

Corporate Plan 2012-13

Minister's Foreword

The UK Government is committed to improving the environment and supporting a strong green economy, and the Forestry Commission is well placed to contribute toward this.

The recent report from the Forestry Regulation Task Force highlighted the need to make it easier for people to create and sustainably manage woodlands. The Forestry Commission's work with land managers, communities, business and other Government bodies such as Natural England and the Environment Agency is a key part of delivering on this: strong partnerships are needed to better manage our woodland resource, which will also bring other benefits for water quality, climate change and biodiversity.

The Task Force report also rightly emphasizes the need for strong skills and innovation. The Forestry Commission is championing the Forestry Skills Initiative by supporting training for up to 45 new entrants to the sector. We want a thriving woodland economy and skilled, capable people at the heart of managing our woodlands and forests.

The Government is also committed to safeguarding and promoting biodiversity. England's woodlands support a wealth of species and we want to improve ecological conditions

through more active management of woodlands. The Public Forest Estate is managed to the UK Forestry Standard – a benchmark for sustainable forest management and this is the standard to which we want woodland and forest owners in England to aspire.

Finally, I am looking forward to the final report of the Independent Panel on Forestry later this year which will advise on the future direction of forestry and woodland policy in England, and on the role of the Forestry Commission. I welcome the Forestry Commission's Corporate Plan for 2012-13.



Lord Taylor of Holbeach
Parliamentary Under-Secretary
Defra

Chair's Introduction

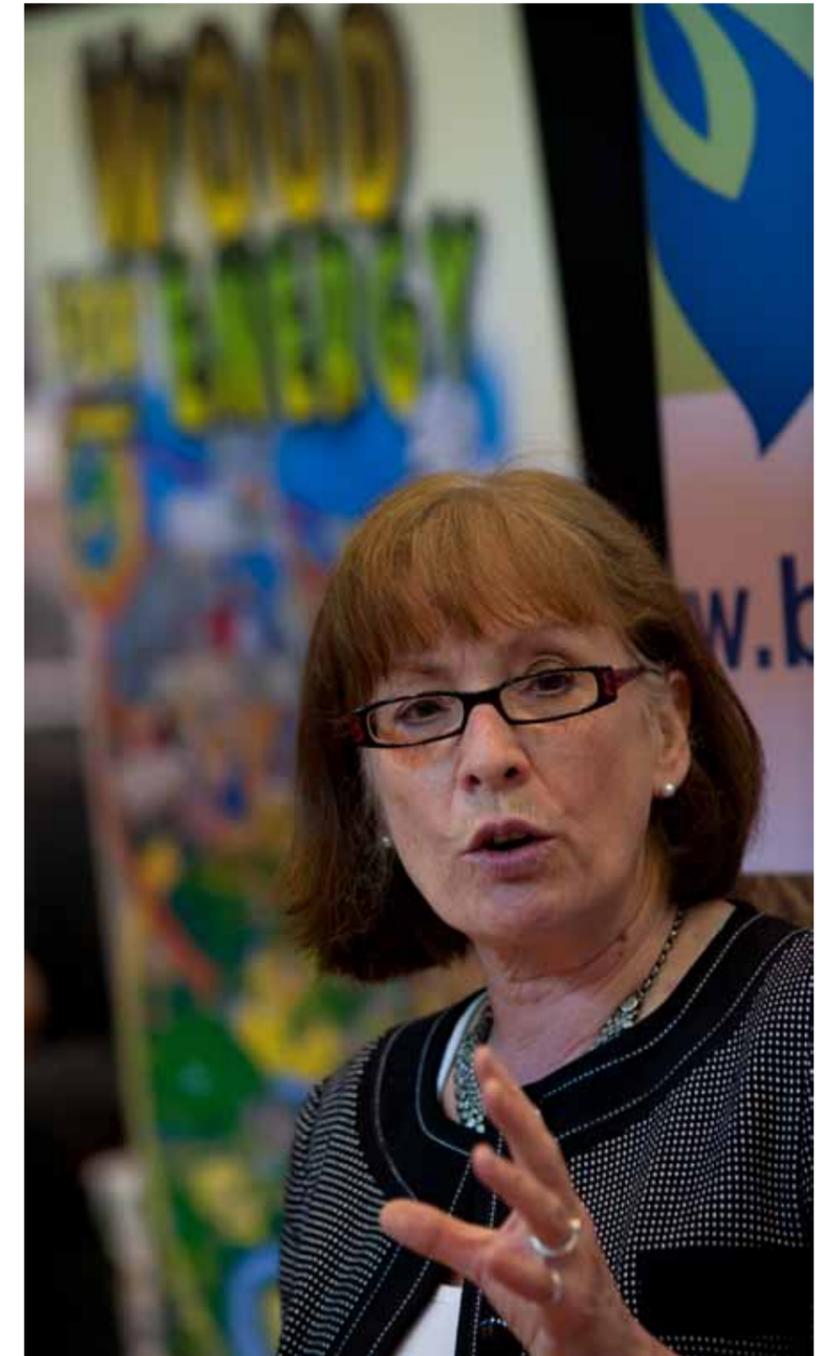
The Forestry Commission has responded with speed and professionalism to the Government's challenge to become a more efficient organisation.

After a year of significant change, our new national, district and area teams are up and running, working with partners and communities to support green growth and people's enjoyment of a vibrant natural environment.

Looking ahead, the challenges have never been greater. We must redouble our efforts to protect England's trees and forests from the growing threats of climate change, pests and diseases. We need to encourage more woodland

managers to plant more woodlands and to bring neglected woodland back into management in order to stimulate green growth and enhance biodiversity.

I am very much looking forward to the report of the Independent Panel on Forestry in the summer. Working together with partners in the public and private sectors, we can channel this commitment to protect, improve and expand England's woodlands for the benefit of generations to come.



