

# Public Opinion of Forestry Survey 2025: Scotland

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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, data, technical support and consultancy services.

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## Introduction

Forest Research (and previously 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 from the Public Opinion of Forestry Survey 2025: Scotland, commissioned by Scottish Forestry, on:

- Forestry in the media;
- Benefits of forestry;
- Climate change;
- Wood as fuel;
- Woodland visits;
- Health and wellbeing;
- Changes to woodland;
- Woodland learning activities;
- Tree health; and
- Urban trees.

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

Surveys have also been run across the UK (to provide results for the UK and for England), and in Scotland. Separate reports, providing results from these surveys, are available on Forest Research's [Public Opinion of Forestry Surveys homepage](#).

Results for 2025 are published for the first time in this release and are shown alongside results from earlier surveys, where appropriate. Since 2021, surveys have

been conducted online; prior to this, surveys were conducted face-to-face. For details on any revisions for earlier years, see the Revisions section of the Annex.

As the data are obtained from a sample survey, there is a range of uncertainty (margin of error, or confidence interval) associated with any results produced. Any differences referred to in the text are statistically significant at the 95 per cent confidence level unless otherwise stated.

Unless otherwise specified, this report refers to the woodlands and trees in both urban and rural settings. The Glossary in the Annex provides further information on terms used.

The results quoted in this report are presented as proportions, which are percentages calculated from the weighted totals of respondents. Proportions (weighted percentages) throughout the report and accompanying data set have been independently rounded, so may not add to the totals shown.

## Key Findings

In 2025:

- About three fifths (62%) of Scottish adults had seen, heard or read about at least one forestry topic in the media in the last 12 months.
- Over 9 out of 10 (93%) of respondents believed that there was at least one benefit from forestry worth supporting with public money.
- More than four fifths (82%) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that 'trees are good because they remove carbon dioxide from the air and store it in wood'. 81% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that 'a lot more trees should be planted'.
- Approximately one fifth (21%) of respondents used wood as a fuel in their home. Of those who did not, 42% did not consider woodfuel to be practical for their property.
- Around 9 out of 10 respondents (90%) had visited forests or woodlands in the last 12 months. Over three fifths (68%) of respondents reported no change in the number of visits they made in the last 12 months.
- Two thirds (66%) of respondents would have liked to see more woodland in their part of Scotland.
- On tree health, 75% agreed or strongly agreed that 'everyone should take action when visiting woodlands to help prevent the spread of damaging tree pests or diseases' and 69% 'would be willing to look out for and report sightings of pests and diseases on trees, if appropriate information was available to [them]'.
- On urban trees, over two fifths (43%) of respondents would be willing to raise concerns with the Local Authority if they notice a problem with urban trees and

36% were prepared to plant and tend trees in their community or residential area.

# 1. Forestry in the media

Respondents were asked whether they had seen, heard or read about Scottish forests, woods or trees on television, radio or newspapers in the last 12 months.

Over three fifths (62%) of Scottish adults in 2025 recalled seeing, hearing or reading about at least one forestry topic in the media (Table 1). The results from the 2025 survey represent a statistically significant increase from the 2023 survey (50%).

The most commonly identified topic was 'tree planting', which was recalled by 28% of respondents.



**Table 1: Proportion of respondents who had seen or read about forests and woodlands in the last 12 months, Scotland, 2015 to 2025**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2025</b>
Tree planting	17	26	49	25	28
Forests and woodlands helping to tackle climate change	9	18	42	16	21
Birds and other animals in woodlands	16	26	41	15	19
Forests and woodlands as places to visit	14	25	44	15	19
Restoration of ancient or native woodlands	8	16	27	14	18
Loss of ancient or native woodlands	10	14	29	15	16
Public rights of access to woodlands	13	21	33	13	16
Community woodlands	10	19	35	11	14
Creation of new native woodlands	7	12	26	10	13
Farmers and crofters integrating trees on their land	[x]	[x]	[x]	9	12
Protests about roads or other developments on woodlands	8	15	29	9	11
Tree pests and diseases	13	17	24	9	11
Flowers and other plants in woodlands	8	14	32	10	10
Woods in and around towns, new local woods, improved local access	7	11	28	8	9
Wood for fuel, short rotation coppice	7	9	19	7	5
Labelling/certification of wood products	3	6	10	4	4
Other	1	2	2	1	[low]
At least one topic	37	54	71	50	62

Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents. Weighted totals: 2015 (1,010), 2017 (1,013), 2021 (1,000), 2023 (1,037), 2025 (1,012).
2. [x]: data not available (statement not included in that year's survey).
3. [low]: less than 0.5%.
4. Respondents could select more than one option.
5. Results for 2023 exclude those who answered "don't know/can't recall".

## 2. Benefits of forestry

The Scottish Government provides grants to plant new woodland and to manage existing woodland for public benefit. Respondents were asked to select, from a list of possible public benefits, good reasons to support Scottish forestry with public money.

Table 2 shows that, in 2025, 93% of respondents believed there was at least one benefit from forestry worth supporting with public money.

As in previous years, the most common reason to support forestry in Scotland with public money was “to provide places for wildlife to live”, with 61% of respondents in 2025 selecting this as a benefit, and “to help tackle climate change” (53%). There was a statistically significant increase in the level of support for “To provide places for wildlife to live”, “To provide places for recreation (such as walking, cycling, horse-riding)”, “To improve the countryside landscape”, “To provide timber for sawmills and wood processing” in 2025 from 2023.

**Table 2: Proportion of respondents who identified reasons to support forestry with public money, Scotland, 2015 to 2025**

<b>Answer</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2025</b>
To provide places for wildlife to live	67	72	93	54	61
To help tackle climate change	46	60	92	51	53
To provide places for recreation (such as walking, cycling, horse-riding)	46	61	92	39	46
To improve the countryside landscape	48	58	86	37	45
To provide places for relaxation and stress release	38	54	85	36	42
To support the economy in rural areas	44	54	86	40	39
To restore former industrial land	29	37	78	27	29
So that Scotland can buy less wood products from abroad	33	45	81	30	29
To improve the appearance of towns and cities	35	47	83	28	29
To provide renewable energy including wood as fuel	40	47	73	27	29
To provide places for families to play	43	54	88	24	25
To provide timber for sawmills and wood processing	29	37	72	15	24
To provide places for learning	34	48	88	21	23
At least one reason	89	95	99	81	93

Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents. Weighted totals: 2015 (1,010), 2017 (1,013), 2021 (1,000), 2023 (1,037), 2025(1,012).
2. Respondents could select more than one option.
3. Results for 2023 exclude those who answered "don't know/can't recall".

## 3. Climate change

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

### 3.1. Woodlands' impact on climate change

First, respondents were asked about the ways in which forests and woodlands in Scotland can impact on climate change.

More than four fifths of respondents (82%) agreed (giving a response of “agree” or “strongly agree”) that “trees are good because they remove carbon dioxide from the air and store it in wood”, and 78% agreed that “planting trees can help us cope with climate change” (Table 3).

In contrast, just over two fifths (41%) of respondents agreed that “using wood for fuel makes climate change worse because it releases carbon dioxide”, and 45% of respondents agreed that “cutting down forests and woodland for timber always makes climate change worse even if they are replanted”.

**Table 3: Proportion of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with ways in which forests and woodlands can impact climate change, Scotland, 2015 to 2025**

<b>Answer</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2025</b>
Trees are good because they remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and store it in wood	78	84	88	77	82
Planting more trees can help us cope with climate change by providing shade and reducing the effects of flooding	72	78	86	75	78
Using wood for building is better for climate change than using materials such as concrete, steel and plastics	53	57	64	48	58
Scotland could offset all its greenhouse gas emissions by planting more trees	46	54	63	47	53
Using wood for fuel is better for climate change than using fuels such as coal, oil and gas	54	56	64	45	48
Cutting down forests and woodland always makes climate change worse, even if they are replanted	50	44	46	43	45
Using wood for fuel makes climate change worse because it releases carbon dioxide	35	42	50	38	41

Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents. Weighted totals: 2015 (1,010), 2017 (1,013), 2021 (1,000), 2023 (1,037), 2025 (1,012).
2. Respondents were able to select more than one option.

