PFE in order to demonstrate these aspects more clearly.

In some locations (especially Alice Holt, Bedgebury, New Forest and Sherwood Forest)¹⁷, the knowledge and experience of community, education and recreation rangers in working with a range of publics was recognised. However, County Council rangers and wardens often had a higher profile because Councils were perceived as more prominently **advertising woodland facilities, walks and activities** through local newspapers, leaflets/maps and the internet.

7.4 Future research

The PFE survey has made a significant new contribution to allow for the first time direct comparison of societal values for the PFE and woodlands under other ownership. However, much of the interpretation depends on the assumption that people are aware of the resources under different kinds of ownership; and research reported here suggests that is not always the case. There is therefore scope for testing these assumptions further.

¹⁷ The range of PFE woodlands highlighted reflect the choice of sampling areas for the discussion groups (South East: Farnham, Reading, Southampton; Midlands: Nottingham)

Lack of public awareness of the range of different ownership types and the variety of resources within and across these is mirrored by an apparent lack of centrally held data on woodland resources in both private and public ownership. Some projects are underway within the Forestry Commission to build on current datasets. For example, work is currently being undertaken by IFOS to build a comprehensive database detailing the ownership of woodlands in the UK using a range of data sources. Also, efforts are underway to collate and standardise information on recreation sites, services and facilities on the PFE and to produce a tool which will provide map-based outputs. There is a **need for a more concerted and systematic approach to assessing the total woodland resource and provisions**. Comparisons could then be made between existing facilities and services provided by the PFE, other publicly owned woodlands and those in private ownership; and priorities set, and as necessary adjusted, for the future.

There is currently relatively poor scope to examine the interactions between different factors contributing to public benefit (ownership, management, location, catchment area, forest type and age). There is **scope for more sophisticated analysis of data from the National Inventory of Woods and Trees to relate woodland type (both within and beyond the PFE) to particular social catchments**, but this is a medium term proposal that was not feasible within the timeframe of this study.

Our current understanding of the use of woodlands under different ownerships is based on the reported beliefs of survey respondents. There is a need to **calibrate this self-reported data with information about the actual ownership of the woodlands visited by a cross-section of society**. If beliefs about ownership are found to be correct, more robust use can be made of self-reported ownership in future.

Within FCE, **more consistent monitoring across the full range of woodland types provided through the PFE is needed, differentiating in particular between the honey pot sites and those which are less developed for recreation**. The current SERG programme to develop a more systematic framework for planning and analysing social research, as well as current data collection programmes under development by FC GB and FCE, will contribute to this evidence base. SERG's work under the systematic framework includes developing a typology of different types of woodlands in terms of ecology, area, silviculture and site facilities. This should help improve our understanding of the connections between benefits or values and different woodlands.

8 Appendix 1: PFE Survey

Survey of public opinion, use and expectations of woodlands in England

SECTION 1: Use of woodlands in England and benefits derived from them

Read introduction to interviewee:

The Forestry Commission would like to find out more about whether and how you use woodlands and which ones you visit. This research is part of an in-depth look at how we manage woodlands in England to serve society's long-term needs.

By 'woodlands' I mean forests and woods of any size, type and age.

Q1. How often did you visit woodlands in England in the last year?

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Three or four times a year
- Once or twice a year
- Never **GO TO Q5**

Q2a. Can you name the woodland you visit most frequently, and the nearest town or village?

Wood:

Town/Village.....

Q2b. Thinking of the woodland you visit most frequently, approximately how far in miles did you travel to reach this woodland? By that I mean the distance from your home to the place you visited?

Distance to woodland visited most frequently: mi

Q2c. Can you tell me why you visit this woodland most frequently? Please tick the option(s) that apply

- It is in close/ easy reach from where I live
- I feel welcome as a visitor
- It has attractive scenery
- It is rich in and/or good for watching wildlife
- It is a good place to unwind and de-stress



- It is a good place for me to get away from people
- It is a good place for me to take children to play and have fun
- It is a good place to walk my dog
- It is a good place for me to exercise
- I feel it is a safe place to visit
- There is no entrance charge / car park fee
- None of the above (state if other reason given):

Q3a. Can you name the woodland you most enjoy visiting, and the nearest town or village?

Wood:

Town/Village.....

If this is the same woodland as in Q2 (most frequently visited woodland), GO TO Q4.

Q3b. Thinking of the woodland you most enjoy visiting, approximately how far in miles did you travel to reach this woodland? By that I mean the distance from your home to the place you visited?

Distance to woodland most enjoyed: mi

**Q3c. Can you tell me why you like visiting this woodland?
Please tick the option(s) that apply**

- It is in close/ easy reach from where I live
- I feel welcome as a visitor
- It has attractive scenery
- It is rich in and/or good for watching wildlife
- It is a good place to unwind and de-stress
- It is a good place for me to get away from people
- It is a good place for me to take children to play and have fun
- It is a good place to walk my dog
- It is a good place for me to exercise
- I feel it is a safe place to visit
- There is no entrance charge / car park fee
- None of the above (state if other reason given):

.....