Pam Warhurst
Chair of the Forestry Commission
Launching the England Woodfuel
Implementation plan

Programme Context

“Protecting, improving and expanding England’s woodlands to increase their value to society, the environment and the economy”.

England’s woodlands are a highly valued but under-managed resource and our role is to protect, improve and expand them in order to increase their value to society, the environment and the economy.

Protecting, improving and expanding our woodlands will ensure that they can flourish in the face of climate change, pests and diseases, and that we can maximise their potential to support biodiversity, to provide other ecosystem services and to contribute to jobs and the economy. We deliver our role both through action on the Public Forest Estate, through the English Woodland Grant Scheme – worth £30 million in 2011/12 – and through advocacy, expert advice, information and support to landowners in both the public and private sectors. Wherever possible we also work closely with a wide range of partners including other Government departments and agencies such as Natural England and the Environment Agency, businesses, third-sector partners and private individuals.

The forestry, wood processing and paper industries, along with recreational visits to forests and woodlands contribute £4.7 billion to the English economy and we will work with others to maximise

the potential for woodlands to contribute towards ‘green growth’. This year we will refresh and streamline our partnership working to support businesses, to reduce the regulatory burden upon them and to bring new energy and capital into the management and creation of England’s woodlands. This enables landowners, businesses, civil society, local communities and individuals to determine and deliver on the sustainable benefits that they need from England’s woodlands.

Managing sustainable woodlands requires a long-term commitment. England’s woodlands form a vital component of our landscapes and environment. They improve our quality of life, protect and enhance our environment and contribute towards a sustainable economy. Our aim is to promote the role of woodlands and to reconnect people with woodlands in order to ensure that they are valued and managed for hundreds of years to come.





Our Priorities

Protection

Protecting the woodland resource and increasing its resilience to pests, diseases and the impact of climate change

England has one of the lowest proportions of woodland cover in Europe – 10% against a European average of 37% - and protecting this resource is a high priority.

Woodlands are naturally resilient to many pressures, but they are also slow to adapt to threats and change. Our woodlands are under threat from a range of pests and diseases such as *Phytophthora ramorum*, Dothistroma needle blight, Oak Processionary Moth, Acute Oak Decline and growing populations of deer, and by the impacts of climate change and extreme weather events.

England is a great place to grow trees but the Climate Change Risk Assessment for Forestry Commission England sets out that by the second half of this century several of our most important tree species may no longer be able to grow well in some parts of England. Conversely, new types of timber growing trees may become commercially viable and, where not limited by water supply, rates of timber production may increase. Even though forestry is a long-term activity we need to enable the forestry sector to start changing now as the impacts of climate change are already being felt. These threats

range widely and cross both borders and land management boundaries.

With careful planning England's woodlands can also play a positive role in helping us to mitigate the impact of climate change; from helping to manage soil nutrients and flood waters, through to providing shade and shelter in rural and urban environments. This year we will continue to enable public bodies, private organisations and landowners to collaborate to meet these challenges.

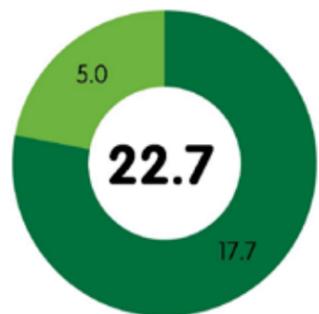


Protection

New Actions for 2012-13

- Implement key actions to contribute to Biodiversity 2020 (Bio2020), including on the Public Forest Estate.
- Implement the Forestry Commission Tree Health Biosecurity Strategy in order to reduce the chances of new tree diseases being imported and strengthen cross-sectoral networks to manage disease outbreaks.
- Implement commitments arising from the Forestry Regulation Task Force, in particular a system of earned recognition for forestry operations and further simplifying our grant scheme.
- Increase our support for the Deer Initiative (a key contribution to Bio2020), which aims to reduce deer populations to sustainable levels through encouraging collaboration between landowners, promotion of deer management activities, such as wild-venison marketing.
- Introduce a new approach to deer management on the Public Forest Estate, including greater involvement of private sector partners.
- Support the new Nature Improvement Area partnerships in order to create bigger and better connected habitats.
- Implement key actions from the Climate Change Risk Assessment for Forestry Commission England, including trialling new tree species on the Public Forest Estate and supporting woodland owners on how to adapt England's woodland resource through the use of woodland management plans which meet the requirements of the UK Forestry Standard Guidelines on Forests and Climate Change.

Allocated Funds (£m)



- Forest Enterprise
- Forest Services

Indicators¹

- Impact: Hectares of woodland covered by plant-health notices (includes notices issued on the Public Forest Estate)
- Impact: Percentage of known tree felling that is carried out with Forestry Commission approval (i.e.: the % of felling that is licensable by the Forestry Commission that is not illegal felling. This excludes felling with development approval)
- Impact: Maintain UK Woodland Assurance Scheme Certification on the Public Forest Estate
- Input: Cost to Forest Services of providing tree health service including surveys and staff time (£'000s)
- Woodland: An indicator of the scale of threat from tree diseases, under development.
- Woodland: Measure of woodland resilience to climate change based on the size and spatial configuration of woodland patches within the landscape. To be developed for 2012/13.
- Woodland: Percentage of woodland Sites of Special Scientific Interest (by land area) in desired condition
- Woodland: Measure of what is happening to the number and variety of species that live in woodland; using Woodland Birds data.
- Woodland: Area of woodland in England that is certified as sustainably managed.

¹ For an explanation of our indicator framework see pages 24 - 27

Improvement

Improving the woodland resource to enhance benefits including biodiversity, landscape quality and a range of other ecosystem services.