### 3.2. Forest management in response to climate change

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

Table 4 shows that the majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that in 2025:

- “A lot more trees should be planted” (81%);
- “More information should be provided about the ways in which wood can be used to lessen the impact on the environment” (79%); and
- “Different types of trees should be planted that are more suited to future climates” (73%).

Conversely, fewer respondents agreed or strongly agreed that:

- “There is nothing that anyone could do that would make any difference” (20%); and
- “No action is needed, let nature take its course” (20%).

Table 4: Proportion of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with management options for Scottish forests in response to the threat of climate change, Scotland, 2015 to 2025

Answer	2015	2017	2021	2023	2025
A lot more trees should be planted	83	88	92	80	81
More information should be provided about the ways in which wood can be used to lessen our impact on the environment	81	87	95	74	79
Different types of trees should be planted that will be more suited to future climates	73	81	86	69	73
No action is needed, let nature take its course	16	18	16	14	20
There is nothing that anyone could do that would make any difference	13	10	7	14	20

Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents. Weighted totals: 2015 (1,010), 2017 (1,013), 2021 (1,000), 2023 (1,037), 2025 (1,012).

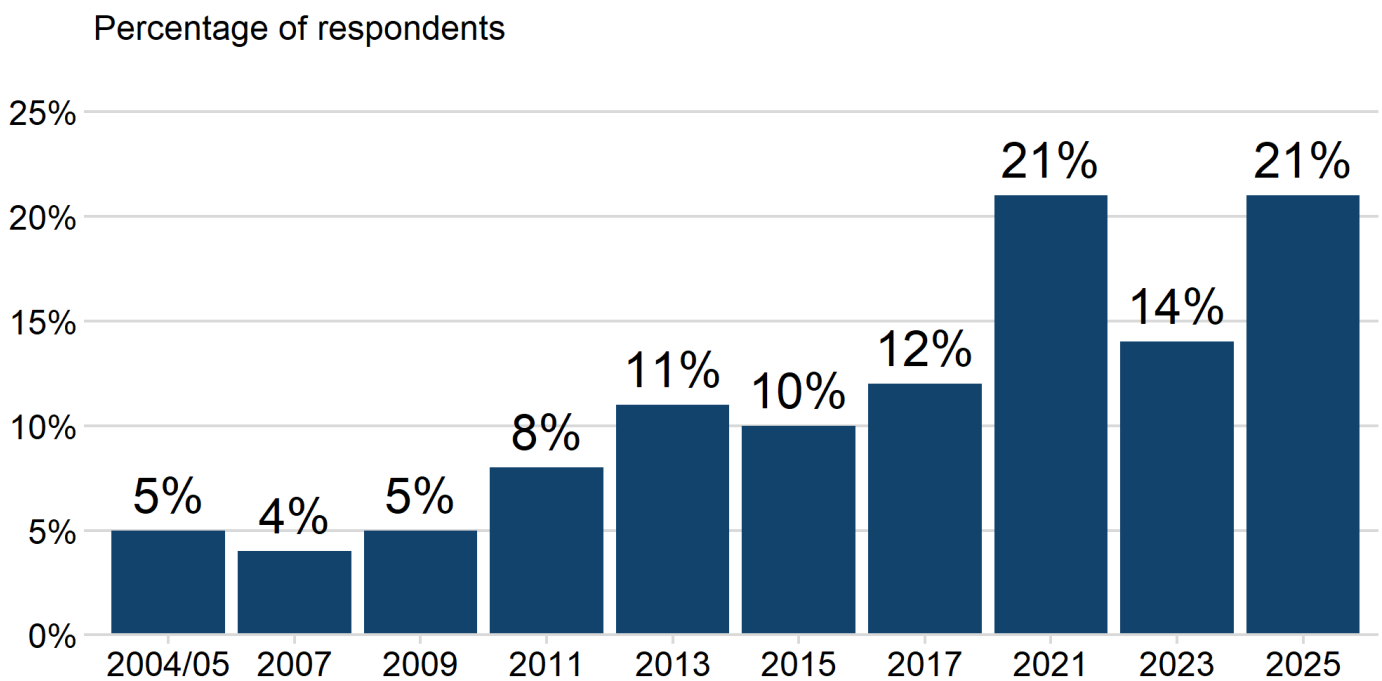


## 4. Wood as a fuel

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. The question had been asked since the 2007 survey, and in a woodfuel consumption study in Scotland in 2004/05.

