

Public Opinion of Forestry 2013, UK and England

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Introduction

The Forestry Commission has conducted biennial surveys of public attitudes to forestry and forestry-related issues since 1995. These surveys are used to inform and monitor policy development.

This publication presents results for the UK and for England from the UK Public Opinion of Forestry Survey 2013 on:

- Woodland recreation;
- Importance of forestry;
- Engagement with forest issues;
- Climate change;
- Wood as a fuel; and
- Tree health.

A copy of the questionnaire used in this survey, giving complete wording of questions and response options, is provided in the Annex at the end of this report.

Surveys have also been run in Wales and in Scotland. Separate reports, providing results from these surveys, are available for Wales and for Scotland.

Statistics on the proportion of adults who have been actively engaged in forestry have already been released, in Forestry Commission England's *Corporate Plan Performance Indicators and Woodland Indicators 2013* (woodlands indicator 9). Other results from the 2013 survey are published for the first time in this release. Figures for earlier years have not been revised from those previously released. For further details, see the Revisions section of the Annex.

As the data are obtained from a sample survey, there is a range of uncertainty (confidence interval) associated with any results produced. Any differences highlighted in the text are statistically significant at the 95 per cent confidence level unless otherwise stated. For further details, see the Data Sources and Methodology and the Quality sections of the Annex.

Key findings

In England, and in the UK as a whole:

- Almost **two-thirds** of respondents have visited forests or woodlands in the last few years. Of these, over **two-thirds** exercised during their visit, including walking, running and mountain biking.
- **One in ten** respondents were involved in volunteer work, organised tree planting events, community-based woodland groups or consultations associated with woodlands in the past 12 months.

On **climate change**:

- **80%** agree or strongly agree that 'trees are good because they remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and store it in wood'.
- **55%** agree or strongly agree that 'cutting down forests and woodland makes climate change worse, even if they are replanted'.
- Around **85%** agree or strongly agree that 'a lot more trees should be planted'
- **12%** use wood as fuel in their home.

On **tree health** (new in 2013):

- **80%** agree or strongly agree that 'action should be taken by authorities and woodland managers to protect trees from damaging pests and diseases'.
- Nearly **two-thirds** agree or strongly agree that 'everyone should take action when visiting woodlands to help prevent the spread of damaging tree pests and diseases' and 'would be willing to look out for and report sightings of pests and diseases on trees, if appropriate information and advice was available to [them]'.
- Less than **one quarter** agree or strongly agree that 'there is very little that anyone can do to prevent the spread of damaging tree pests and diseases'.

Woodland recreation

The survey asked respondents a number of questions about visits to woodland. This included whether the respondent had visited woodland in the last few years, reasons for not visiting (more often or at all), type of woodland visited, frequency of visits and participation in activities during woodland visits.

Proportion visiting woodland

As in previous years, respondents to the 2013 survey were asked whether they had visited forests or woodlands for walks, picnics or other recreation in the last few years.

In 2013, around two thirds of respondents in the UK (66%) and in England (65%) said they had visited forests or woodlands in the last few years for walks, picnics or other recreation (Table 1). This represents a significant decrease over the results in 2007 and 2009 but is similar to the results in 2011 and in earlier years.

Table 1: Visited woodland in last few years

Year	Percent of respondents	
	UK	England
2003	67	66
2005	65	65
2007	77	76
2009	77	77
2011	67	68
2013	66	65

Source: UK Public Opinion of Forestry Surveys.

Note:

1. Figures are based on all respondents:

UK - 2003 (4,120), 2005 (3,892), 2007 (4,018), 2009 (2,011), 2011 (2,068), 2013 (1,927);

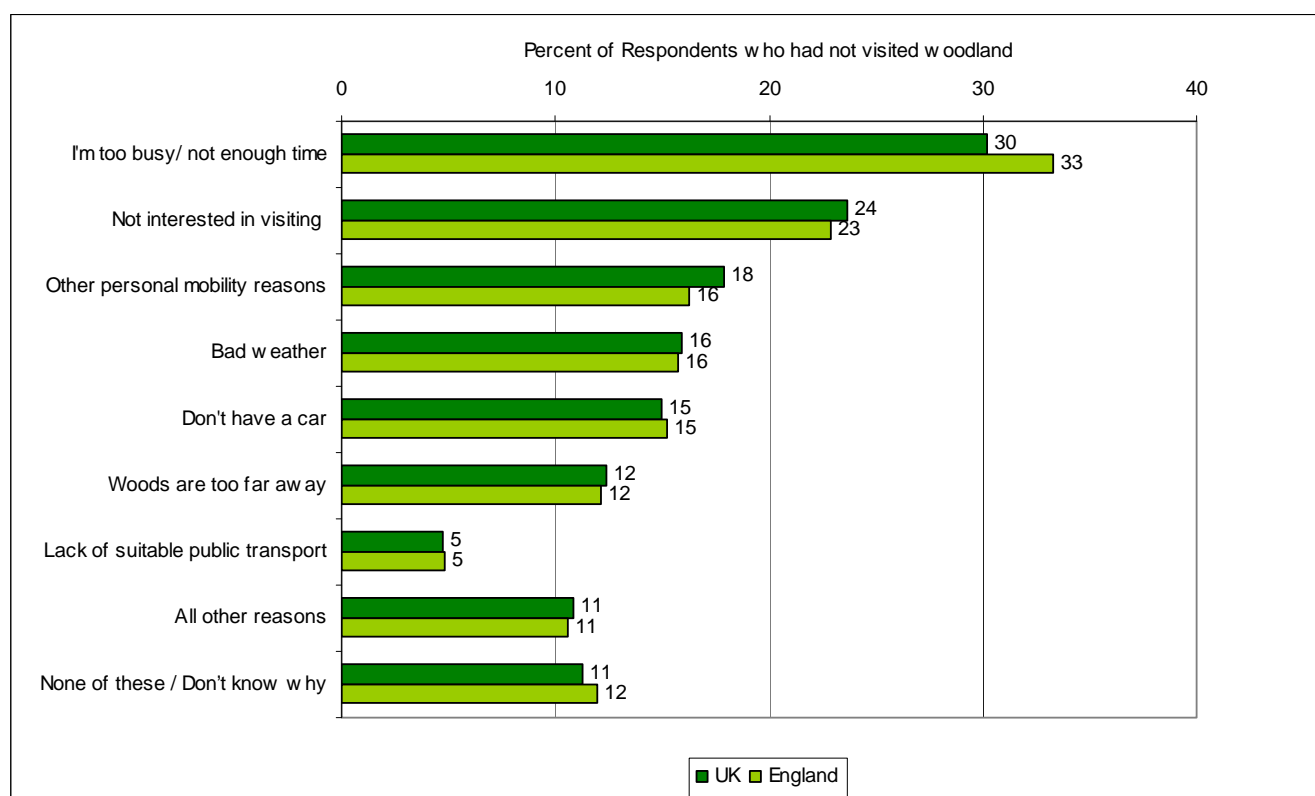
England - 2003 (3,412), 2005 (3,367), 2007 (3,339), 2009 (1,685), 2011 (1,733), 2013 (1,615).

Reasons for not visiting woodland

All respondents were asked to state their main reasons for not visiting woodland more often or at all.

For those who had not visited woodland or forests in the last few years, 'I'm too busy/not enough time', was the most commonly cited reason for not doing so (30% of those in the UK, 33% of those in England) (Figure 1). Other common answers included 'not interested in visiting' (24% for the UK, 23% for England), 'other personal mobility reasons' (18% for the UK, 16% for England) and 'bad weather' (16% for the UK and for England).