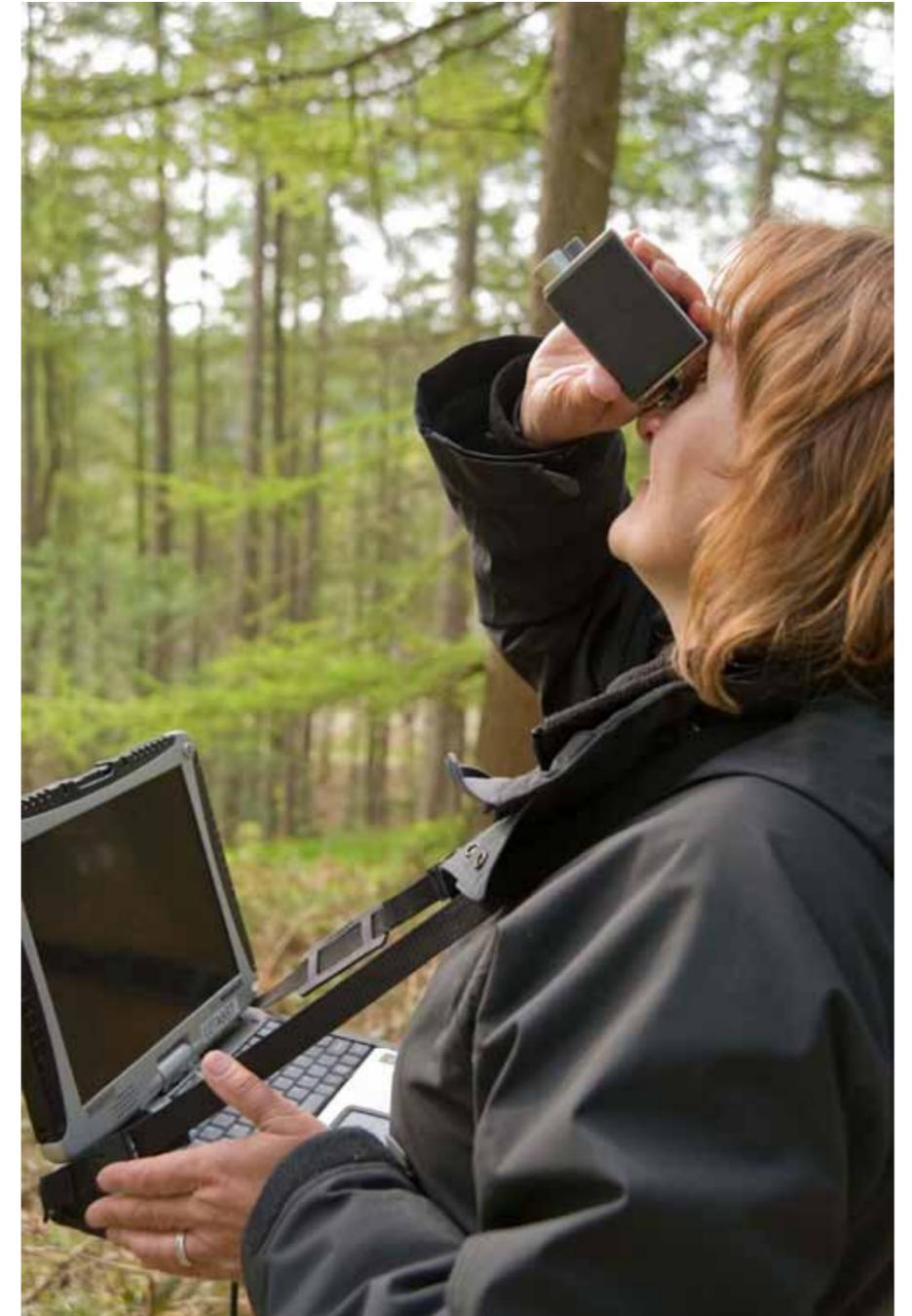
In recent decades there has been a steady increase in the proportion of woodlands in England – currently 52% - which are in active management. In 2011/12 we provided £16.5 million of investment through the English Woodland Grant Scheme to support the management of private woodlands. Yet despite this improving picture only less than half of the timber that grows each year is harvested – 52% of which comes from the 18% of woodland which forms the Public Forest Estate. This is a great opportunity both for the woodlands and our economy and to make our woodlands healthier and more resilient.

We are working with other woodland owners to bring more woodlands into better ecological and economic condition by promoting sustainable forest management and we want to ensure that people understand the range of goods and services that woodlands can provide for them. We are encouraging

and empowering people to get involved in woodlands to produce a vibrant forestry sector, with a range of businesses, skilled professionals and enterprises. We will continue to support and work with the England Woodland and Timber Partnership.

A recent report suggests that 15,000 jobs could be created in the UK as the woodfuel supply chains develop. Demand for woodfuel could increase to several million tonnes per year as industry responds to the renewable heat incentive and renewables obligation. This growing market which is beginning to increase the level of economic activity in woodland.

The Public Forest Estate was the first national forest in the world to be certified to international standards and balances its timber production with the management of a wide range of non-forestry habitats and support for public recreation and the English tourism industry.

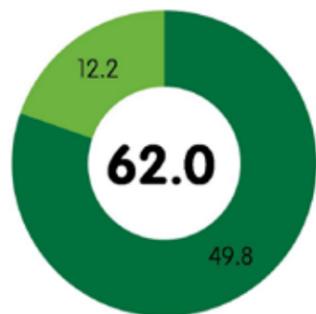


Improvement

New Actions for 2012-13

- By March 2013 we will plant 250,000 trees with £1m of grant through the Big Tree Plant funding scheme in order to generate local community engagement in trees and improve local quality of life.
- Promote collaboration between owners, forestry contractors, wood product suppliers, and buyers to create critical mass in the supply chain for wood products and realise economies of scale in woodland management.
- Implement the Skills Action Plan, particularly through setting up a private sector led apprenticeship scheme, to support technical and business management and skills in the sector.
- Support forestry stakeholders' involvement in Defra's Green Infrastructure Partnership.