SECTION 2: Knowledge of ownership of woodlands, perceived significance of ownership and potential impact of ownership



Q4. Thinking of the woodland(s) that you visit most regularly and most enjoy visiting, do you know who owns and manages the woodland?

Do not show screen and do not prompt

4a. Woodland visited most regularly:

- Public - Forestry Commission
- Public - Other (e.g. Local Authority, Ministry of Defence)
- Private (e.g. forestry or timber business; farmer; charity; private trusts)
- Other, state which:
- Don't know

4b. Woodland most enjoyed:

- Public - Forestry Commission
- Public - Other (e.g. Local Authority, Ministry of Defence)
- Private (e.g. forestry or timber business; farmer; charity; private trusts)
- Other, state which:
- Don't know

Q5. When you decide to visit a woodland is it important to you who owns and manages it?

- Yes
- No

Q6. Thinking about the Forestry Commission, which one of these statements do you think best describes the organisation?

Tick one only

- A government department or agency that manages publicly owned woodlands
- An independent, charitable organisation
- A body representing private woodland owners
- A private company
- Don't know

Read definitions to interviewee: Woodland ownership and management can be divided into 'private' and 'public'. Private ownership refers to all non-public woodlands. Owners include private businesses, individuals, trusts and charities (such as the National Trust and the Woodland Trust). Publicly owned woodlands are owned by the Government on behalf of everyone and managed for the benefit of everyone. Public woodlands are managed by Local Authorities, the Ministry of Defence and the Forestry Commission. The Public Forest Estate, which are the woodlands managed by the Forestry Commission, is made up of over 1,500 different woodlands; that is nearly 1/5 of all woodlands.

Q7. What do you value most about publicly owned woodlands?

Do not show screen and do not prompt. Only use the precodes if one of the specific answers shown on the screen is mentioned. If the response does not exactly match one of these, use the 'other' code and write in interviewee's response.

- Access** - free, cheap, welcoming, access protected by law
- Recreation** – place to walk, ride bike or horse, children's play, Go Ape, watch wildlife
- Resources and facilities** - play areas, picnic sites, car parks, visitor centres, big spaces(get away from other people), rangers
- Woodland management** – sustainably managed, keeping traditions and practices alive
- Benefits to local environment** – woods and forests protected by law, improves local area, rangers manage the woodland (reduce anti-social behaviour)
- Benefits to wider environment** – help tackle climate change, provide places for wind turbines
- Benefits to society** – learning and education, cultural events
- Benefits to economy** – jobs, employment, tourism, attracts visitors to area
- Wildlife** – habitats, places for wildlife to live
- Products** - timber, wood, wood-fuel, collecting non-timber forest products (e.g. mushrooms, berries)
- Nothing**
- Don't know**
- Other:**

Q8. What do you value most about private woodlands?

Do not show screen and do not prompt. Only use the precodes if one of the specific answers shown on the screen is mentioned. If the response does not exactly match one of these, use the 'other' code and write in interviewee's response.

- Access** - free, cheap, welcoming, access protected by law
- Recreation** – place to walk, ride bike or horse, children's play, Go Ape, watch wildlife
- Resources and facilities** - play areas, picnic sites, car parks, visitor centres, big spaces(get away from other people), rangers
- Woodland management** – sustainably managed, keeping traditions and practices alive
- Benefits to local environment** – improves local area
- Benefits to wider environment** – help tackle climate change, provide places for wind turbines
- Benefits to society** – learning and education, cultural events
- Benefits to economy** – jobs, employment, tourism, attracts visitors to area

Wildlife – habitats, places for wildlife to live

Products - timber, wood, wood-fuel, collecting non-timber forest products (e.g. mushrooms, berries)

Nothing

Don't know

Other:

SECTION 3: Expectations of priorities for the future provision and management of the Public Forest Estate as compared to private woodlands

Q9a. Taking an England-wide perspective, what are the benefits that the Public Forest Estate, that is woodlands managed by the Forestry Commission, should deliver over the next few decades? Please tick up to five that you think are most important.

Type of benefit	Tick up to five
Grow woods and forests to help combat climate change	
Provide wood as a renewable fuel	
Provide sites to generate electricity from windpower	
Provide places for wildlife to live	
Demonstrate how to manage woods and forests and support innovation and research	
Improve and protect the landscape	
Help people get involved in their local woodland	
Enhance areas in and around towns and cities	
Provide places to walk	
Provide places to cycle or ride horses	
Provide places for learning and education	
Provide places for events such as outdoor concerts, sporting events and festivals	
Restore former industrial land as new public woodlands and open space	
Provide sand, gravel and other minerals for construction	
Help encourage tourism and leisure visits	
Provide timber for sawmills and other wood-using businesses	
Other (please specify):	

9b. Taking an England-wide perspective, what are the benefits that private woodlands should deliver over the next few decades? Please tick up to five that you think are most important.