Figure 1: Reasons for not visiting woodland in last few years



Source: UK Public Opinion of Forestry Survey 2013.

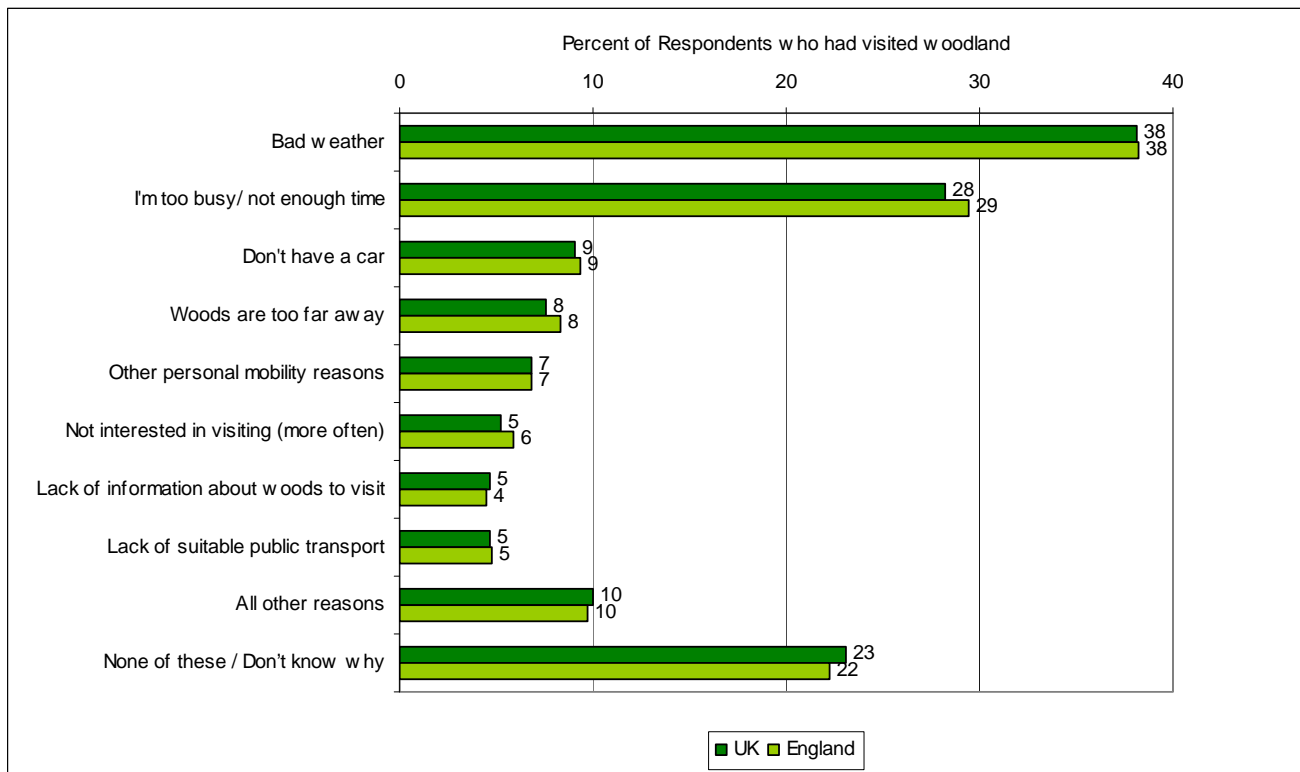
Note:

1. Figure is based on all respondents who had not visited woodland in the last few years: UK (655), England (559).
2. Respondents could provide more than one reason.

Public Opinion of Forestry - UK/ England

Of those respondents who had visited woodlands, the most commonly stated reasons for not visiting more often were 'bad weather' (38% for the UK and for England) and 'I'm too busy/not enough time' (28% for the UK, 29% in England) (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Reasons for not visiting woodland more often in last few years



Source: UK Public Opinion of Forestry Survey 2013.

Note:

1. Figure is based on all respondents who had visited woodland in the last few years: UK (1,272), England (1,056).
2. Respondents could provide more than one reason.

Type of woodland visited

Table 2 shows that respondents who had visited woodlands and forests in the last few years were more likely to visit ‘woodlands in the countryside’ (85% for both the UK and England) than ‘woodlands in and around towns’ (70% in the UK and 68% in England). In addition, over half of respondents (55% in the UK and 53% in England) reported visiting woodlands and forests in both locations.

The proportion of UK respondents in 2013 who had visited woodlands in and around towns (70%) represents a significant increase over the 2011 figure (62%).

Table 2: Type of woodland visited

Type of woodland	Percent of respondents who had visited woodlands					
	UK			England		
	2009	2011	2013	2009	2011	2013
Woodlands in the countryside	86	84	85	84	84	85
Woodlands in and around towns	64	62	70	61	62	68
Both	48	47	55	45	46	53

Source: UK Public Opinion of Forestry Surveys.

Note:

- Figures are based on all respondents who had visited woodland in the last few years:
 UK - 2009 (1,549), 2011 (1,393), 2013 (1,272);
 England - 2009 (1,291), 2011 (1,170), 2013 (1,056).
- Responses for those who said they had been to ‘both’ types of woodlands have been included in the totals for ‘woodlands in and around towns’ and ‘woodlands in the countryside’.

Frequency of woodland visits

Of the respondents who had visited woodlands in the last few years, almost three quarters (73% in the UK and 71% in England) said that they visited at least once a month during summer 2012 (between April and September 2012) (Table 3 and Figure 3). Few respondents who had visited woodlands in the past few years said that they did not visit during summer 2012 (3% in both the UK and in England).

Table 3: Frequency of woodland visits in Summer (April to September)

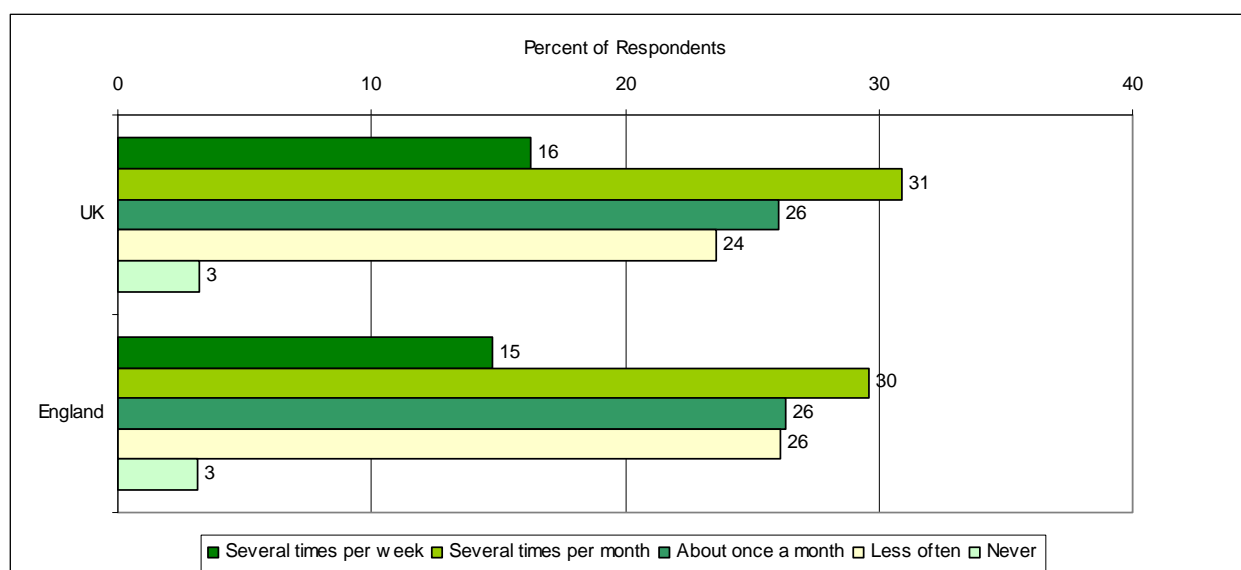
Frequency	Percent of respondents who had visited woodlands					
	UK			England		
	2009	2011	2013	2009	2011	2013
Several times per week	12	15	16	12	15	15
Several times per month	24	29	31	24	29	30
About once a month	26	26	26	26	25	26
Less often	34	27	24	34	28	26
Never	5	3	3	5	4	3

Source: UK Public Opinion of Forestry Surveys.