Allocated Funds (£m)



- Forest Enterprise
- Forest Services

Indicators

- Impact: Percentage of woodland in active management (including the Public Forest Estate)
- Impact: Hectares of restoration of plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS) and open habitat
- Impact: Hectares of woodland brought into management by woodfuel Woodland Improvement Grant
- Input: Value of Woodland Improvement Grant and Woodland Regeneration Grant (£m)
- Input: Value of Woodfuel Woodland Improvement Grants
- Woodland: Annual increment in England's forests.
- Woodland: Measure of the conservation condition of woodlands using information from the National Forest Inventory.
- Woodland: Percentage of people actively engaged in woodland
- Woodland: Number of visits to woodland from Natural England Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment survey (MENE)
- Woodland: Number of apprentices and university students entering forestry .
- Woodland: Volume of timber brought to market per annum from the Public Forest Estate and other English sources
- Woodland: Percentage of the total amount of wood that grows in English woodlands that is harvested
- Woodland: Installed capacity of medium sized wood-fuelled boilers (Mega Watt thermal)

Expansion

Making it easier for landowners, business and local communities to choose woodland creation as a way of increasing benefits both to themselves and society.

Hand in hand with improving our existing woodlands, increasing the level of woodland cover in England will bring benefits to our environment and economy.

By making woodland management easier and more financially viable we can enable landowners to create more woodlands and increase overall economic activity in forestry. English woodlands are often small and isolated, so by encouraging new planting which links woodlands together into larger blocks and creates critical mass in the forestry sector we can further increase their viability as well as the environmental and social benefits which they deliver. In order for the forestry sector to make a significant contribution to reducing greenhouse gas emissions in England by 2050, the rate of woodland creation needs to increase right now.

In 2011/12 our woodland officers worked with over 8,000 landowners and agents, enabling them to create 1,900ha of new woodland (and to carry on the establishing other woodland planted in previous years) supported by £17.3 million from the English Woodland Grant Scheme. Alongside this we are also working with other Government bodies and many stakeholder groups - particularly Natural England and the Environment Agency - through the Woodland Carbon Task Force to create frameworks to enable the use of private finance and public engagement to expand woodland cover.

In 2011/12 we are also working with Defra and the Rural Payments' Agency on negotiations for the future of the Rural Development Programme for England. This round of negotiations will be critical to future investment in the sector.



Expansion

New Actions for 2012-13

- Simplify and target woodland creation grants where woodland can have most impact and make them work more effectively with Natural England stewardship grants.
- Develop targeted packages of incentives and advice, to support different landowners most likely to create woodland.
- Develop and communicate across the sector a mechanism to enable private investment in woodland creation, linked to the Woodland Carbon Code.
- Create and roll-out a map based tool that helps interest groups determine the overall level of woodland creation that is desirable at a landscape scale.
- Work with the Environment Agency to provide enhanced woodland creation grants where this will help to safeguard clean water and manage flood risk.
- Maintain a high level of engagement in negotiations on the future of the Rural Development Programme.
- Pilot new ways of working with commercial partners to create and fund community woodlands on the Public Forest Estate.

Indicators

- Impact: Hectares of woodland created (gross)
- Impact: Projected carbon capture in 2050 on Woodland Carbon Code woodland creation projects
- Input: Grant paid for woodland creation (total and GBP per hectare)
- Woodland:. Area of woodland and change over time.
- Woodland: Carbon captured by English woodland.
- Woodland: Gross Value Added from domestic forestry

Allocated Funds (£m)



- Forest Enterprise
- Forest Services

Research and Evidence

It is vital that the management of England's woodland is based on high quality research and that management decisions are founded on clear and reliable evidence.

Forest Research, the Forestry Commission's research agency, is internationally renowned for the quality of its work and close links between scientists and practitioners which contributes to the development of sustainable forestry.

It works with a wide range of research partners and industrial stakeholders and is leading key programmes covering ecosystem resilience, climate change and sustainable management vital to promoting a green economy.

Knowledge exchange and sharing expertise are important components; ensuring that the research gets to the people who can use it and that the researchers hear from the practitioners who will implement it.

In 2012/13 new research will contribute to implementation of the new Defra and Forestry Commission Action Plan for Tree Health and Plant Biosecurity (October 2011). The plan includes

