

Forestry Statistics 2021

Sources: Public Opinion of Forestry

Release date:
30 September 2021

Coverage:
United Kingdom

Geographical breakdown:
Country

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The Research Agency of the
Forestry Commission

Forest Research is the Research Agency of the Forestry Commission and is the leading UK organisation engaged in forestry and tree related research.

The Agency aims to support and enhance forestry and its role in sustainable development by providing innovative, high quality scientific research, technical support and consultancy services.

11.6 Sources: Public Opinion of Forestry

Introduction

Forest Research (on behalf of the Forestry Commission, Scottish Forestry, Welsh Government/ Natural Resources Wales and Northern Ireland Forest Service) has conducted similar surveys of public attitudes to forestry and forestry-related issues since 1995. Three separate surveys were undertaken in 2021; in Wales, in Scotland and across the UK as a whole. A survey for Northern Ireland was most recently carried out in 2019.

Some questions were asked in all of the surveys conducted in 2019/2021 and in the surveys undertaken in earlier years, but an increasing number are survey specific. Questions are asked on a variety of topics including, public awareness of forestry, woodland-based recreation and community involvement, woodfuel and the relationship between forestry and climate change. Tree health was introduced in the 2013/2014 surveys and continued in more recent surveys. Questions on urban trees were introduced in 2017 surveys. For the 2021 surveys, questions were introduced on changes over the previous 12 months (since COVID-19 restrictions had first been introduced in the UK).

Data Sources and Methodology

The survey results were obtained by placing questions in omnibus surveys run by private market research companies. The four surveys undertaken in 2021 (and 2019) achieved representative samples of:

- 5,119 adults across the UK;
- 1,000 adults across Scotland;
- 1,014 adults across Wales;
- 1,000 adults across Northern Ireland (in 2019).

All of the surveys use quota sampling to ensure that the sample selected is representative of the population, and results are weighted to produce estimates for the population as a whole.

Further information on the methodologies used for each survey are provided in the individual survey reports, available at www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/statistics/statistics-by-topic/public-opinion-of-forestry/.

Quality

All results are subject to the effects of chance in sampling, so a range of uncertainty (confidence interval) is associated with results from the surveys. The confidence intervals take into account the effect of clustering, weighting and stratification in the survey designs. For questions asked to the whole UK sample in 2021 of 5,119 the range of uncertainty around any result should be no more than $\pm 2.1\%$. The corresponding ranges of uncertainty for other sample sizes should be no more than:

- $\pm 3.2\%$. for questions asked to around 2,000 respondents (e.g. UK surveys in earlier years);
- $\pm 4.6\%$. for questions asked to around 1,000 respondents (e.g. the surveys in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland).

Revisions

Results from the Public Opinion of Forestry (POF) Surveys were previously released in the separate POF reports for each country. The statistics are not normally revised.

Our revisions policy sets out how revisions and errors to these statistics are dealt with and is available at <https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/statistics/about-our-statistics/code-of-practice/quality-of-official-statistics/>.

Further information

Latest reports for UK and England (using a subset of the UK data set), for Wales and for Scotland were published on 29 July 2021, along with the full sets of data tables.

The latest report for Northern Ireland was published on 28 March 2019, along with the full set of data tables.

Reports and data tables (including results for previous surveys) are available at www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/statistics/statistics-by-topic/public-opinion-of-forestry/.

Release schedule

The next Public Opinion of Forestry surveys are expected to run in early 2023, with results available in summer 2023.

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