Type of benefit	Tick up to five
Grow woods and forests to help combat climate change	
Provide wood as a renewable fuel	
Provide sites to generate electricity from windpower	
Provide places for wildlife to live	
Demonstrate how to manage woods and forests and support innovation and research	
Improve and protect the landscape	
Help people get involved in their local woodland	
Enhance areas in and around towns and cities	
Provide places to walk	
Provide places to cycle or ride horses	
Provide places for learning and education	
Provide places for events such as outdoor concerts, sporting events and festivals	
Restore former industrial land as new public woodlands and open space	
Provide sand, gravel and other minerals for construction	
Help encourage tourism and leisure visits	
Provide timber for sawmills and other wood-using businesses	
Other (please specify):	

SECTION 4: Diversity, socio-cultural and economic background data

Q10. Gender of respondent

- Male
- Female

Q11. Age

- 16-17
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54

55-64
65-74
75+

Q12. How would you describe your cultural or ethnic background?

White British
White Irish
Any other white background
White & Black Caribbean
White & Black African
White & Asian
Any other mixed background
Indian
Pakistani
Bangladeshi
Any other Asian background
Caribbean
African
Any other Black background
Chinese
Any other

Q13. Do you have any illness or disability that would limit your daily activities or the work that you can do?

Yes
No

Q14. What is the approximate total income in your household?

Under 10K
10 to 20K
21 to 30K
31 to 50K
50K+

Q15. What is your postcode?

This information will only be used for analysis purposes and will not be used to identify you as an individual or your responses.

.....

9 Appendix 2: Survey sampling strategy and weighting

TNS's Sampling System

The sampling system integrates the Post Office Address file with the 2001 Census small area data at output area level. This enables drawing replicated waves of multi-stage stratified samples with accurate and up-to-date address selection using PPS methods. This is explained in greater detail below.

TNS Omnibus has Random Location Sampling as its sampling basis. A unique sampling system has been developed by TNS for this purpose utilising 2001 UK Census small area statistics and the Post Office Address File. This divides Great Britain, south of the Caledonian Canal, into 600 areas of equal population. From these 600 areas a master sampling frame of 300 sample points is selected to reflect the country's geographical and socio-economic profile. The areas within each Standard Region are stratified into population density bands, and each band in descending order by percentage of population into socio-economic Grades I and II.

To maximise the statistical accuracy of Omnibus sampling, sequential waves of fieldwork are allocated systematically across the sampling frame to ensure maximum geographical dispersion. The 300 primary sampling units are allocated to 12 sub-samples of 25 points each, with each sub-sample in itself being a representative drawing from the frame. For each wave of Omnibus fieldwork, a set of sub-samples is selected in order to provide the number of sample points required (typically circa 139 for 2,000 interviews). Across sequential waves of fieldwork all sub-samples are systematically worked, thereby reducing the clustering effects on questionnaires asked for two or more consecutive weeks.

Each primary sampling unit is divided into two geographically distinct segments, each containing, as far as possible, equal populations. The segments comprise aggregations of complete postcode sectors. Within each half (known as the A and B halves) postcode sectors have been sorted by the percentage of the population in socio-economic groups I and II. One postcode sector from each primary sampling unit is selected for each Omnibus, alternating on successive selections between the A and B halves of the primary sampling unit, again to reduce clustering effects. For each wave of interviewing, each interviewer is supplied with two blocks of 70 addresses, drawn from different parts of the sector. Addresses are contacted systematically with three doors being left after each successful interview.

To ensure a balanced sample of adults within effective contacted addresses, a quota is set by sex (male, female housewife, female non-housewife); within female housewife, presence of children and working status and within men, working status. In each weekly wave of the omnibus survey, a target of 2000 interviews is set and the survey data is weighted, where necessary, to ensure that the sample is representative of the UK population in terms of the standard demographic characteristics.

The sampling procedure is the same whether GB\UK or England-only based. For samples amongst the English population, only points within England are used.

Quotas are not set by urban / rural classification. However, cross breaks can be added to outputs to show the proportion interviewed in urban and rural areas. A sample point is rural if the majority of Wards are defined as rural; and urban if the majority of Wards are defined as urban. Ward Urbanisation is based on the population density of the ward. Wards are urban if the population density is above 4.45 people per hectare and rural if below that figure.

Weighting

Weighting takes into account any variations between the demographic distribution of respondents and the GB population (England only used). Factors taken into account at this stage of the weighting process are region of residence (based on Government Office Region), age, sex and working status. If any of these quotas are over-represented, the responses from these respondents are weighted down. Likewise, responses from under-represented groups are up-weighted. Our sampling approach is designed to be representative, which limits the amount of weighing necessary.

