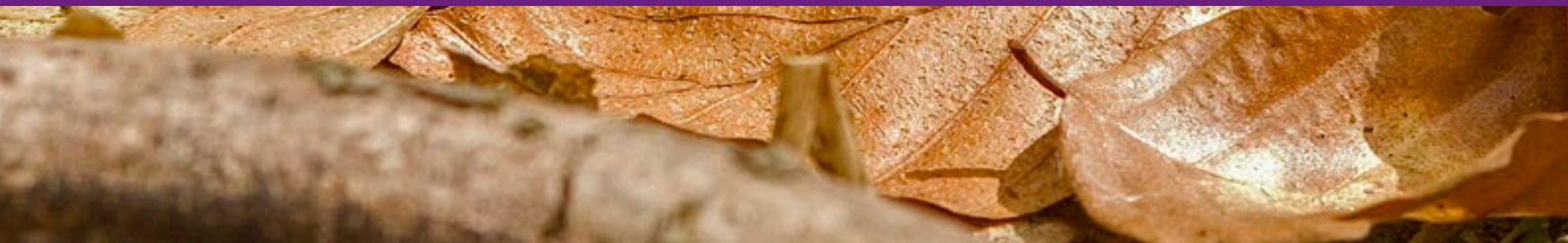




Forest Research



A Strategy for Growth



Our Purpose

To be a world leader in applied forest science and a trusted and recognised provider of expertise, data, products and services for governments and the tree, wood, forest and natural resource sectors.

Forest Research: excellent science – practical solutions

Introduction

It is an exciting time for forestry and Forest Research. There is growing interest in woodland creation in England, Scotland and Wales. The challenges of ensuring our forests remain resilient and meet the changing requirements of today's society are the focus of much attention and are significant areas of our activity.

In this context it is timely for Forest Research to help ensure that expert science and evidence inform, shape and underpin policy and operational decisions affecting our trees, woods and forests.

The Forest Research **Strategy for Growth** describes our purpose, what we will do over the next five years and how we will do it. It defines our values and our unique attributes, and sets out what success will look like.

Our expertise is focused on trees, woods and forests, both rural and urban, and ranges in scale from the microscopic to the whole country. Forest Research will work to increase our reputation as an outward-orientated, impact-focused agency, engaging and collaborating with our customers and stakeholders to identify, generate and deliver shared solutions. We will continue to support the UK Government and devolved administrations and work to inform and inspire change that benefits society, the economy and the environment.

The Strategy for Growth will be enhanced by tailored research plans that describe in more detail the science that we will undertake. We will monitor and report on our progress to fulfil the Strategy and will endeavour to work towards it on a daily basis.

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Our themes

Engaging with customers

Our customers are our primary focus. We will conduct timely, rigorous and independent research to give our customers the quality science, evidence, data, products and services they need to make informed decisions, support policy development or develop and grow their businesses.

Our customers are our primary focus.

We will continue to grow our relationship with our customers by:

- understanding our customers' needs;
- providing constructive challenge, insight and evidence based on quality applied science;
- providing authoritative advice, data and statistics.

This will be achieved through:

- understanding the challenges our customers face;
- appointing dedicated customer relationship managers to deliver business growth for our customers;
- constantly refining, developing and marketing the range of science, products and services we offer;
- proactively and effectively communicating our findings and increasing our digital presence;
- monitoring and responding to feedback on our impact and performance.



Developing our science and data offer

Using and adapting new technology, techniques and approaches are fundamental to our provision of quality research and data services. Our interdisciplinary science and data provision will offer trusted and quality-assured insight and innovation by:

- being objective, impartial and at the forefront of forest science technology, modelling and data analysis and development;
- being solution and impact focused;
- being applied, accessible, relevant and easily understood.

This will be achieved through:

- diversifying our customer base, attracting more income and increasing our commercial activities;
- investing in a world-class tree biosecurity and diagnostics facility;
- growing our world-leading science in managing planted forests, tree-health research, forest inventory and carbon accounting, land-use and ecosystem services, climate mitigation and adaptation, applied social science and economics;
- becoming world leaders in forest informatics by establishing a Forest Information Hub and investing in our associated forest remote-sensing, decision-support system, modelling and forecasting capabilities;
- disseminating our quality-assured research in places and formats that are relevant for our customers, including workshops and webinars, peer-reviewed scientific journals, the professional forestry media and on interactive digital platforms.

Our interdisciplinary science and data provision will offer trusted and quality-assured, insight and innovation.



Our themes

Increasing our value

Through well-established connections across the forestry sector, we understand the issues facing our trees, woods and forests and those involved with them. To continue to give the best research advice, information and data to our customers and to grow our business, we will improve by:

- developing new and existing strategic partnerships across the UK and internationally to enhance our capabilities and offer;
- maintaining, extending and exploiting our unique set of data, forest trials and experimental plots;
- building on, and investing in, our established interdisciplinary approach across the whole forest-wood supply chain to provide integrated solutions.