Note:

- Figures are based on all respondents who had visited woodland in the last few years:
 - UK - 2009 (1,549), 2011 (1,393), 2013 (1,272);
 - England - 2009 (1,291), 2011 (1,170), 2013 (1,056).

Figure 3: Frequency of woodland visits in Summer (April to September 2012)



Source: UK Public Opinion of Forestry Survey 2013.

Note:

- Figures are based on all respondents who had visited woodland in the last few years: UK (1,272); England (1,056).

Of the respondents who had visited woodlands in the last few years, around two fifths (42% in the UK and 40% in England) said they visited at least once a month during winter 2012/13 (between October 2012 and March 2013) (Table 4 and Figure 4). Around one quarter of respondents (23% for both UK and England respondents) said they did not visit during the winter.

Table 4: Frequency of woodland visits in Winter (October to March)

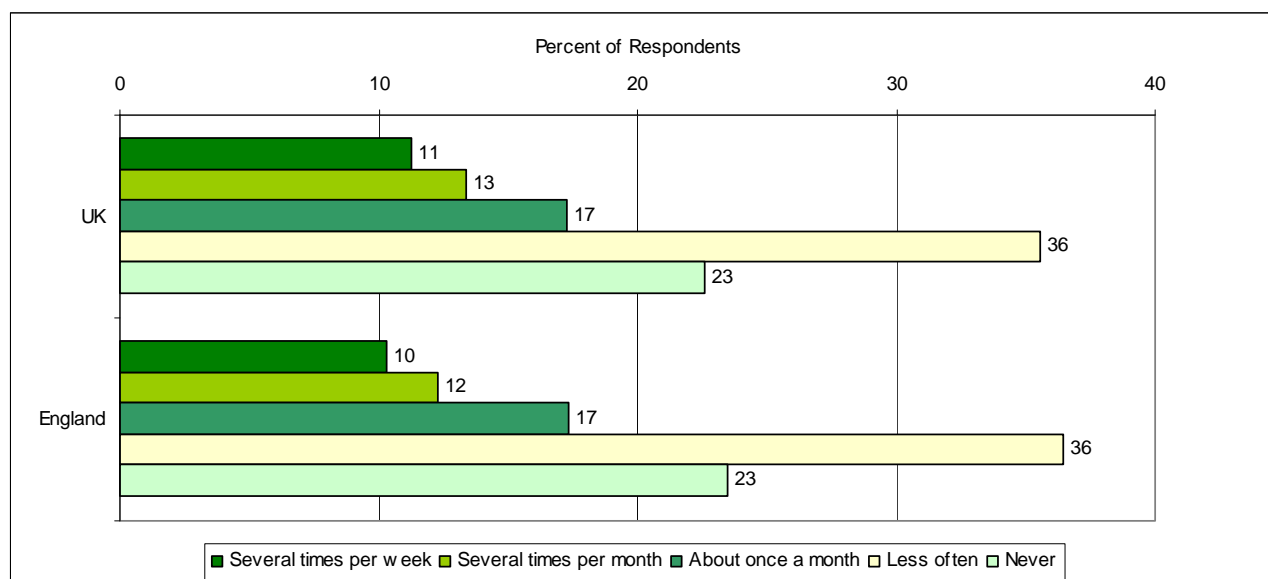
Frequency	Percent of respondents who had visited woodlands					
	UK			England		
	2009	2011	2013	2009	2011	2013
Several times per week	7	9	11	7	9	10
Several times per month	11	12	13	11	13	12
About once a month	16	17	17	16	17	17
Less often	36	32	36	36	32	36
Never	31	29	23	31	29	23

Source: UK Public Opinion of Forestry Surveys.

Note:

- Figures are based on all respondents who had visited woodland in the last few years:
 UK - 2009 (1,549), 2011 (1,393), 2013 (1,272);
 England - 2009 (1,291), 2011 (1,170), 2013 (1,056).

Figure 4: Frequency of woodland visits in Winter (October 2012 to March 2013)



Source: UK Public Opinion of Forestry Survey 2013.

Note:

- Figures are based on all respondents who had visited woodland in the last few years: UK (1,272); England (1,056).

Participation in activities during woodland visit

Respondents who had visited woodlands in the last few years were asked to state what activities, if any, they had taken part in during their visit.

Table 5 shows that the most popular activity undertaken by respondents in 2013 was exercise e.g walking, running, mountain biking (cited by 69% of those in the UK and 67% of those in England who had visited woodlands). Other popular activities included relaxing/spending time thinking, playing with children, having a picnic or barbecue, dog walking, watching nature and visiting a café (all mentioned by over one quarter of respondents in both the UK and in England).

These results are generally similar to those from the 2011 survey, although there has been a significant reduction in the proportions reporting that they had been dog walking or watching nature in the UK and in England.

Table 5: Activities undertaken on woodland visits

Activity	Percent of respondents who had visited woodlands					
	UK			England		
	2009	2011	2013	2009	2011	2013
Exercise e.g walk, run, mountain biking	74	66	69	74	65	67
Relaxed or spent time thinking	55	36	32	53	36	34
Played with the children	41	35	32	40	34	33
Had a picnic or barbecue	47	33	30	45	32	31
Dog walking	39	37	30	38	37	29
Watched nature	55	35	29	55	36	30
Visited a café	36	29	28	36	29	29
Been to see a historic site	33	24	21	31	24	21
Followed an interpreted trail	29	14	13	29	14	13
Been to enjoy sculpture or arts and crafts	16	9	9	16	10	9
Been on a guided walk or talk	16	8	6	14	8	6
Attended an organised event in a wood that involved physical activity	12	6	6	11	6	6
Attended cultural event or activity	10	6	6	10	6	6
Been to see an ancient tree	16	6	5	16	6	5
Horse riding	6	4	3	6	3	3
Volunteered	5	3	3	4	2	3
Other	4	6	5	3	6	5
None of these	1	1	2	1	1	2

Source: UK Public Opinion of Forestry Surveys.

Note:

- Figures are based on all respondents who had visited woodland in the last few years:
UK - 2009 (1,549), 2011 (1,393), 2013 (1,272);
England - 2009 (1,291), 2011 (1,170), 2013 (1,056).
- Respondents could provide more than one activity.

Importance of forestry

Respondents were asked to state their level of agreement with a set of statements regarding the purpose and use of woodlands and forests. Respondents were asked to indicate their opinion twice, once for the importance of woodlands and forests to the public and again for the importance to them personally.

Overall, the results suggest that woodlands are viewed as most important for wildlife and for recreation.

Importance of woodland to the public

Table 6 shows the percentage of respondents who agreed (selected 'Strongly agree' or 'Agree') with each of the statements relating to importance of woodland to the public.