The percentages used in the text and shown in tables are always based on the weighted base.

10 Appendix 3: Sampling approach for discussion groups

Defining the sample size for qualitative research is largely a matter of judgement and experience and needs to take account of the remit and extent of the study, the focus and range of target audiences and the specific method used. A recent study looking at the issue of 'sample size' in interview-based studies, for example, showed a range of sample sizes from 5 to 93 with one additional 'outlier' of 350 (a mean of 31, which decreases to 24 without the outlier).¹⁸ In our group discussion/interviews we did not have the time to test for 'theoretical saturation'¹⁹ but found a range of cross-cutting and distinct themes and patterns of similar emphasis or a set of different/characteristic positions in replies to our key questions.

We used a purposeful sampling approach where sets of selection criteria are identified and participants are recruited from populations which fulfil those criteria. The composition of groups was tailored to cover the range of criteria but within the existing time and resource limitations. This meant that most groups covered more than one selection criteria (see also **Table 10.1**) as we had to strike a balance between homogeneity within each group and comparability of specific criteria between different groups. For example, the urban group held in the Midlands included participants from ethnic minorities, age groups from 16 to 55, users and non-users. A similar mix of ages and user/non-user was part of the low-income group held in Farnham that included urban catchments (Aldershot, Fleet and Farnham). Holding separate discussions for the major segments of the target populations is thought to improve the efficiency of data collection, e.g. by creating a more welcoming and relaxed rather than adversarial or awkward atmosphere, which helps participants to freely contribute their views and experiences on the topics being discussed. This approach was effective in gathering relevant data in a relatively short amount of time and in making some cross-comparisons between different events and their associated (sub-)target groups.

The discussion groups were scheduled to take place mid to late August to allow 2-3 weeks for recruitment. The tight time frame and the study falling into the holiday period provided some obstacles; e.g. many interest groups and contacts were extremely busy or shut/away during August, and potential recruits about to go on holiday. However, we succeeded in recruiting between 6 and 13 people for each group (with between 3 and 11

¹⁸ These figures comes from a meta-analysis of grounded theory projects, using 50 research articles from a range of disciplines and project carried out between 2002-2004; see <http://www.buseco.monash.edu.au/research/studentdocs/mgt.pdf> [accessed 7 Oct 2009].

¹⁹ See e.g. Strauss, A.L. and J.M. Corbin (1998) *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*. Second Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

attending). The recruitment for the intensive user / interest group discussion event showed a high level of interest, and we ended up with 19 people wishing to attend, so we run two groups in parallel (with 8 and 9 respectively attending). Another noteworthy point about this group was that attendees refused taking the £30 incentive payment²⁰ as they welcomed having a forum where they could contribute their own views and the needs of the interest groups they represented, as well as having the opportunity to hear and learn from others. In the case of DG2.1 which focused on sexual diversity (see **Table 10.1**) the low turnout for that group and the interest by another group that was contacted to participate meant that a second discussion group was held to obtain a wider range in ages and variety in backgrounds and experiences.

Table 10.1. Overview of participant profile for the 10 discussion groups

Group	Location - Catchment	N	Male	Female	Age range / groups	Selection (sub-)criteria and comments
DG1 Business Partners	Farnham - SE England (Alice Holt, Beddington)	3	3	0	35-54	Franchises and businesses with some interest in or association with FC or woodlands in the area.
DG2.1 Sexual diversity - GOC Berkshire and Mid-Thames Group	Reading - Berkshire	2	2	0	55-74	<i>Group members were invited to come to this meeting held in a pub early evening. The group secretary and the person who organised the last walk both turned up, but not others.</i>
DG2.2 Sexual diversity - GOC Solent Group	Near Romsey - Solent	5 (+2)	5 (+2)	0	25-54	<i>This discussion group was held during the lunchbreak of the group's regular monthly walk; 5 (who ate outside) were present throughout the group discussion; another 2 (of the 7 who ate inside) joined in later (the pub was too noisy to be able to record inside).</i>
DG3 Disability	Beeston - Nottingham	9	4	5	25-34 45-74	People with range of disabilities or special needs. <i>The group consisted of those who worked with disabled adults and children (esp. horseriding) as the disabled participants were either too young or did not feel up to attending. For some target groups (e.g. blind and deaf) the lead-in time was too short.</i>
DG4 Urban	Beeston - Nottingham	11	3	8	16-54 65+	Include ethnic minorities and 16-22 age group. <i>Some participants (3 males, incl. 1 from minority group) did not turn up. Mother of 16 yr old accompanied daughter and contributed.</i>

²⁰ Paying £30 or £40 to participants for attending focus/discussion groups and covering travel costs is the current going rate and common practice. SERG was advised by the recruitment agencies who tendered for the contract that they would have extreme difficulties recruiting without the offer of such incentive.