Around one in five respondents in Scotland (21%) reported that they use wood as a fuel (Figure 1). This represents a statistically significant increase from the 2023 figure of 14%, but is similar to the level in 2021.

**Figure 1: Proportion of respondents who use wood as a fuel in the home, Scotland, 2004/05 to 2025**



**Footnote:**

1. Results are based on all respondents. Weighted totals: 2004/05 (4,006), 2007 (1,007), 2009 (1,040), 2011 (1,018), 2013 (1,001), 2015 (1,010), 2017 (1,013), 2021 (1,000), 2023 (1,037), 2025 (1,012).

Respondents who said they used wood as a fuel were asked a further two questions. The following was reported in 2025:

- 51% of wood fuel users said they use wood as the main fuel for heating their home;
- 32% of those using wood as a fuel gathered it themselves, 23% bought it 'by the truckload', and 39% bought one or more bags at a time.

Respondents who said they did not use wood as a fuel were asked to give the main reason why not. Table 5 shows that the single most common reason cited by respondents who do not use wood as a fuel, either on its own or with other fuels was "Not practical for this property" (42%). A further 21% reported that they do not use wood as a fuel because they are happy with the existing system, and another 11% reported not using woodfuel as they did not own property.

**Table 5: Proportion of respondents who identified the main reason for not using wood as a fuel at home, Scotland, 2015 to 2025**

<b>Reason</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2025</b>
Happy with the existing system	17	22	12	11	21
Not practical for this property	52	56	71	15	42
I do not have a wood burner/open fireplace or anything else to burn wood	[x]	[x]	[x]	44	[x]
Do not own property	17	10	3	14	11
Never thought about it	6	4	6	6	9
All other responses	9	8	8	11	18

Footnote:

1. Results are based on respondents who do not use wood as a fuel. Weighted totals: 2015 (914), 2017 (889), 2021 (786), 2023 (854), 2025 (803).
2. [x]: data not available (statement not included in that year's survey).

## 5. Woodland visits

The survey asked respondents a number of questions about visits to woodland. This included how often the respondent would like to visit the woodlands and the outdoors in the next 12 months, how often the respondent had visited woodland in the last 12 months, and type of woodland visited.

### 5.1. Latent demand for woodland visits

Respondents to the 2025 survey were asked to state how often they would like to visit woodlands and the outdoors in the next 12 months.

Over four fifths of respondents (82%) said they would like to visit at least once a month, while 4% said they would not like to visit at all in the next 12 months (Table 6).

**Table 6: Proportion of respondents and desired frequency of visits to woodlands and the outdoors in the next 12 months, Scotland, 2015 to 2025**

<b>Frequency</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2025</b>
Several times per week	19	23	50	11	21
Several times per month	25	28	25	26	35
About once a month	23	24	13	28	26
Less often	19	15	8	21	15
Never	14	10	3	6	4
Don't know	[x]	[x]	1	7	[x]

Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents. Weighted totals: 2015 (1,010), 2017 (1,013), 2021 (1,000), 2023 (1,037), 2025 (1,012).
2. [x]: data not available (statement not included in that year's survey).

## 5.2 Frequency of visits to woodland

Respondents to the 2025 survey were asked how often, on average, they had visited forests or woodlands for walks, picnics or other recreation in the previous 12 months.

Almost two fifths (38%) of respondents in 2025 said they visited on average at least once a week (Table 7). This represents a statistically significant increase from the 2023 survey, where 18% of respondents reported that they visited at least once a week in the past 12 months.