The highest levels of agreement were with the following statements:

- 'They are important places for wildlife' (93% in the UK and 92% in England agreed);
- 'They are places where people can relax and de-stress' (91% in the UK and in England agreed);
- 'They are places where people can have fun and enjoy themselves' (91% in the UK and 90% in England agreed).

The lowest levels of agreements were with the following statements:

- 'They bring the community together' (56% in the UK and in England agreed);
- 'They contribute to the local economy' (60% in the UK and 59% in England agreed).
- 'They get people involved in local issues' (60% in the UK and in England agreed).

Table 6: Reasons woodlands and forests are important to the public

Reason	Percent of respondents who agree or strongly agree					
	UK			England		
	2009	2011	2013	2009	2011	2013
They are important places for wildlife	97	97	93	97	97	92
They are places where people can relax and de-stress	95	95	91	95	95	91
People can have fun and enjoy themselves	94	95	91	94	95	90
They are places where people can exercise and keep fit	..	94	89	..	94	88
They make areas nicer places to live	96	90	87	93	91	86
People can learn about the environment	91	90	87	91	89	86
People can learn about local culture or history	69	71	72	68	71	71
They get people involved in local issues	63	57	60	63	57	60
They contribute to the local economy	59	60	60	57	60	59
They bring the community together	50	54	56	51	55	56

Source: UK Public Opinion of Forestry Surveys.

Note:

1. Figures are based on all respondents:

UK - 2009 (2,011), 2011 (2,068), 2013 (1,927);

England - 2009 (1,685), 2011 (1,733), 2013 (1,615).

2. .. denotes data not available (statement not included in 2009 survey).

Importance of woodland to individual respondents

Respondents who had visited woodland in the last few years (Table 1) were also asked to state their level of agreement with a list of statements as to why woodlands and forests are important to themselves personally.

Results were generally similar to those reported by all respondents in considering the importance of woodland to the public, with stronger levels of agreement for recreation than for other issues.

As shown in table 7, the majority of respondents who had visited woodlands in the last few years agreed (selected 'Strongly agree' or 'Agree') with most of the statements but the statements that had the highest level of agreement were as follows:

- 'They are places where I can relax and de-stress' (93% in the UK and 92% in England agreed)
- 'They are places where I can have fun and enjoy myself' (91% in the UK and 90% in England agreed)
- 'They are places where I can exercise and keep fit' (87% in the UK and 86% in England agreed)

The lowest levels of agreements were with the following statements:

- 'They get me involved in local issues' (37% in the UK and 37% in England agreed)
- 'They are good places for me to socialise' (60% in the UK and 61% in England agreed)
- 'They are places where I can learn about local culture or history' (66% in the UK and 65% in England agreed)

Table 7: Reasons woodlands and forests are important to individuals

Percent of respondents who agree or strongly agree

Reason	UK			England		
	2009	2011	2013	2009	2011	2013
They are places where I can relax and de-stress	94	95	92	94	94	92
They are places where I can have fun and enjoy myself	91	94	91	90	93	90
They are places where I can exercise and keep fit	84	90	87	84	89	86
They are places where I can learn about the environment	80	80	77	81	79	76
They are places where I feel at home	69	75	74	69	75	73
They are places where I can learn about local culture or history	..	64	66	..	64	65
They are good places for me to socialise	50	59	60	51	58	61
They get me involved in local issues	33	34	37	34	35	37

Source: UK Public Opinion of Forestry Surveys.

Note:

1. Figures are based on all respondents who had visited woodland in the last few years:
 UK - 2009 (1,549), 2011 (1,393), 2013 (1,272);
 England - 2009 (1,291), 2011 (1,170), 2013 (1,056).
2. .. denotes data not available (statement not included in 2009 survey).

Engagement with forest issues

Respondents were asked whether they had been involved in woodland consultations or any volunteer groups and organised events associated with woodlands in the last 12 months.

Table 8 shows that, in the previous 12 months, 10 per cent of respondents to the 2013 survey (in both the UK and in England) said that they had been involved with at least one of the following:

- voluntary work in connection with a woodland (4% in the UK and in England);
- an organised tree planting event (3% in the UK and in England);
- a community based woodland group (3% in the UK and in England);
- a consultation about plans for creating/managing or using woodland (2% in the UK and in England).

Table 8: Engagement with forest issues in the last 12 months

Have you...?	Percent of respondents					
	UK			England		
	2009	2011	2013	2009	2011	2013
Been involved in voluntary work in connection with a woodland (e.g. physical work in a wood, admin, fund raising, running a group)	3	4	4	3	4	4
Been involved in an organised tree planting event	3	3	3	2	3	3
Become or are you a member of a community based woodland group such as a 'Community Trust' or 'Friends of Group'	3	2	3	2	2	3
Been involved or consulted about plans for creating/ managing or using woodlands in your area	3	2	2	3	2	2
None of these	91	92	90	91	92	90

Source: UK Public Opinion of Forestry Surveys.

Note:

1. Figures are based on all respondents:

UK - 2009 (2,011), 2011 (2,068), 2013 (1,927);

England - 2009 (1,685), 2011 (1,733), 2013 (1,615).

Climate change

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with two sets of statements related to woodlands and climate change.

Woodlands' impact on climate change

Respondents were asked about their level of agreement with a set of statements regarding the ways in which forests and woodlands in the UK can impact on climate change.

Table 9 shows that the highest levels of agreement, where respondents selected 'Strongly agree' or 'Agree', were with the following statements:

- 'Trees are good because they remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and store it in wood' (80% in the UK and in England agreed);
- 'Planting more trees can help us cope with climate change by providing shade and reducing the effects of flooding' (72% in the UK and 73% in England agreed).

The lowest levels of agreement were with the following statements:

- 'Using wood for fuel makes climate change worse because it releases carbon dioxide' (37% in the UK and 39% in England agreed);
- 'Using wood for building is better for climate change than using materials such as concrete or steel' (42% in the UK and 43% in England agreed);
- 'Using wood for fuel is better for climate change than using fuels such as coal and gas' (44% in the UK and 45% in England agreed).

Table 9: Ways in which forests and woodlands can impact on climate change

Percent of respondents who agree or strongly agree

	UK			England		
	2009	2011	2013	2009	2011	2013
Trees are good because they remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and store it in wood	84	82	80	85	83	80
Planting more trees can help us cope with climate change by providing shade and reducing the effects of flooding	67	73	72	67	74	73
The UK could offset all its greenhouse gas emissions by planting more trees	49	56	55	49	58	55
Cutting down forests and woodland makes climate change worse, even if they are replanted	52	52	55	53	53	55
Using wood for fuel is better for climate change than using fuels such as coal and gas	48	47	44	47	47	45
Using wood for building is better for climate change than using materials such as concrete and steel	43	42	42	42	43	43
Using wood for fuel makes climate change worse because it releases carbon dioxide	36	36	37	36	37	39

Source: UK Public Opinion of Forestry Surveys.

Note:

- Figures are based on all respondents:
 UK - 2009 (2,011), 2011 (2,068), 2013 (1,927);
 England - 2009 (1,685), 2011 (1,733), 2013 (1,615).

Forest management in response to climate change

Respondents were presented with a series of statements regarding the way in which UK forests and woodlands should be managed in response to the threat of climate change.

Table 10 shows that the majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that:

- 'A lot more trees should be planted' (86% in the UK and 85% in England);
- 'More information should be provided about the ways in which wood can be used to lessen our impact on the environment' (80% in both the UK and in England); and that
- 'Different types of trees should be planted that will be more suited to future climates' (71% in both the UK and in England).