Group	Location - Catchment	N	Male	Female	Age range / groups	Selection (sub-)criteria and comments
DG5 Rural ('young': 16-50 years)	Beeston	10	2	8	16-55	<i>Younger age group was targeted (especially 16-22) to probe into their requirements/perspectives. The catchment had to be extended to semi-urban due to chosen semi-urban venue and town-based recruitment efforts by contractor.</i>
DG6 Rural ('old': 50+)	Farnham - 15 mi radius	12	3	9	50-75+	<i>Older group was targeted to get 'history' of experiences and probe into requirements/perspectives of that age group.</i>
DG7 Low income and unemployed	Farnham - 15 mi radius	9	3	6	16-64	<i>This group consisted largely of participants aged under 45, a mixture of regular/intensive and occasional users and 1 non-user.</i>
DG8.1 Intensive users / interest groups	Farnham - 50 mi radius	9	7	2	45-74	<i>Those / representatives of clubs with a strong interest in walking, mountain biking, cycling, rally motorcycling, horse-riding, nature conservation</i>
DG8.2 Intensive users / interest groups	Farnham - 50 mi radius	8	5	3	25-64 and 75+	<i>Those / representatives of clubs with a strong interest in local planning, walking, mountain biking, cycling, rally motorcycling, nature conservation, learning & education</i>
Total		78 (80)	37 (39)	41		

11 Appendix 4: Discussion Groups Protocol

August-September 2009

Purpose of Discussion Groups

Find out whether people distinguish between TWF under different ownership, and whether they attach any special conditions, expectations and benefits to the public forest estate.

Objectives of the Discussion Group Work

The group interviews will enable us to:

- Establish whether people distinguish between PFE and TWF under other forms of ownership (in terms of the woodlands used / known / generally).
- Elicit people's perceptions and expectations of the PFE and its management (personal use if applicable / for society generally / in the longer term), and whether these are different from TWF under other ownership and management. If so, why?
- Find out how these expectations are reflected (or not) in the use and management of the PFE.
- Explore the contribution of the PFE to the wellbeing of different groups of stakeholders, compared with TWF under other forms of ownership (any differences?).
- Test reaction to "What if the Government sold part of its forests?" How much do ownership / provisions / proximity matter?

Target Groups & Geographical Spread

DG1: Business partners - Franchises and businesses with some interest in or association with FC or woodlands in the area. *Alice Holt, QECP*

DG2: Sexual diversity - Gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, transgender - users and non-users of woodlands - range of ages. *Berkshire & Mid Thames Gay Outdoor Club, Reading. Solent Gay Outdoor Club, Southampton*

DG3: Disability - People with range of disabilities or special needs - users and non-users of woodlands - range of ages - M/F. *Midlands - within 30 mi radius of Sherwood Pines*

DG4: Urban - Users and non-users of woodlands - including BME - range of ages (should include 16-22 yrs) - M/F. *Midlands - Nottingham area, within 30 mi radius of Sherwood Pines*

DG5: Rural (young) - Users and non-users of woodlands - target younger age group (16-50 yrs) - M/F. *Midlands - within 30 mi radius of Sherwood Pines*

DG6: Rural (old) - Users and non-users of woodlands - include at least 5 in older age group (50+) - M/F. *South East England - within 30 mi radius of Alice Holt Forest*

DG7: Low income and unemployed - Users and non-users of woodlands - all ages - M/F. *South East England - within 30 mi radius of Alice Holt Forest*

DG8: Users and pro-nature - Intensive users of woodlands (cycling / horse-riding / walking / learning & education) - all ages - M/F. *South East England - within 30 mi radius of Alice Holt Forest*

Equipment

- 2 digital voice recorders (with additional stereo microphone)
- Spare batteries
- Notebook and pen for field observations
- Camera
- Copies of questionnaire, Pens
- Copies of consent form
- Discussion Group Protocol
- Participant list
- Route description, address and details of contact person for venue

Focus Group Plan

Facilitators to wear their Forest Research badge and sticky label with first name

Arrival

- Greet participants and introduce ourselves (name and organisation)
- Ask participant to write their name on and wear a sticky label
- Offer refreshments/snack
- While waiting for others to arrive, ask participant to **complete PFE survey**

Before we start the group discussion, we would like you to complete a short questionnaire which asks a few questions relating to the Discussion Group topic and background information about yourself. [Show and give them a copy of the questionnaire.] This should take about 10 minutes to complete and if you prefer, you can complete it with one of us.