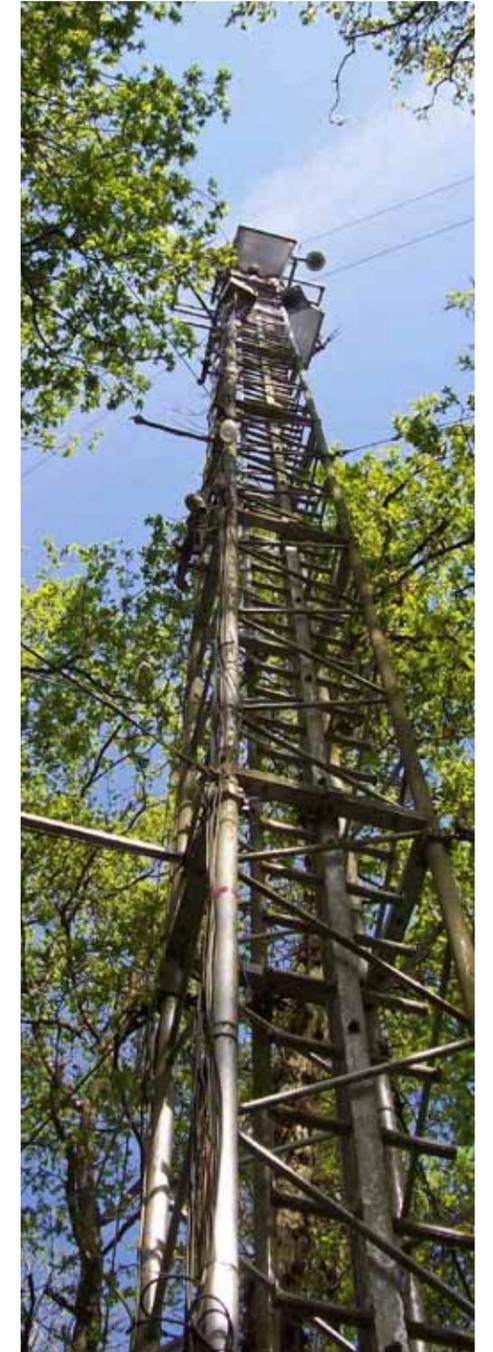
delivery of plant health information days, training to improve disease detection and increased use of citizen science. As part of the Bioenergy Development Programme we will establish new short rotation forestry trials in England. Research to meet the evidence needs of forestry in England will be delivered in an integrated programme which considers the research requirements of the Devolved Administrations, the forestry sector and our partners in other Government departments and agencies.

In 2012/13 we will complete the construction of our indicator framework (Annexes B-D). These indicators tell us what is happening to England's woodlands, how best to enable society to protect, improve and expand them, and what impact our work is having so that we can achieve the greatest value for money through our work.

Our commitment and collaborative approach to research and evidence based decision making are vital to engaging and empowering people and to ensuring that England's woodlands are sustainably managed and contribute to our health, environment and economic growth for decades to come.

Actions

- Embed our Indicator Framework into our planning processes to ensure that our work is focused in the areas where we can have the greatest impact.
- Participate in the review of the Science and Innovation Strategy for Forestry in Great Britain and thereby further strengthen our knowledge exchange networks.



Corporate Programmes

Restructuring our Business 2011-15

Along with all public bodies the Forestry Commission is required to manage a reduction in government funding of 25% by 2014/15 as our contribution towards meeting the public sector financial deficit.

We are therefore undertaking significant restructuring of current programmes whilst refocusing resources on a number of new priority programmes. Through this restructuring we are seeking to maintain our frontline capacity to carry out statutory regulatory functions, to support businesses and landowners and to manage the Public Forest Estate.

We are also changing what we deliver and how it is delivered to match the Government's vision for the role of public bodies. We have established our new Forest Services' Directorate which is developing programmes and services into an 'enabling framework' to empower and engage others to protect, improve and expand England's woodland resource.

A key part of this framework is our collaboration with the Environment Agency and Natural England. We are working together to protect and enhance the natural environment and promote its understanding and appreciation, and in so doing help to deliver sustainable development. We will build on the synergies between our activities to make more efficient use of the funding we receive and to provide better services for our customers, where we can, by speaking with one voice and by sharing best practice.

Forest Enterprise, which is responsible for managing the Public Forest Estate changing the way that it delivers key activities such as wildlife management and learning whilst maintaining key programmes of timber production, habitat and environmental management as well as unparalleled opportunities for recreation and tourism.

Business Sustainability

Our business sustainability programme sets out how we intend to reduce the impact of our operations on the planet and make our business more efficient through reducing the resources which we use and the waste which we produce. In 2011/12 we reduced our production of greenhouse gases through business travel and energy consumption by 7%. We also published an assessment of the risk that climate change presents to the delivery of our

functions and responsibilities, including the management of the Public Forest Estate.

In 2012/13 we shall start to monitor our performance against a new set of 11 internal indicators and will benchmark our Environmental Management System against the ISO14001(2004) standard to ensure that we continue to improve our environmental performance.





Case Studies

Reducing floods the Pennine Way

“We were successful with our application and received a grant from the Forestry Commission of over £17,000 to plant and establish 7,200 trees on our land.”

With over five million people living or working in flood risk areas in England and Wales and a series of severe floods in recent years, prevention and mitigation are now high on the public agenda. Forests and woodlands have long been associated with the ability to reduce run-off because trees intercept and use more water than other vegetation types.

Outside London, Yorkshire and Humber is the region with the highest risk of economic damage from flooding. With that in mind, the Forestry Commission teamed up with the Environment Agency to identify target areas where woodland could help reduce erosion and then to offer higher rates of grant aid through the English Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS) in order to encourage the planting of new woodlands where they can help most.

One North Yorkshire landowner who has taken advantage of the higher rate of grant aid is Les Hughes and his wife Ulla Vangsgaard. The couple own 15 hectares (37 acres) of land in the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) which

Backstone Beck runs through. Les explains, “we were successful with our application and received a grant from the Forestry Commission of over £17,000 to plant and establish 7,200 trees on 4.5 hectares (11 acres) of our land. Additional funding from the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust took the total to around £19,000. Our land links to ancient woodland lower down the gill, so it was important that the new woodland be an extension of what already exists, so the new trees are native to Nidderdale keeping in sync with the local environment and landscape forming an extension to the woodland that already exists.”

Jeremy Dick, Woodland Officer at the Forestry Commission: “The implementation of the Woodland Creation Grant can provide a whole host of benefits to local landowners like Les. Not only do trees provide an effective eco-friendly method of reducing the severity of flooding, but they also provide wildlife havens and even income from timber harvesting in future years.”



Blazing a trail at Hicks Lodge

“We all really enjoyed being able to cycle free from the danger of motor vehicles! The kids loved the challenge of the different trails. We will look forward to visiting ‘Hicks Lodge’ again soon and seeing how it all grows.”