Conversely, few respondents agreed or strongly agreed that:

- 'There is nothing anyone could do that would make any difference' (17% in both the UK and in England);
- 'No action is needed; let nature take its course' (18% in the UK and in England);
- 'Trees should not be felled in any circumstances, even if they are replaced' (22% in the UK and 23% in England);

Table 10: Management of UK forests in response to the threat of climate change

	Percent of respondents who agree or strongly agree					
	UK			England		
	2009	2011	2013	2009	2011	2013
A lot more trees should be planted	92	90	86	92	90	85
More information should be provided about the ways in which wood can be used to lessen our impact on the environment	86	86	80	86	86	80
Different types of trees should be planted that will be more suited to future climates	70	74	71	70	74	71
Trees should not be felled in any circumstances, even if they are replaced	17	21	22	17	21	23
No action is needed, Let nature take its course	16	21	18	16	20	18
There is nothing that anyone could do that would make any difference	13	13	17	13	13	17

Source: UK Public Opinion of Forestry Surveys.

Note:

1. Figures are based on all respondents:

UK - 2009 (2,011), 2011 (2,068), 2013 (1,927);

England - 2009 (1,685), 2011 (1,733), 2013 (1,615).

Wood as a fuel

All respondents were asked to state whether or not they use wood as a fuel in their home, either on its own or with other fuels.

Around one in eight respondents in the UK and in England (12%) reported that they use wood as a fuel (Table 11). This was not significantly different from the results in previous surveys.

Table 11: Use of wood as a fuel in the home

Year	Percent of respondents	
	UK	England
2007	8	8
2009	11	10
2011	12	12
2013	12	12

Source: UK Public Opinion of Forestry Surveys.

Note:

1. Figures are based on all respondents:

UK - 2007 (4,018), 2009 (2,011), 2011 (2,068), 2013 (1,927);

England - 2007 (3,339), 2009 (1,685), 2011 (1,733), 2013 (1,615).

Respondents who said they used wood as a fuel were asked three further questions. The following was reported in 2013:

- The way in which wood as a fuel is obtained is relatively evenly balanced between those who gathered the wood themselves (31% in the UK and 34% in England), those who bought it 'a few bags at a time' (37% in the UK and 31% in England) and those who received it 'by the truck load' (31% in the UK and 34% in England);
- The majority (59% in the UK and in England) said they use wood as a fuel occasionally while the remainder would class themselves as regular users;
- 14% of wood fuel users in the UK and 12% in England said they use wood as the main fuel for heating their home, while the rest mainly use something else.

Respondents who said they did not use wood as a fuel were asked to give the main reason why not. The most common reasons cited by respondents who do not use wood as a fuel, either on its own or with other fuels, were:

- 'Don't have facilities e.g. open fire/ chimney' (48% in the UK and 46% in England),
- 'Not practical for this property' (26% in the UK and in England) and
- 'Happy with the existing system' (16% in the UK and 17% in England).

Tree health

A new question relating to tree health was introduced for the 2013 survey. Respondents were presented with a series of statements and asked to indicate their level of agreement.

Table 12 shows that the majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that:

- 'Action should be taken by authorities and woodland managers to protect trees from damaging pests and diseases' (80% in the UK and in England);
- 'I would be willing to look out for and report sightings of pests and diseases on trees, if appropriate information and advice was available to me' (64% in the UK and 63% in England); and that
- 'Everyone should take action when visiting woodlands to help prevent the spread of damaging tree pests and diseases' (63% in the UK and 64% in England).

Conversely, few respondents agreed or strongly agreed that:

- 'There is very little that anyone can do to prevent the spread of damaging pests and diseases' (22% in the UK and 23% in England);
- 'I understand what is meant by biosecurity' (28% in the UK and 27% in England).

Table 12: Tree health

Percent of respondents who agree or strongly agree

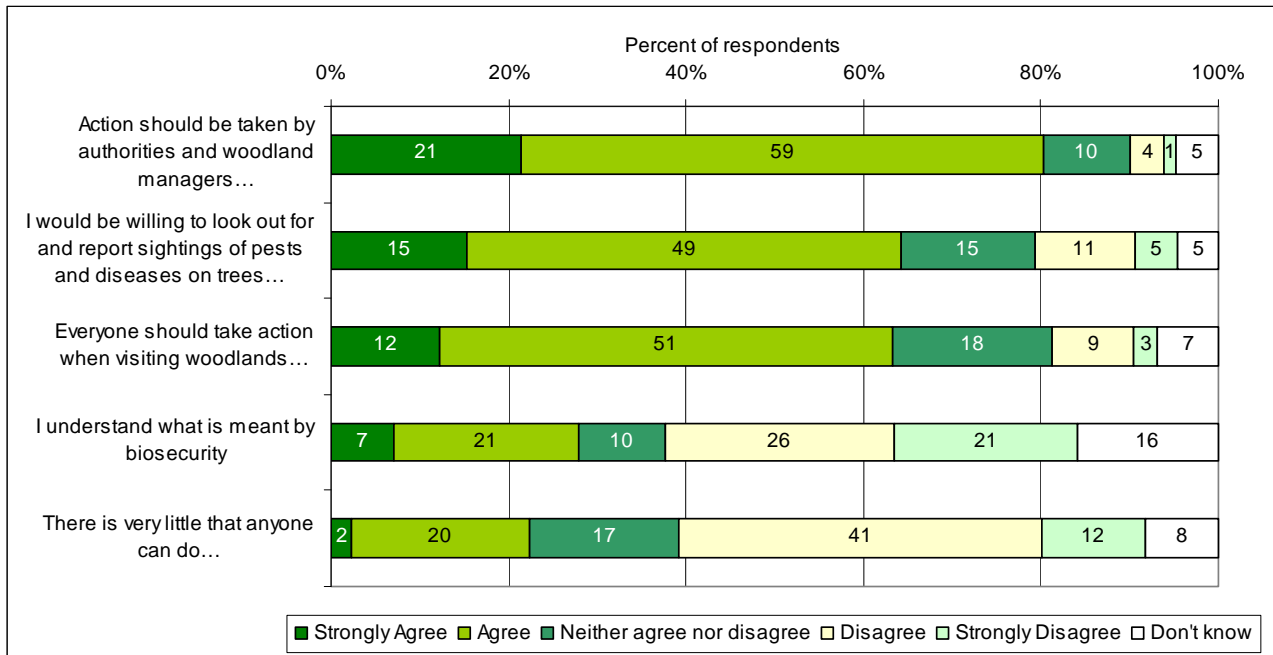
	UK	England
Action should be taken by authorities and woodland managers to protect trees from damaging pests and diseases	80	80
I would be willing to look out for and report sightings of pests and diseases on trees, if appropriate information and advice was available to me	64	63
Everyone should take action when visiting woodlands to help prevent the spread of damaging tree pests and diseases	63	64
I understand what is meant by biosecurity	28	27
There is very little that anyone can do to prevent the spread of damaging tree pests and diseases	22	23

Source: UK Public Opinion of Forestry Survey 2013.