Introduction

- Let participants and facilitators find a comfortable seat and make sure we all see and hear each other
- Outline the project aim and what we are doing today

*This group meeting today is part of a **short research study** that looks at the role of woodlands, especially those owned and managed by the Forestry Commission. We would like to find out what you think about woodlands in public ownership, your expectations about their characteristics and management over the next decades. We have some questions prepared to help cover different aspects of the topic, but you can bring in the elements that you feel are most relevant and important.*

*Participation in the discussion group is **voluntary** and you do not have to be part if you don't want to.*

*We will take some notes during the discussion and would like to **record** the session with two digital audio-recorders. This helps us to remember what you actually said in your own words rather than changing it to what we think or remember you said. We will treat the information as **confidential**. Any material we may use from this session in a report or presentation will be **anonymised**; that means we will not refer to your actual name. We have to follow data protection laws in how we treat and store the data.*

We feel that it is important to hear and become more aware of what you think rather than us making assumptions, and this is why we would like you to share and discuss your experiences and thoughts today.

Hand out and ask them to check and complete the Information and Consent Form.

Do you have any questions about the research or this meeting today before we start?

Opening Questions (each in turn)

Would each of you say your name and a little bit about yourself and where you are from?

Q 1: What do you (personally) think about woods and forests?

PROBE Do you like trees and woodlands?
 Did you use woods or forests in your childhood?
 What do you associate with woodlands / forests / trees?

Introductory Questions (not necessarily each in turn but make sure all contribute)

*For the following questions, we would like you to focus on woodlands **in England**.*

Q 2: Can you tell us more about your use of woods and forests? Why do you use them? Is there anything that prevents you from using woodlands?

- PROBE Do you use different woods for different reasons?
Do the following matter for why you do or do not use woodlands?:
- type of wood (e.g. conifer, broadleaf)
 - facilities (e.g. car park, bike trails)
 - perceptions of the wood (e.g. safety, ownership)
 - vicinity / location

Q 3: Do you know who owns the woods that you use / or those which are near where you live?

- PROBE How do you know who owns the wood/s?
(Are there any signs or notices? Or is it just common knowledge?)

Key Questions

Ownership/Resource

Q 4: Does it matter to you or affect you who owns the woodland?

- PROBE Do you feel you are, or would be, more welcome in woods that are in a particular type of ownership?
- Does the ownership have any effect on how safe you (would) feel in the wood?
- Do you think that woods in a particular type of ownership have more or fewer facilities or provisions (e.g. bike trails, play parks, cafes, educational opportunities etc)?
- How important is ownership in relation to other factors which may influence your decision to visit or not visit a wood? (e.g. wider issues regarding safety, facilities, proximity to home)?

Provisions / Benefits / Expectations

Q 5a: What do you expect from public woods owned or managed by the Forestry Commission both now and over the next few decades?

- PROBE in terms of:
- Type of wood

- Access
- Facilities – recreation, car parking, visitor centres
- Social benefits
- Biodiversity / environmental / climate change benefits
- Economic benefits

Make sure longer term is being considered.

Q 5b: Taking a broader view and thinking about society as a whole, what are the expectations and needs relating to publicly owned woodlands over the next decades?

Check whether what is raised would ONLY be achieved by public woodlands or to some degree/equally/better by private woodlands.

Q 6: In comparison, what do you expect of woods in private ownership?

PROBE What kinds of forests does each of the participants think of or are aware of?

Check for various forms of 'private' woods; include trusts and charities, investment groups, businesses.

Has any of the private or public owners a duty to provide more social / environmental / economic benefits?

Check for now and into the future (considering changes in social, economic, environmental and climate conditions/context).

How do provisions/benefits/expectations relate to different types and sizes of forests?

May be suitable to make participants aware of the fact that it costs FCE £76million to run and manage PFE and that with the profits it makes from timber, recreation etc it only receives £15 million from government.

Q 7: How would you feel if the Government sold part of its forests?

PROBE What kinds of forests and priorities in management should stay in public ownership?

What would be acceptable to sell?

What kind of forests should be bought or planted and where?

Governance / Public Involvement

Q8: Are you, or have you ever been consulted about or practically involved in local wood management?

PROBE **If yes:** Who owned the wood?

Do you think your opinions were adequately considered?

If no: Would you like to have the opportunity?

Do you think you should have greater opportunities to be involved in local wood management?

Do you think you should have the same level of engagement in publicly owned and privately owned local woods?

Specific questions

Check whether the following angles/issues have been covered in the discussion. If not, ask now:

Business partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How important is location and vicinity of business to woodland compared with ownership? • What works well in the partnership with FC? What not? Are you involved in other partnerships that work better?
Sexuality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any stigma or discrimination experienced during woodland use? Or know of problems experienced by friends / partners? • Any special needs / provisions / information & communication issues? Different needs when younger / older?
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any specific access and use issues that have not yet been mentioned? • What could the Forestry Commission do to improve the public forest estate for your particular needs?
Urban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How important is the presence/use of <i>urban</i> greenspace compared with rural/FC woodlands? • What are your thoughts and experiences of urban woodlands and trees compared with rural woodlands?
Rural young	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any special provisions / information & communication issues? • (Small) group events or activities planned using

	woodlands?
Rural old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any special needs / information & communication issues? • Woodland characteristics & management: Perceived change for better/worse over past decades?
Low income & unemployed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any special needs / information & communication issues? • What type of greenspace do you use most (park, football pitch, garden,...)? What is most affordable in your experience?
Intensive users & Nature watchers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflicts between use, increasing/improving access and wildlife?