**Table 7: Proportion of respondents and frequency of visits to woodlands in the last 12 months, Scotland, 2017 to 2025**

<b>Frequency</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2025</b>
More than once per day	2	3	1	3
Every day	6	13	2	8
Several times a week	13	26	10	17
Once a week	12	14	5	10
Once or twice a month	24	18	23	22
Once every 2-3 months	15	6	16	17
Less often	13	7	23	[x]
Never	16	13	17	10
Don't know	0	1	4	[x]
Once or twice	[x]	[x]	[x]	14

Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents. Weighted totals: 2017 (1,013), 2021 (1,000), 2023 (1,037), 2025 (1,012).

90% of respondents to the 2025 survey reported that they had visited forests or woodlands in the last 12 months.

Table 8: Proportion of respondents who had visited woodlands in the last few years/12 months, Scotland, 2015 to 2025

Year	Proportion of respondents who had visited woodlands in the last few years/12 months
2015	78
2017	84
2021	86
2023	79
2025	90

Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents. Weighted totals: 2015 (1,010), 2017 (1,013), 2021 (1,000), 2023 (1,037), 2025 (1,012).
2. Question wording changed in 2017, from asking about visits 'in the last few years' to asking about visits 'in the last 12 months'.

A new question was introduced in the 2021 survey to find out about changes to the number of visits to woodland in the last 12 months (Table 9). Around one in seven respondents (14%) to the 2025 survey reported an increase in the number of visits they made. A further 68% stated that the number of visits they made was about the same as usual, and 17% reported a decrease.

**Table 9: Proportion of respondents and change in woodland visiting habits in the last 12 months, Scotland, 2021 to 2025**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2025</b>
I have visited forests or woodlands more often than usual	35	15	14
The number of visits I have taken to forests or woodlands is about the same as usual	32	56	68
I have visited forests or woodlands less often than usual	31	23	17
Don't know	2	6	[x]

Footnote:

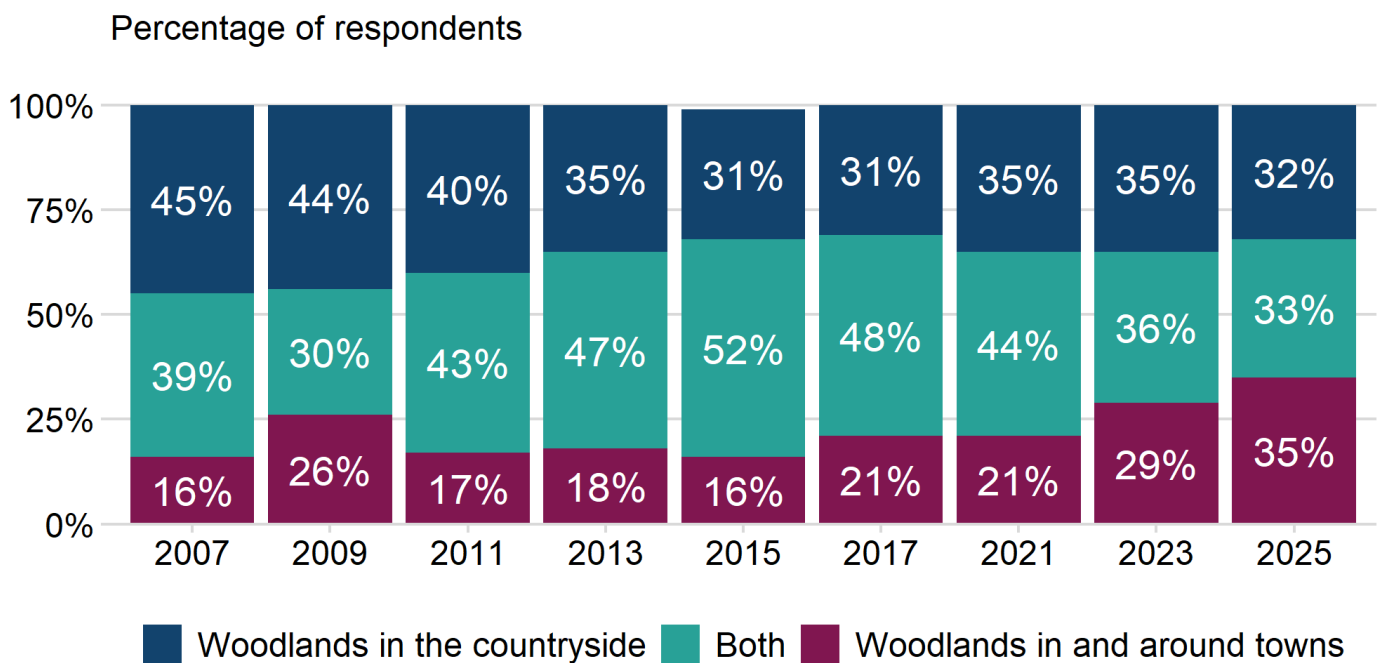
1. Results are based on all respondents. Weighted totals: 2021 (1,000), 2023 (1,037), 2025 (1,012).
2. [x]: data not available (statement not included in that year's survey).