Last year, the Forestry Commission in partnership with the National Forest Company opened a new £1.4 million cycle centre in the heart of the National Forest. The project has transformed a former coal mining site with 16km of off-road cycle trails, including 6.4km of disabled access paths and a state of the art sustainable building hosting cycle hire, a café, a meeting room and events.

The open cast mine at Hicks Lodge, near Ashby de la Zouch in Leicestershire, closed in 2000 and the National Forest Company bought the site in 2008. The Forestry Commission took over the freehold soon after. A feasibility study identified Hicks Lodge as the ideal place for a new off-road cycle centre within the National Forest. £1.4 million funding was raised through a partnership

between the National Forest Company, Leicestershire Economic Partnership, the 6Cs partnership green infrastructure project, the Department of Energy and Climate Change and the Forestry Commission. The new centre was finally opened to the public in June 2011.

The new eco-friendly centre has been built to the highest environmental standards and has been awarded Excellent rating by BREEAM, the world’s leading sustainable buildings rating. It includes solar panels, wood fuel heating, Forestry Stewardship Council compliant timber, low water usage cisterns and movement activated low energy lights throughout.

We’ve already won the Small Scheme award of the Property and Construction Leicestershire awards, and were runner-up in the East Midlands Centre for Constructing the Built Environment Sustainable Building Awards.



Tackling disease threats



In summer 2011, the Forestry Commission, Forest Research and Fera tackled the first known outbreak in England of *Phytophthora lateralis*. This pathogen kills the roots of Lawson Cypress, among the most important conifers in the UK ornamental plant trade. There are about 2200 hectares of Lawson cypress in Great Britain.

The outbreak was found on land owned by Yorkshire Water, the British Canoe Union (BCU) and private owners along the banks of the River Washburn. All the owners involved responded to our Plant Health Notices requiring them to fell and destroy the trees to prevent the disease from spreading. "As soon as we became aware of the tree infection our event organisers took immediate bio precautions," said the BCU's Chris Hawkesworth.

Ben Jones of the Forestry Commission highlighted that "as soon we heard about the first case in England we began looking for the disease using our tree health

helicopter surveys. We discovered the second case in the same month in Blubberhouses, North Yorkshire. We are now planning this year's aerial survey flight paths to target areas of Lawson cypress".

The Forestry Commission, Forest Research and the Food and Environment Research Agency (FERA) are raising awareness of the disease among the public, land managers and people who work with trees. We are providing advice on identifying the disease, what people should do if they suspect it and the biosecurity measures they should take.

In October 2011, together with Defra, we published an Action Plan for tree health and plant biosecurity. The Action Plan dedicates £7 million to protecting Britain's trees and plants by introducing stricter controls at UK borders,

strengthening biosecurity and surveillance, helping more people to identify, prevent and manage threats and using research and evidence to understand the threats we face.



Fuelling the local economy



The Balcombe Estate is situated on the High Weald in West Sussex, in an area of outstanding natural beauty. The estate comprises 1,112 hectares of mixed farmland and woodland and is at the forefront of the renewable energy market, supplying heating grade woodchip to the Hoathly Hill Community in West Sussex as well as hundreds of other domestic log customers.

The Forestry Commission supported the scheme by providing a capital grant to the Hoathly Hill Community, which along with further grants from EDF Energy's Green Fund, South East England Development Agency and the Bio Energy Lottery Fund, enabled the community to purchase and install a woodchip boiler to provide heating and hot water for 31 units including houses and community buildings.

Jamie Kirkman, Head Forester at Balcombe Estate in West Sussex comments: "We used to supply woodchip for gardening as a by product of our sawmill, and when the Hoathly Hill community group asked if we could supply them with heating grade woodchip for a boiler that they were intending to install we decided that it was something that we could offer."

"We obtained a grant from South East England Development Agency and partial capital funding from the Forestry Commission for a wood chipper, firewood processor and wood fuel storage facility which allows us to bulk store woodchip and logs for times of peak demand. The funding was a significant help and allowed us to finance a project that would not otherwise have happened. We produce little waste,

reusing 98% of our resources; we even trade our sawdust with a local farmer who uses it for animal bedding. The slogan on our website sums up our approach: 'wood fuel from the past, heating us in the present, for a sustainable future'".

"The funding was a significant help and allowed us to finance a project that would not otherwise have happened."



Flying high in Morecambe Bay

Through its Woodland Improvement Grant the Forestry Commission has worked closely with Butterfly Conservation to support a number of projects in the South Cumbria area to encourage the management of woodlands for wildlife.

This extends a well established partnership between Butterfly Conservation and the Forestry Commission in the area where habitat restoration on the public forest

estate has given a nationally significant boost to the High Brown Fritillary population. Morecambe Bay is one of the few places in the country where the High

Brown Fritillary survives – this beautiful woodland butterfly is on the red list of critically endangered species for the UK. Key to its survival is the active management of woodlands to create wildlife friendly habitats.

In 2010 the Forestry Commission awarded £60,000 to the National Trust to carry out woodland management over five years at its Sizergh Estate. Part of this money is being used by the Trust to work with Woodmatters, a Kendal coppice business, to develop a community woodshare scheme.

“The collaborative approach that the National Trust is exploring with Woodmatters is only possible because of the Forestry Commission grants and expertise which are acting as a catalyst for reviving our woodlands” says Stuart Palmer of the National Trust.

“The funds are not only protecting endangered wildlife but are also being used to build a sustainable future for our woodlands, as well as delivering tangible benefits to local communities. By involving local people and businesses there is an opportunity for them to become the guardians of our woodlands - both now and in the future.”



Jeskyns



Located in the London Green Belt and on the fringe of Gravesend, Jeskyns was acquired in 2005 by the Forestry Commission through funding provided by the Sustainable Communities Fund.