Ending Question (each in turn)

Q 9a: Considering all that has been discussed within this group, what is most important to you about the public forest estate?

Q9b: What aspects of other publicly owned or privately owned woods are most important to you?

Q 10: Have your opinions or expectations of [publicly owned] woods changed over time or as a result of taking part in this discussion?

We would like to thank you for participating and sharing your experiences and wish you all the best!

Collapsed categories	Total	Gender		Age								Disability		Ethnicity		Income					Population density	
			Females	16-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	Yes	No	White	Minority Ethnic	>10	10-20K	21-30K	31-50K	>50K	Rural	Urban
Forestry Commission	16	19	13	5	7	18	18	17	18	14	16	13	16	16	5	14	15	24	22	17	14	25
Public other	23	26	20	8	23	25	22	24	24	20	34	29	23	23	39	24	24	19	21	26	26	11
Private	18	16	20	6	10	17	17	19	20	35	14	23	18	18	15	18	20	13	14	21	18	21
Other	2	2	2	.	1	.	3	2	3	4	1	2	2	2	3	1	2	2	1	7	2	3
Don't Know	41	38	45	81	59	42	43	39	35	28	34	34	42	42	40	44	40	43	43	32	42	41

Table 13.4. Ownership of favourite wood to visit

Collapsed categories	Total	Gender		Age								Disability		Ethnicity		Income					Population density	
			Females	16-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	Yes	No	White	Minority Ethnic	>10	10-20K	21-30K	31-50K	>50K	Rural	Urban
Forestry Commission	17	20	14	5	7	18	18	19	19	18	17	14	17	18	7	14	17	25	24	20	16	24
Public other	22	24	20	11	21	25	19	22	22	20	35	25	22	21	33	26	24	13	20	18	24	12
Private	17	17	18	6	10	17	17	19	16	31	13	24	16	17	15	15	19	14	15	20	17	19
Other	2	2	2	.	1	.	3	3	4	2	1	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	.	8	2	2
Don't Know	42	38	45	78	58	43	43	39	37	28	31	37	42	42	45	42	39	47	41	34	42	41

Table 13.5. Ownership of wood most frequently visited

	Total	Gender		Age								Disability		Ethnicity		Income					Population density	
		Males	Females	16-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	Yes	No	White	Minority Ethnic	>10	10-20K	21-30K	31-50K	>50K	Rural	Urban
A government department or agency that manages publicly owned woodlands	50	56	45	39	37	50	50	55	60	50	44	41	52	50	47	38	55	57	59	34	50	50
An independent charitable organisation	15	13	16	11	16	14	15	16	14	18	11	17	14	16	4	13	15	16	17	19	14	15
A body representing private woodland owners	7	8	7	2	9	9	8	6	6	6	7	6	7	7	9	7	6	8	10	5	7	8
A private company	4	5	4	6	5	3	4	6	3	5	4	4	4	4	7	6	2	3	6	.	4	4
Don't know	24	19	29	42	34	23	24	17	18	21	35	32	23	23	32	36	22	16	9	12	24	23

Table 13.6. Knowledge of Forestry Commission

	Total	Gender		Age								Disability		Ethnicity		Income					Population density	
Collapsed categories			Females	16-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	Yes	No	White	Minority Ethnic	>10	10-20K	21-30K	31-50K	>50K	Rural	Urban
access	24	Males 26	21	10	16	24	27	27	28	27	20	18	26	25	19	17	28	23	33	39	24	26
economy	7	7	8	5	9	7	8	6	7	7	7	8	7	7	10	8	7	11	4	9	7	9
local environment	11	12	10	8	8	10	10	10	15	13	8	9	11	11	11	9	11	11	11	11	10	13
society	4	4	5	2	3	4	3	6	7	5	3	4	4	5	2	4	7	2	6	5	4	4
wider environment	1	1	1	4	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	3	1	1	5	1	2	1	1	2	1	1
products	3	3	3	4	3	1	4	3	4	4	3	2	3	3	4	3	5	2	1	2	3	4
recreation	33	31	34	17	20	17	22	31	23	20	24	17	23	34	23	32	33	33	34	32	33	30
resources and facilities	22	21	22	20	20	24	28	24	18	15	18	17	23	21	25	18	21	24	24	19	22	18
wildlife	15	14	16	6	8	9	18	20	18	20	15	15	15	15	10	16	15	13	12	13	15	16
woodland management	12	13	11	7	9	9	10	14	18	14	9	10	12	12	11	9	17	16	10	15	11	18
none	9	9	10	7	13	10	7	8	10	10	10	8	10	2	3	2	2	2	5	2	23	22
don't know	22	20	24	43	30	27	19	17	19	19	25	25	22	22	29	30	24	19	19	10	23	22