### 5.3. Type of woodland visited

Around one third of respondents (33%) to the 2025 survey who had visited in the last 12 months reported visiting woodlands and forests in both the countryside and towns (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Proportion of respondents and type of woodland visited, Scotland, 2007 to 2025



Footnote:

1. Results are based on respondents who had visited woodland in the last few years/12 months. Weighted totals: 2007 (752), 2009 (589), 2011 (761), 2013 (764), 2015 (785), 2017 (851), 2021 (863), 2023 (785), 2025 (909).
2. Results for 2023 exclude those who answered "don't know/can't recall". "Don't know" was not included as an option in 2007 to 2021, or 2025.

## 5.4. Duration of visits

A new question was introduced into the 2021 survey to ask about the length of time spent on-site during the most recent visit to a forest or woodland and was repeated in 2023 and 2025. Around 95% of respondents to the 2025 survey who had visited woodlands reported that their visit lasted three hours or less.

**Table 10: Proportion of respondents and length of last visit to forest or woodland, Scotland, 2021 to 2025**

Length of time	2021	2023	2025
Less than 1 hour	16	12	20
1-2 hours	56	46	53
2-3 hours	18	22	22
3-4 hours	[x]	12	[x]
4-5 hours	7	4	4
5-8 hours	1	2	1
8 hours or more	2	[low]	[low]
Don't know	[x]	2	[x]

Footnote:

1. Results are based on respondents who had visited woodland in the last 12 months. weighted totals: 2021 (862), 2023 (817), 2025 (909).
2. [x]: data not available (statement not included in that year's survey).
3. [low]: less than 0.5%.

## 5.5. Activities during woodland visits

Respondents were asked about the activities they engaged in during their last forest or woodland visit.

Most respondents (91%) reported that they had been walking on their most recent woodland visit (Table 11).

**Table 11: Proportion of respondents and activities engaged in during last woodland visit, Scotland, 2021 to 2025**

Activity	2021	2023	2025
Walking	92	90	91
Running/jogging	7	9	13
Cycling	6	7	10
Swimming	1	[x]	7
Horse riding	1	3	4
Other	8	5	5

Footnote:

1. Results are based on respondents who had visited woodland in the last 12 months. Weighted totals: 2021 (863), 2023 (817), 2025 (909).
2. Respondents were able to select more than one option.
3. [x]: data not available.
4. [low]: less than 0.5%.
5. Results for 2023 exclude those who answered “don’t know/can’t recall”.

Respondents were then asked about the amount of time they spent on each activity (Table 12). Running or jogging tended to be the shortest activity, with almost three quarters (72%) of respondents participating for one hour or less.

**Table 12: Proportion of respondents and time spent on activities during last woodland visit, Scotland, 2025**

<b>Length of time</b>	<b>Walking</b>	<b>Running/jogging</b>	<b>Cycling</b>
1-15 minutes	6	10	7
16-30 minutes	11	29	25
31-60 minutes	27	33	32
1-2 hours	39	17	23
2-3 hours	13	7	7
3-5 hours	3	1	3
5 hours or more	1	3	3

Footnote:

1. Results are based on respondents who had participated in each activity.  
Weighted totals: walking (825), running/ jogging (120), cycling (88).
2. Respondents were able to report time on more than one activity.
3. [x]: data not available.
4. Results for 2023 exclude those who answered "don't know/can't recall".