The site opened to the public as a new 147 ha community woodland in 2007. Jeskyns provides a high quality, environmentally sensitive and accessible green space for existing and planned new communities in north Kent.

From the outset, community participation was a critical part of the planning process. Starting with a blank sheet, the views of the local communities were captured through a series of

planning workshops, guided site walks, questionnaires and liaison meetings with key stakeholders.

It was through these consultations that the FC was then able to develop a comprehensive design plan, meeting the key requirement of Jeskyns to be meaningful to local people's needs and aspirations. This has significantly increased the level of community ownership, and as a result, the site has become very

popular and well thought of.

Building on the positive feedback from the consultation and design process, the Forestry Commission continues to foster the role local people play in the management and development of the community woodland. A site management plan, meeting Green Flag Award criteria, was created in consultation with local stakeholders. An active group of volunteers undertake a range of site works including the management of community orchards.

Localism continues to play a key role in the development and management of Jeskyns. Two recent examples include responding to the views of local people by improving the car park to increase capacity and accessibility, and engaging with local people in seeking ways of increasing service provision at Jeskyns whilst reducing the management costs.



Jeskyns Grove



Jeskyns Woods



Jeskyns Meadows



Jeskyns Orchards



Jeskyns Glades

Forestry Skills Initiative

“Forestry is at the heart of our aspirations for a green economy. But there are some real issues around skills shortages that threaten to undermine its potential.”

Pam Warhurst, Forestry Commission Chair.

In 2010, the Forestry Commission brought together a group of key players in the forestry sector to join forces in driving skills development and increasing the number of new entrants to the sector - the result was a new Forestry Skills Action Plan for England. Everyone involved is now taking real action, such as working with careers advisors or providing training and guidance for contractors. As part of its contribution the Forestry Commission is developing an initiative, which will fund the training of up to 45 forestry apprentices in the private sector.

The North York Moors is an area where we have seen a shortage of skilled people to carry out forestry and recreation work. The Forestry Commission has been working with the North York Moors National Park Authority to support their Modern Apprenticeship Scheme since 2005. We provide two-year placements for 6 apprentices and £10,000 funding each year. The apprentices spend 36 man weeks with us each year, learning practical skills such as chainsaw and tractor use, vegetation clearance,

fence repair and deer management. In their second year they progress on to develop their supervisory and business skills, aiming to achieve the NVQ 3 Advanced Apprenticeship qualification.

We have seen some real success stories and benefitted from the hard work of the people who have been part of the Modern Apprenticeship Scheme. So far, of the 37 apprentices we have supported, all but one who left to take up full time employment have gained a full qualification. We have also employed some of the rising stars who have come through the scheme.

Dale Roberts joined the Forestry Commission in 2006 as a Forest Craftsperson. “I saw the apprenticeship scheme advertised when I was at college studying leisure and tourism. I applied, was successful and started within a few days. After completing my first year, I was really happy to be offered the chance to work towards the level 3 NVQ. It’s been six years since I applied for a job with the Forestry Commission and now I supervise four apprentices myself.”



Support for major industry and investment

Egger (UK) Limited's state of the art plant at Hexham, produces over 600,000 m³ of chipboard per annum, of which 85% is laminated. The product is used in both the construction and furniture industries. The Egger plant is very important to the economy of Tynedale and directly employs circa 500 people, and a further 1200 indirectly.

There has been chipboard manufacturing on the site at Hexham since the early 1960's. One of the main drivers for locating the plant at Hexham was the availability of timber supply from local forests and sawmills. The site was purchased from Airscrew Weyroc in 1985 by Egger, who are an Austrian based company with 17 panelboard factories worldwide. It was developed during the 1980's with an increased level of

production based on the output from two production lines. By 2005 the plant was reaching the end of its natural lifespan and a decision had to be made on its future.

A plan was proposed to build a new facility on a greenfield site adjacent to the existing plant, which would require an investment of over £100m. During the decision-making process, one of the keystones to the investment going ahead was that of timber supply, both in terms of availability and continuity.

"At this time the Forestry Commission had long-term contracts to supply both small roundwood and standing timber to Egger. After discussions with the Forestry Commission regarding the intention to re-invest, they offered support by extending the long term contracts until 2014."

"Their support of the sawmilling industry, via similar long term contracts, were also a major contribution to the security of the supply chain with regards to hackchips and sawdust."

"The existence of such contracts inspired sufficient confidence in the continuity of supply to enable Egger to proceed with their proposed development. There is a strong argument to say that without

this support from the Forestry Commission, this investment would not have gone ahead."



contributed by:

EGGER (UK) LIMITED
 Panelboard
 Manufacturers, Hexham,
 Northumberland

Sources and Use of Funds

£ million		2011-12 Planned	2011-12 Outturn	2012-13 Indicative	2013-14 Indicative	2014-15 Indicative
Source of Funds						
Parliamentary Funding		37.4	30.1	35.1	29.5	27.6
Forest Services	RDPE*	30.9	31.9	32.7	33.7	--*
	Other Income	1.3	3.8	3.8	3.2	1.6
Forest Enterprise	Trading Income	50.3	60.6	50.8	49.2	49.2
Total Revenue		119.9	126.4	122.4	115.6	78.4*
Use of Funds						
Forest Services	Protection	5.1	5.2	5.8	5.2	3.8*
	Improvement	25.6	26.3	28.0	27.7	9.3*
	Expansion	19.2	19.7	20.4	20.0	3.3*
	Total	49.9	51.2	54.2	52.9	16.4*
Forest Enterprise	Protection	18.3	19.7	17.7	16.3	16.1
	Improvement	50.7	54.5	49.8	45.8	45.3
	Expansion	1.0	1.0	0.7	0.6	0.6
	Total	70.0	75.2	68.2	62.7	62.0
Total Expenditure		119.9	126.4	122.4	115.6	78.4*

Notes

1. Parliamentary funding assumes Defra CAP cover of £7m in 12/13, and £3.5m in both 13/14 & 14/15.
 2. Parliamentary funding excludes Capital expenditure.
 3. Forest Services includes National Office, England Corporate Services and Admin depreciation on Grants and Licenses Online System.
 4. Forest Services project income includes Newlands 2, Wood Fuel East and Plant Health (FERA).
- * FC receives delegated authority from Defra on an annual basis to commit funds from the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE). Funds for the 14/15 year will be subject to a new programme to be approved by Defra and the EU for the period 2014-2020.