Table 13.7. Value most about public woodlands

Collapsed categories	Total	Gender		Age								Disability		Ethnicity		Income					Population density	
			Females	16-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	Yes	No	White	Minority Ethnic	>10	10-20K	21-30K	31-50K	>50K	Rural	Urban
access	10	Males 11	9	3	7	8	14	13	9	13	6	6	11	10	7	6	8	11	9	11	9	14
economy	4	5	4	7	3	4	6	4	4	4	3	5	4	4	9	4	4	6	4	3	4	4
local environment	8	9	8	.	6	8	9	9	8	13	8	8	8	9	4	7	10	7	11	9	8	10
society	2	2	3	.	3	2	1	5	4	2	1	3	2	2	3	1	4	3	4	.	3	2
wider environment	2	1	2	.	1	2	2	2	2	.	.	1	2	1	4	1	2	3	1	2	2	1
products	2	2	2	4	1	1	2	3	2	4	3	2	2	2	4	2	3	.	.	1	2	2
recreation	26	24	28	14	28	20	31	29	26	20	27	25	26	26	23	28	25	24	27	26	26	26
resources and facilities	16	16	16	13	18	18	20	19	12	7	10	11	17	15	23	12	18	13	18	17	15	17
wildlife	14	12	15	7	8	8	16	16	18	14	15	14	14	14	10	15	13	15	11	14	13	16
woodland management	12	13	11	12	9	10	12	13	15	14	11	9	13	12	8	10	15	13	17	15	11	17
none	12	12	13	7	14	14	9	12	13	15	12	37	33	11	21	12	9	14	8	14	13	9
don't know	33	33	33	54	36	38	33	27	31	27	38	37	33	33	32	38	38	33	32	24	34	31

Table 13.8. Value most about private woodlands

	Total	Gender		Age								Disability		Ethnicity		Income					Population density	
Collapsed categories			Females	16-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	Yes	No	White	Minority Ethnic	>10	10-20K	21-30K	31-50K	>50K	Rural	Urban
wider environment	36	Males 37	35	27	30	33	35	38	47	38	27	36	36	36	33	33	43	48	46	41	34	45
local environment	69	68	69	64	57	68	72	73	77	69	55	65	69	71	51	63	75	76	79	84	68	74
recreation	53	54	52	59	47	54	53	56	56	55	45	48	54	55	35	51	57	50	63	56	52	61
economic	27	30	24	19	28	25	30	27	28	27	20	22	28	26	32	22	29	30	32	29	26	29
society	48	47	49	47	40	56	46	49	54	46	36	46	48	49	42	41	54	57	59	51	46	55
Other	78	79	77	78	65	80	78	81	85	81	65	75	78	80	60	75	84	83	90	89	77	84
Don't know	15	13	17	22	22	15	16	10	9	13	26	18	15	14	29	18	11	9	5	5	16	9

Table 13.9. Benefits of the Public Forest Estate

	Total	Gender		Age								Disability		Ethnicity		Income					Population density	
Collapsed categories			Females	16-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	Yes	No	White	Minority Ethnic	>10	10-20K	21-30K	31-50K	>50K	Rural	Urban
wider environment	35	Males 35	34	26	37	32	34	41	39	34	23	34	35	35	31	32	41	43	37	44	32	48
local environment	63	63	64	54	57	64	63	64	71	62	55	59	64	65	44	6	68	69	69	80	61	75
recreation	48	47	48	50	43	46	51	52	48	44	46	46	48	49	34	46	53	50	51	46	46	56
economic	24	26	22	32	24	25	25	24	24	24	17	20	25	24	25	21	26	24	24	25	23	27
society	40	38	43	37	38	41	42	46	43	39	26	39	40	41	38	38	41	43	50	48	39	47
Other	71	71	71	67	66	72	73	74	77	69	62	67	72	73	59	68	76	76	75	86	69	81
Don't know	21	19	22	26	24	21	20	16	16	24	30	25	20	20	32	24	18	15	16	7	23	12

Table 13.10. Benefits of private woodlands



Please reference this report as:

Carter C., Lawrence A., Lovell R. and O'Brien L. (2009)
The Forestry Commission Public Forest Estate in England: social use, value and expectations. Final Report
Farnham: Forest Research

Two other reports are available about this research:

Lawrence A., Carter C., O'Brien L. and Lovell R. (2009)
Social benefits from the Forestry Commission Public Forest Estate in England: review of current evidence
Farnham: Forest Research

Lawrence A. and Carter C. (2009)
The Forestry Commission Public Forest Estate in England: social use, value and expectations – Summary Report
Farnham: Forest Research

All three reports will be available from the FR webpages for social research

<http://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/peopleandtrees>

following release of the full PFE study