## 6. Health and wellbeing

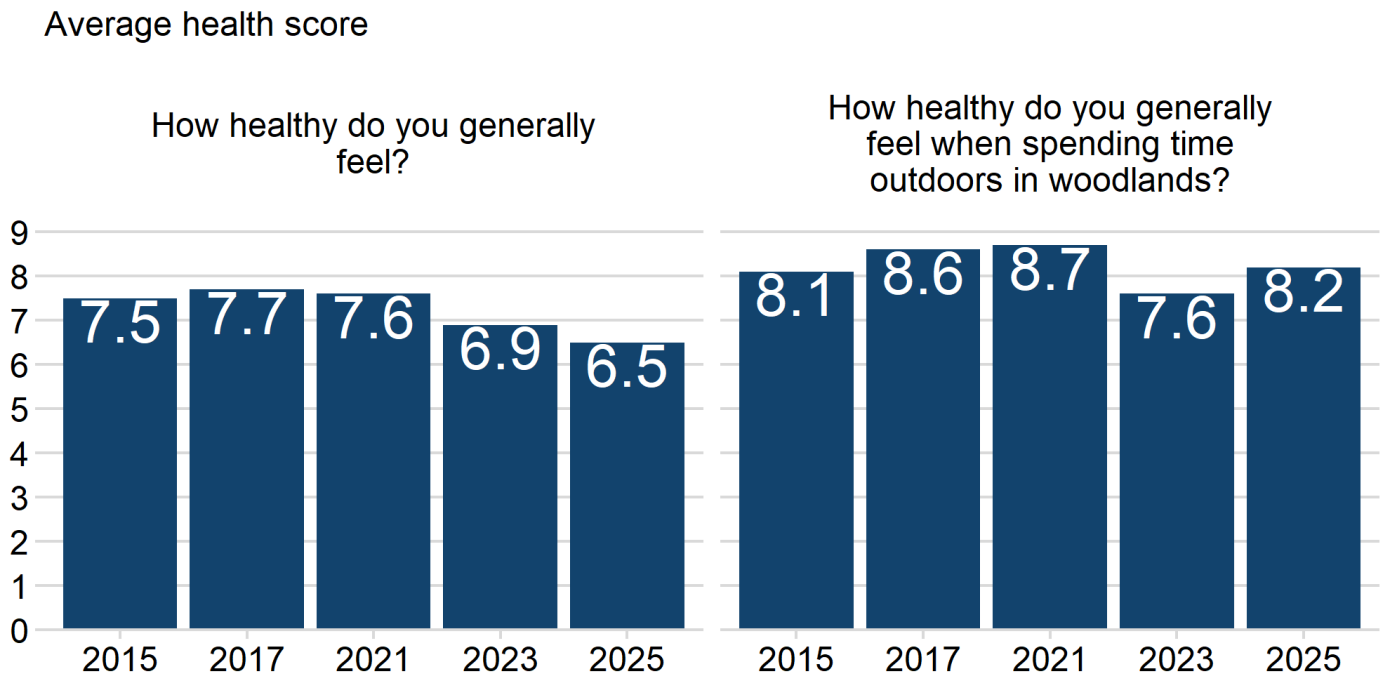
All respondents were asked about their health and wellbeing in response to woodland visits.

Firstly, respondents were asked to rate the following on a scale of 1 to 10 (where 1 denotes not at all satisfied/ poor health and 10 denotes completely satisfied/ good health):

- Their satisfaction with life;
- Their general health;
- Their health when spending time outdoors in the woodlands.