Note:

1. Figures are based on all respondents: UK (1,927); England (1,615).

Figure 5: Tree health, UK

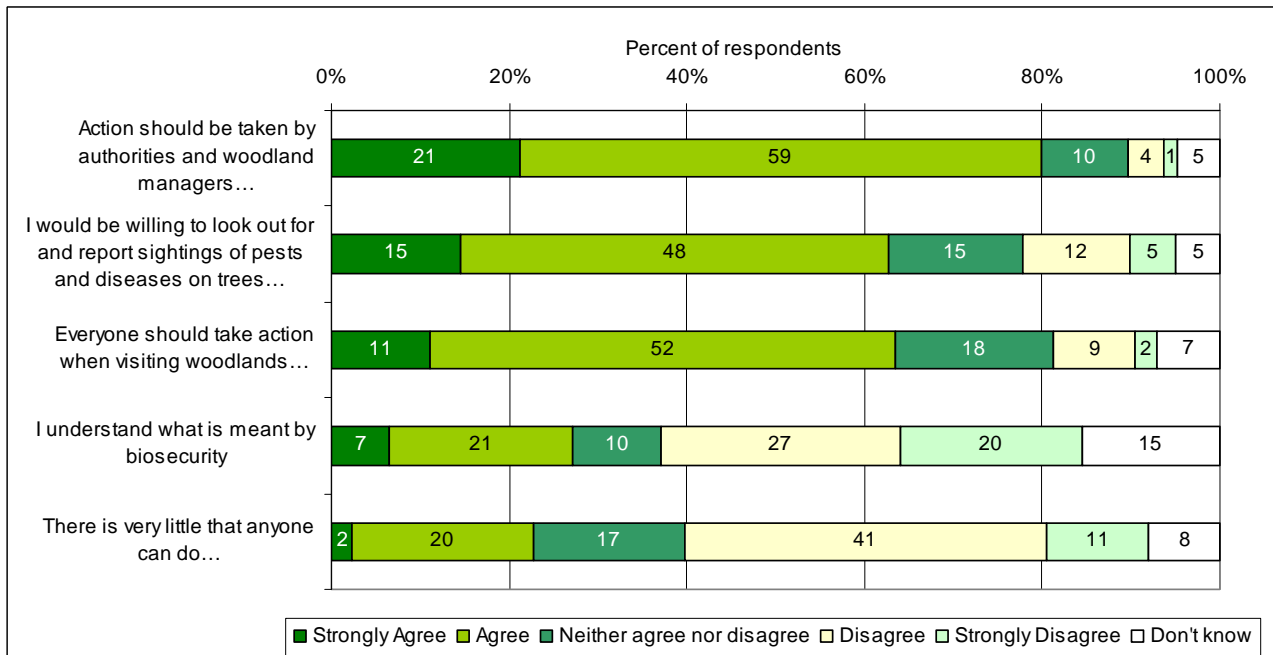


Source: UK Public Opinion of Forestry Survey 2013.

Note:

1. Figures are based on all respondents in the UK (1,927).
2. See Table 10 or Questionnaire in Annex for full text of response options.

Figure 6: Tree health, England



Source: UK Public Opinion of Forestry Survey 2013.

Note:

1. Figures are based on all respondents in England (1,615).
2. See Table 10 or Questionnaire in Annex for full text of response options.

Annex

Introduction

This annex provides background information on the statistics presented in this release. It covers the data sources and methodology used to produce the statistics, information on quality measures and on any revisions to historic data and links to further information.

Glossary

Biosecurity A set of precautions that aim to prevent the introduction and spread of harmful organisms. These may be pests, pathogens or invasive species.

Confidence interval An estimated range of values that is likely to include an unknown population parameter. The confidence interval around an estimate is derived from the sample data, and is used to indicate the reliability of the estimate.

Clustering A sampling technique where the entire population is divided into groups, or clusters, and a random sample of these clusters are selected. All (or a selection of) observations in the selected clusters are included in the sample. Cluster sampling is often used when a random sample would produce a list of subjects so widely scattered that surveying them would prove to be far too expensive.

Forestry Commission (FC) The government department responsible for forestry matters in England, Scotland and (until March 2013) Wales. The Forestry Commission's functions in Wales transferred to a new organisation, Natural Resources Wales, on 1 April 2013. The responsibility for forestry is devolved.

Forest In the United Kingdom, there is no formal definition of "forest"; the term is often used for large woodland areas (especially conifers) or for old Royal hunting preserves such as the New Forest or the Forest of Dean.

Forest Service (FS) An agency of the Northern Ireland Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Great Britain (GB) England, Wales and Scotland.

Quota sampling A method of sampling where interviewers are each given a fixed number of subjects of specified type to interview.

Statistical significance A statistical assessment of whether observations reflect an actual pattern rather than just chance.

Stratification A sampling technique where the entire population is divided into groups, or strata, and a random sample is selected within each group. Stratified sampling is often used to ensure that sufficient numbers from each group are included in the overall sample, particularly where results are required for each group.

United Kingdom (UK) Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Weighting A set of factors assigned to survey responses to ensure that the resulting weighted results are representative of the population as a whole.

Woodland Land under stands of trees with a canopy cover of at least 20% (25% in Northern Ireland), or having the potential to achieve this, including integral open space, and including felled areas that are awaiting restocking.

Data Sources and Methodology

Background

The Forestry Commission has conducted biennial surveys of public attitudes to forestry and forestry-related issues since 1995. The surveys have evolved since then as follows:

- In the initial surveys, a representative sample of 2,000 adults across Great Britain (GB) was surveyed;
- In 2001, with more interest in country-level results within GB, additional questions were asked of representative samples of 1,000 adults in each of Scotland and Wales;
- Information has also been collected for Northern Ireland in the past through UK wide surveys in 2003 and the separate Northern Ireland surveys (1,000 adults) carried out in 2005, 2007 and 2010;
- In 2013 three separate surveys were carried out for the UK, for Scotland and for Wales. Some questions were asked in all three of the surveys conducted in 2013, but a number of questions have become survey-specific.

The table below is a summary of the previous surveys and presents the approximate number of adults interviewed for each country. England results are a subset of the UK survey.

Table A1: Sample sizes for Public Opinion of Forestry surveys since 2001

Approximate number of adults interviewed

Year	UK ¹	England ²	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
2001	2,000		1,000	1,000	
2003	4,000	3,400	1,000	1,000	
2005	4,000	3,400	1,000	1,000	1,000
2007	4,000	3,300	1,000	1,000	1,000
2009	2,000	1,700	1,000	1,000	
2010					1,000
2011	2,000	1,700	1,000	1,000	
2013	2,000	1,700	1,000	1,000	

Note:

1. 2001 and 2005 surveys covered Great Britain only (i.e. excluding Northern Ireland).
2. Results for England are derived from UK surveys.

Survey Design

The 2013 survey results presented in this report are taken from the GfK NOP Random Location Omnibus survey carried out from the 21st February to 6th March 2013. The survey was based on a representative sample of 1,927 adults (aged 16 or over) across the UK, of whom 1,597 adults were in England. They were selected from within 175 randomly selected sample points across the UK. More details of the sample method are given below.

The 2011 and 2009 surveys were also obtained from the GfK NOP Random Location Omnibus survey.

The UK 2007 survey data were obtained from the TNS CAPI Omnibus survey while the 2003 and 2005 survey data were obtained from the TNS RSGB General Omnibus. These surveys, which had a higher sample size of 4,000 adults for UK/GB, employed a different survey design so comparisons should be taken with care.

Methodology

UK 2013 survey

The GfK NOP Random Location Omnibus employs a quota sample of individuals with randomly selected sampling points. The sample design is essentially a 3-stage design, sampling first parliamentary constituencies, and then output areas within those selected constituencies and finally respondents within the output areas. The sample is based on 175 sampling points.