This will be achieved through:

- formalising longer-term service provision arrangements with key partners;
- developing and extending our knowledge-exchange and technology-transfer capability through investment in our 'Forester and Data Services' platform and development of forest-management tools that can be accessed and used through mobile and digital devices;
- developing our expert modelling, analysis and consultancy services to provide robust and innovative solutions to problems;
- investigating how big-data analytics, continuous monitoring and artificial intelligence can be applied and used in our work;
- developing bespoke services in the arboriculture and urban-forestry sectors.



We understand the issues facing our trees, woods and forests.



Working together

Forest Research's staff are fundamental to our success. Their expertise, pride and passion have made us the UK's leading provider of applied forest research. We recognise that our future reputation depends on the work we will do, not just on the work we have done. We will continue to develop by:

- investing in our staff and facilities;
- providing opportunities for career development;
- encouraging and rewarding innovation.

This will be achieved through:

- growing our business while making Forest Research an attractive, stimulating and positive place to work;
- supporting staff innovation and risk-taking through the creation of an internal innovation fund to support the development of novel ideas;
- investing in new and refurbished facilities and equipment, including a tree biosecurity and diagnostics facility at Alice Holt and a new bespoke Forest Information Hub at Roslin;
- encouraging and facilitating continuous professional development, including staff exchanges, post-doctoral placements, secondments and training;
- establishing joint appointments with research partners.

We recognise that our future reputation depends on the work we will do, not just on the work we have done.



Our values

We will be:

- **Communicative**

We will be honest, professional, impartial and objective with each other and our customers.

- **Open**

We will act with integrity, take pride in our work and be inclusive and welcoming in our approach, treating everyone with respect.

- **Customer-focused**

We will focus on our customers' interests and provide them with the best possible service, support, information and advice.

- **Collaborative**

We will work in an interdisciplinary way, and be co-operative and collaborative in our approach to our science, data provision and business development.

- **Creative**

We will champion scientific challenge, debate and innovation.

- **Safe**

We will identify, assess, communicate and appropriately manage risks to the health, safety and well-being of our staff.



What success will look like

- We are recognised by our customers and partners as the **provider of choice** for applied forest science and data services.
- We will continue to be **trusted** by our customers and partners for our expertise.
- Our data, products, services and new facilities demonstrably **add value** for customers and are therefore in high demand.
- Our science is **peer-reviewed**; our products and services are innovative, **user-driven** and user-tested.
- Our **scientific credibility** is recognised nationally and internationally.
- We continue to attract and retain professional **staff who excel** at what they do and who are committed to understanding and meeting customer needs.
- We continue to meet the needs of the business and can adjust to **meet demand**.
- We have a coherent and **inclusive culture**.
- We are recognised for delivering **value for money**.
- We generate new sources of income and continue to **grow our turnover** year on year.
- We are operationally **efficient**.



Our unique attributes

Recognised experts: We are the largest single employer of forest scientists in the UK. We are internationally recognised with an established reputation for the quality, relevance, utility, uptake and impact of our work. We have experts who advise across the breadth of forest topics from policy to practice and, as an organisation, we combine expertise to ensure all aspects of complex forestry-related issues are fully addressed. **Our staff are passionate about what they do and the difference they make.**

Interdisciplinary: We are the only provider of interdisciplinary research across the whole forest-wood supply chain, from tree breeding and ground preparation to forest management, harvesting, wood processing, forest inventory and resource evaluation. We also work in the diverse settings in which trees are valued – from rural to urban locations.

Information assets: We have an unparalleled range and longevity of experimental and forest-survey datasets and models. These underpin the evidence and policy needs of Government as well as sector initiatives such as the Woodland Carbon Code, UK Forestry Standard and tree-health strategies. Data and models are accessible through our website as are software and decision-support systems including Ecological Site Classification (ESC), ForestGALES, Forester and Forest Yield.

Forest trials and experimental plots: We have over 2,600 forest experiments located throughout Great Britain including, for example, the majority of forest genetic resources trials. We act as the long-term guardian of this resource. Through our long-term data, supporting documentation and experience of our Technical Services Unit in establishing, monitoring and managing these sites, we ensure maximum use and benefit from these resources. **No other organisation has these skills or resources.**



Value to governments: We have the capabilities and skills that enable both the UK Government and the devolved administrations to fulfil their statutory obligations and we also provide emergency response and policy-impact knowledge exchange. Forest Research provides expert advice to manage pest and disease outbreaks and contributes extensively to the UK Forestry Standard – the reference standard for sustainable forest management in the UK.

Value to the sector: We are highly valued by the forestry sector, from forest owners and processors to nurseries, conservation organisations and urban-forest managers.

Collaboration and leverage: We have a long history of effective collaboration and partnership, working across disciplines within our own research programmes as well as with other institutes and universities across the world. We keep up to date with the latest scientific developments and attract additional funding for research activities.

Skills development: Through PhDs and post-doctoral research we provide an essential training ground for specialist expertise in trees, woods and forests. Many leading specialists have worked at, or with, Forest Research – benefiting them as well as us and the wider interests of the sector and society.

Brand value: Forest Research is the research agency of the Forestry Commission and continues to work across England, Wales and Scotland.



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