Annex B: Forestry Commission Impact Indicators

Below are tables of Forestry Commission England's Indicator Framework for 2011-15, as set out throughout this document. The tables set out indicators of the Forestry Commission's impact in England, indicators of its inputs to achieve this impact, and a wider set of indicators of the state of England's woodland. These indicators have been developed, monitored and published as a part of Forestry Commission England's wider commitment to the Government's Transparency agenda, providing information of value to our stakeholders. These indicators tell us what is happening to England's woodlands, how best to enable society to protect, improve and expand them, and what impact our work is having so that we can achieve the greatest value for money through our work.

Priority	Indicator	Trend
Protection	Hectares of woodland covered by plant-health notices (includes notices issued on the Public Forest Estate)	✓
Protection	Percentage of known tree felling that is carried out with Forestry Commission approval (i.e.: the % of felling that is licensable by the Forestry Commission that is not illegal felling. This excludes felling with development approval)	✓
Protection	Maintain UKWAS Certification on the Public Forest Estate	✓
Improvement	Percentage of woodland in active management (including the Public Forest Estate)	≈
Improvement	Hectares of restoration of plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS) and open habitat	✓
Improvement	Hectares of woodland brought into management by woodfuel Woodland Improvement Grant	≈
Expansion	Hectares of woodland created (gross)	✓
Expansion	Projected carbon capture in 2050 on Woodland Carbon Code woodland creation projects	≈
Customer Service	Percentage of people in priority places close to accessible woodland	✓
Customer Service	Customer satisfaction rating for visits to the Public Forest Estate from the interactive "rate my visit" facility	✓

 = improving
  = little or no progress
  = deteriorating
  = insufficient or no comparable data

For further information on performance during 2011-12 please see <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/forestry.nsf/byunique/infd-8kmhu6>

Annex B: Forestry Commission Impact Indicators (Cont.)

Priority	Indicator	Trend
Customer Service	Number of agreements for locally led events and activities on the Public Forest Estate	✓
Customer Service	Number of households in the Discovery Pass scheme for the Public Forest Estate	✓
Customer Service	Number of private sector businesses operating on the Public Forest Estate	≈
Customer Service	Area of felling licences issued	✓
Customer Service	Percentage of grant and felling licence transactions completed on time or early	✓
Restructuring our Business	Number of employees (FTEs)	✓
Developing our Staff	Number of training events provided by the internal Human Resource Learning & Development team taken up by employees	✗
Developing our Staff	Number of significant work-related accidents per 100 employees	✗

 = improving
  = little or no progress
  = deteriorating
  = insufficient or no comparable data

For further information on performance during 2011-12 please see <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/forestry.nsf/byunique/infd-8kmhu6>

Annex C: Forestry Commission Input Indicators

Below is a list of Forestry Commission England's Input Indicators for 2011-15 which provide information on the allocation and efficient use of resources. In addition we shall also publish the overall budget contribution towards each priority.

Priority	Indicator	Trend
Protection	Cost to Forest Services of providing tree health service including surveys and staff time (£'000s)	⋯
Improvement	Value of Woodland Improvement Grant and Woodland Regeneration Grant (£m)	✓
Improvement	Value of Woodfuel Woodland Improvement Grants	≈
Expansion	Grant paid for woodland creation (total and GBP per hectare)	≈
Customer Service	Cash spent on partnerships and engagement by Forest Services	⋯
Restructuring our Business	Cost of managing the Public Forest Estate (per hectare)	✓

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For further information on performance during 2011-12 please see <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/forestry.nsf/byunique/inf-d-8kmhu6>

Annex D: Woodland Indicators

These long-term indicators will be used to provide a broader indication of the condition of England's woodlands but will not form part of our corporate reporting framework. In many cases although reporting will be annual, meaningful conclusions will require analysis over a longer time-frame.

Priority	Indicator	Trend
Protection	An indicator of the scale of threat from tree diseases, under development	⋯
Protection	Measure of woodland resilience to climate change based on the size and spatial configuration of woodland patches within the landscape.	⋯
Protection	Percentage of woodland SSSIs (by land area) in desired condition	✓
Protection	Measure of what is happening to the number and variety of species that live in woodland; using Woodland Birds data	≈
Protection	Area of woodland in England that is certified as sustainably managed	✓
Improvement	Annual increment in England's forests	⋯
Improvement	Measure of the conservation condition of woodlands using information from the National Forest Inventory	⋯
Improvement	Percentage of people actively engaged in woodland	≈
Improvement	Number of visits to woodland from Natural England Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment survey (MENE)	✓
Improvement	Number apprentices and university students entering forestry	✗
Improvement	Volume of timber brought to market per annum from the Public Forest Estate and other English sources	✓
Improvement	Percentage of the total amount of wood that grows in English woods that is harvested	✓
Improvement	Installed capacity of medium sized wood-fuelled boilers (Mega Watt thermal)	✓
Expansion	Area of woodland (total and change over time)	✓
Expansion	Carbon captured by English woodland	✗
Expansion	Gross Value Added from domestic forestry	✓

 = improving
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