Stratification of parliamentary constituencies

The first-stage sampling units for the survey are parliamentary constituencies, which are initially stratified by government office region. In Scotland, a further stratification is by the Strathclyde Region and the rest of Scotland while in Wales, the South East is stratified

separately from the rest of Wales. Within each Standard Region, constituencies are classified into four urban/rural types (Metropolitan county, other 100% urban (greater than 7 persons per hectare), mixed urban/rural and rural). Within each of the resultant 46 cells, as a final stratification, constituencies are listed in order of the percentage of people resident in households whose head is in socio-economic Groups 1, 2, 3, 4 or 13 (approximates to Social Grades A&B).

Selection of parliamentary constituencies

When all the constituencies have been listed in the above way, the electorate of each constituency is entered on the list and a cumulative total of electors by constituency is formed. From the file of constituencies, a sample of 175 must be drawn thus the total number of cumulative electors (N) on the list is divided by 175 and a random number between 1 and $N/175$ is selected.

This random number identifies an elector, in the cumulative total of electors, and the constituency this elector is in becomes the first selected constituency in the sample. To obtain the other 174 constituencies, the sampling interval $N/175$ is added on 174 times to the initial random number to select the 175 constituencies required.

The Selection of Output Areas

Within each selected constituency, an output area is selected for each wave of the Omnibus (i.e. each separate run of the survey). These output areas are selected at random, but with some stratification control so that the sample of areas drawn is representative of the sample of constituencies and therefore of the United Kingdom in demographic terms. The variables used for stratification are age, sex, social class, and geodemographic profile (Mosaic classification). Once the areas have been selected, the profile of the aggregated set of areas is checked against the national profile to ensure that it is representative. Each area is a small area containing, on average, around 150 households. Each output area is therefore homogeneous, with the people living within it being fairly similar in social grade terms.

Therefore, when quotas are set for interviewing within each output area, the variables controlled for are age and sex within working status. No quota is set for social grade, as the selection of areas ensures that the sample is balanced in this respect. This procedure is repeated for each wave of the Omnibus, producing a different sample of areas for each week of fieldwork.

The Selection of Respondents

For each selected output area, a list of all residential addresses is taken from the Postal Address File (PAF), which is used by the interviewer to identify the households at which they can interview. In addition to the address listing for an output area, the interviewer is also given a quota sheet in order to target certain groups in terms of age and sex within working status. Each interviewer must interview 12 people within an output area, and the quotas are different for each area in order to reflect the demographic profile of that area.

Questionnaire

A copy of the 2013 questionnaire is provided at the end of this release. This covers the questions requested by the Forestry Commission. In addition, a small number of additional questions are included as standard in the omnibus surveys run by Market Research companies (e.g. gender, age, country/ region) and some of these are also used in analysing the results from the survey.

Most questions are retained from one survey to the next, to enable comparisons over time. However, changes are sometimes made to reflect changing circumstances or priorities, or to improve the wording of questions. The following changes were made for the 2013 questionnaire:

- Questions that asked about children and woods and about whether respondent has children have been dropped;
- A new question has been added on tree health (Q10);
- Additional response options have been included to the question on how disabilities or health problems have affected use of woodlands/ forests or other greenspaces (Q11c);
- New questions have been added on aspects of diversity (Q13-16).

Quality

The data collected in the survey are weighted, to correct for imbalances between the profiles of the sample and the population and therefore ensure that the weighted results are representative of the UK adult population. For the 2013 survey, this weighting has resulted in an increase in the apparent number of respondents in England, from a total 1,597 adults who were interviewed to a weighted total of 1,615. The results quoted in this report are based on weighted data.

All results are subject to the effects of chance in sampling, so a range of uncertainty (confidence interval) should be associated with any result from the survey. The confidence intervals take into account the effect of clustering, weighting and stratification in the survey design (see methodology, above, for more details).

Confidence intervals are most commonly reported at the 95% level. This means that there is a 95% chance that the true population value lies within the confidence interval. The following provides a guide to interpreting the results in this report on the basis of a 95% confidence interval:

Public Opinion of Forestry - UK/ England

- For questions asked in 2013 to the whole UK sample of 1,927, the range of uncertainty around any figure should be no more than $\pm 3.3\%$ ($\pm 3.7\%$ for the 1,615 respondents in England).
- For responses of subgroups, i.e. questions not posed to the whole sample of respondents, the range of uncertainty is correspondingly higher. For example the uncertainty for statistics asked only to those who visited woodland (1,272 respondents in the UK and 1,056 in England) should be no more than $\pm 4.1\%$ for the UK and no more than $\pm 4.5\%$ for England.
- For questions asked to whole samples, differences of more than 4.7% (UK) or 5.1% (England) between the 2013 results and 2011 results are statistically significant.
- For questions asked only to those who had visited woodland, differences of more than 5.7% (UK) or 6.2% (England) between the 2013 results and 2011 results are statistically significant.

Given the small sample sizes within the UK survey for respondents living in other parts of the UK, it is not recommended that the UK survey be used to provide results for Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland. Please refer to the separate survey reports for these countries for relevant results.

Further quality information on FC Official Statistics is available at:

www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-7zhk85

Revisions

Statistics on the proportion of adults who have been actively engaged in forestry have already been released, in Forestry Commission England's Corporate Plan Performance Indicators and Woodland Indicators 2013 (woodlands indicator 9). Other results from the 2013 survey are published for the first time in this release.

All figures are final. Figures for earlier years have not been revised from those previously released.

The Forestry Commission's revisions policy sets out how revisions and errors to these statistics are dealt with, and can be found at:

[www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/FCrevisions.pdf/\\$FILE/FCrevisions.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/FCrevisions.pdf/$FILE/FCrevisions.pdf).

Further information

Accompanying tables to this release, available at www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-5zyl9w, provide more detailed figures, showing standard breakdowns.

Figures in tables have been independently rounded, so may not add to the totals shown.

Release schedule

The UK Public Opinion of Forestry is a biennial survey, next due to run in early 2015 with results likely to be available in summer 2015.

Official Statistics

This is an Official Statistics publication. For more information about Official Statistics and the UK Statistics Authority visit www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk.

UK Public Opinion of Forestry Survey 2013: Questionnaire

Q1 [All]

a. In the last few years have you visited forests or woodlands for walks, picnics or other recreation?

(Single answer)

- Yes
- No

b. Which of the following, if any, are the main reasons for you not visiting woodland/forests more often or at all?

(Multi answer)

- Not interested in visiting more often
- Don't have a car
- Lack of suitable public transport
- Other personal mobility reasons (difficulty in walking, unwell, etc.)
- Woods are too far away
- Lack of facilities (play areas, picnic areas, etc.)
- Lack of information about woods to visit
- Prefer other areas of countryside
- Concerns that woods are not safe
- Woodlands are badly maintained
- Cost of visiting
- Lack of confidence
- I'm too busy/ not enough time
- Bad weather
- None of the above

[Ask if answered yes to Q1a. Others to Q4]

c. Did you visit woodlands in the countryside or woodlands in and around towns or both?

(Single answer)

- Woodlands in the countryside
- Woodlands in and around towns
- Both

Q2 [If answered yes to Q1a]

How frequently did you visit forests and woodlands last summer, i.e. between April and September 2012?

(Single answer)

- Several times per week
- Several times per month
- About once a month
- Less often
- Never

[If answered yes to Q1a]

And how often this winter, i.e. since October 2012?

(Single answer)

- Several times per week
- Several times per month
- About once a month
- Less often
- Never

Q3 [If answered yes to Q1a]

Thinking of your visits to woodlands / forests over the past few years / what activities have you taken part in?

(Multi answer)

- Exercise e.g. walk, run, mountain biking
- Dog walking
- Horse riding
- Been on a guided walk or talk
- Followed an interpreted trail
- Been to enjoy sculpture or arts and crafts
- Been to see an ancient tree
- Been to see a historic site
- Attended an organised event in a wood that involved physical activity
- Visited a cafe
- Had a picnic or barbecue
- Played with the children
- Watched nature
- Relaxed or spent time thinking
- Volunteered
- Attended cultural event or activity (e.g. exhibition, performance or ceremony)
- None
- Other (specify)

Q4 [All]

Now thinking specifically about woodlands and forests and why they are important to the public please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements.

I think woodlands and forests are important to the public because:

(1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neither agree or disagree, (4) agree, (5) strongly agree, and (6) don't know

- They contribute to the local economy
- They are places where people can relax and de-stress
- They are places where people can exercise and keep fit
- They are places where people can have fun and enjoy themselves
- They are places where people can learn about the environment
- They are places where people can learn about local culture or history
- They are important places for wildlife
- They bring the community together
- They make areas nicer places to live
- They get people involved in local issues

Q5 [If answered yes to Q1a. Others to Q6]

Now thinking specifically about woodlands and forests you have visited and why they are important TO YOU PERSONALLY please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements.

Woodlands and forests are important to me because:

(1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neither agree or disagree, (4) agree, (5) strongly agree, and (6) don't know

- They are places where I can relax and de-stress
- They are places where I can exercise and keep fit
- They are places where I can have fun and enjoy myself
- They are good places for me to socialise
- They are places where I can learn about the environment
- They are places where I can learn about local culture or history
- They get me involved in local issues
- They are places where I feel at home

Q6 [All]

Have you in the past 12 months...

(Multi answer)

- Been involved or consulted about plans for creating/ managing or using woodlands in your area.
- Been involved in an organised tree planting event
- Been involved in voluntary work in connection with a woodland (e.g. physical work in a wood, admin, fund raising, running a group)
- Become or are a member of a community based woodland group such as a 'Community Trust' or 'Friends of' group
- None of these

Q7 [All]

Would you agree or disagree with the following statements about the ways in which forests and woodlands in the UK can impact on climate change?

(1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neither agree or disagree, (4) agree, (5) strongly agree, and(6) don't know

- Trees are good because they remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and store it in wood
- Cutting down forests and woodland for timber always makes climate change worse, even if they are replanted
- Using wood for fuel is better for climate change than using fuels such as coal and gas
- Using wood for fuel makes climate change worse because it releases carbon dioxide
- Using wood for building is better for climate change than using materials such as concrete and steel
- The UK could offset all its greenhouse gas emissions by planting more trees
- Planting more trees can help us cope with climate change by providing shade and reducing the effects of flooding

Q8 [All]

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding how UK forests and woodlands should be managed in response to the threat of climate change?

(1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neither agree or disagree, (4) agree, (5) strongly agree, and (6) don't know

- There is nothing that anyone could do that would make any difference
- No action is needed; let nature take its course
- A lot more trees should be planted
- Trees should not be felled in any circumstances, even if they are replaced
- Different types of trees should be planted that will be more suited to future climates
- More information should be provided about the ways in which wood can be used to lessen our impact on the environment

Q9 [All]

a. Do you ever use wood as a fuel in your home, either on its own or with other fuels?

(Single answer)

- Yes
- No (Go to Q9e)

[Ask if answered yes to Q9a]

b. Do you get the wood by the truck load, or a few bags at a time, or gather it yourself?

(Single answer)

- by the truck load
- a few bags at a time
- gather it yourself
- Other

[Ask if answered yes to Q9a]

c. Do you use wood as a fuel regularly or only occasionally?

(Single answer)

- regularly
- occasionally

[Ask if answered yes to Q9a]

d. Is the wood the main fuel for heating your home, or do you mainly use something else?

(Single answer)

- main fuel
- something else

[After Q9d, skip to Q10]

[Ask if answered no to Q9a]

e. What is the main reason that you do not use wood as a fuel in your home?

(Single answer)

- Never thought about it
- Happy with the existing system/ other fuels
- Not practical for this property
- Concerned about cost
- Concerned about efficiency
- Concerned about ease of use
- Concerned about environmental issues
- Do not own property
- Lack of local help/suppliers
- Don't have facilities (e.g. open fire/ chimney)
- Other (specify)

Q10 [All]

Would you agree or disagree with the following statements relating to tree health?

(1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neither agree or disagree, (4) agree, (5) strongly agree, and(6) don't know

- Everyone should take action when visiting woodlands to help prevent the spread of damaging tree pests and diseases (e.g. by washing shoes/ boots, bikes etc before and after their visit and by brushing soil & plant material from clothes).
- I would be willing to look out for and report sightings of pests and diseases on trees, if appropriate information and advice was available to me.
- There is very little that anyone can do to prevent the spread of damaging tree pests and diseases.
- Action should be taken by authorities and woodland managers to protect trees from damaging pests and diseases.
- I understand what is meant by biosecurity.

Q11 [All]

a. Do you consider yourself to have any of the following disabilities or health problems?

(Multi answer)

- Mobility disability
- Visual impairment
- Hearing impairment
- Mental health problem
- Physical disability
- Other
- None of the above

[Ask all with a disability. Others to Q12]

b. Does your disability affect your use of woodlands/ forests or other greenspaces?

(Single answer)

- Yes
- No (Go to Q12)

[Ask if answered yes to Q11b. Others to Q12]

c. If so, in which of the following ways?

(Multi answer)

- Lack of public transport to the woodland/forest or other green space
- Lack of suitable paths around the woodland/forest or other green space
- Lack of accessible facilities, eg toilets, cafe, visitor centre etc
- Lack of suitable activities at the woodland/forest or other green space
- Lack of information to help inform a visit to the woodland/forest or other green space
- Lack of information at the woodland/forest or other green space
- Lack of information in a suitable format for your disability
- Attitude of staff at the woodland/forest or other green space
- Attitude of other visitors at the woodland/forest or other green space
- The cost of reaching the woodland/forest or other green space
- Cost once at the woodland/forest or other green space
- Concern that woods are not a safe place
- Other (specify)

Q12 [All]

Which of these best describes your ethnic origin?

(Single answer)

1. White

Includes:

- English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British
- Irish
- Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- Any other White background

2. Mixed / multiple ethnic groups

- White and Black Caribbean
- White and Black African
- White and Asian
- Any Other Mixed / multiple ethnic background

3. Asian / Asian British

Includes:

- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Chinese
- Any Other Asian background

4. Black / African / Caribbean / Black British

Includes:

- African
- Caribbean
- Any Other Black / African / Caribbean background

5. Other ethnic group

Includes:

- Arab
- Any other ethnic group

Q13 [All]

Do you identify as belonging to the trans community (including transsexual, transgender, transvestite, cross-dresser, etc)?

(Single answer)

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to disclose

Q14 [All]

Which of the following options best describes how you think of yourself?

(Single answer)

- Heterosexual
- Gay man
- Gay woman/lesbian
- Bisexual
- Other
- Prefer not to disclose

Q15 [All]

Which of the following options best describes how you think of your religion or belief?

(Single answer)

- No religion
- Christian (all denominations)
- Buddhist
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Sikh
- Atheist
- Other
- Prefer not to disclose

Q16 [All]

Are you ...?

(Single answer)

- Married
- In a civil partnership
- Single
- Widowed/ divorced/ separated
- Other
- Prefer not to disclose