For respondents who provided a score in 2025, the average score for satisfaction with life was 7.1 out of 10. An average score of 6.5 was achieved for general health and 8.2 for health when spending time outdoors in the woodlands (both out of 10) (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Average health scores reported by respondents for general health and for spending time outdoors on a scale of one to ten, Scotland, 2015 to 2025



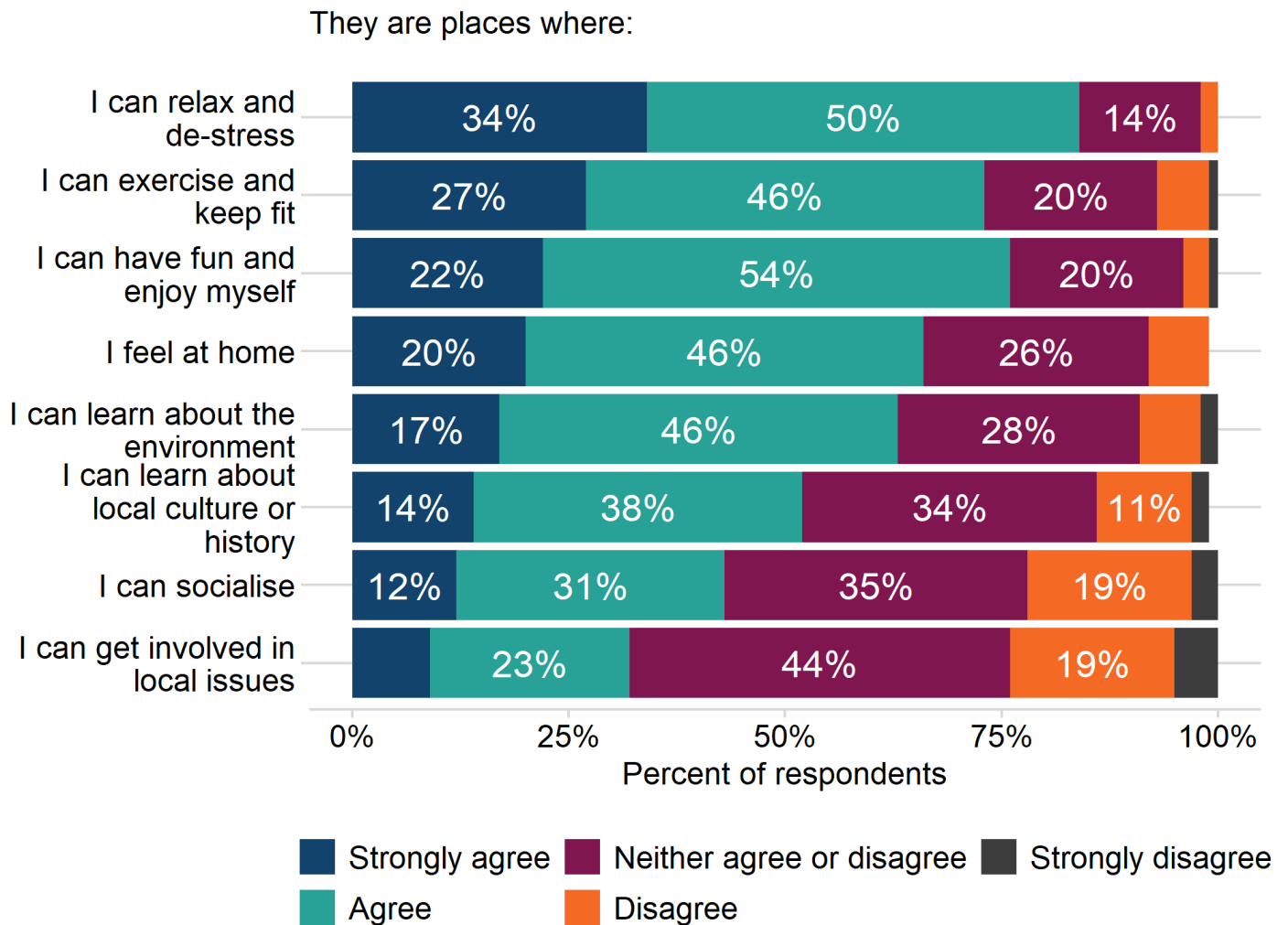
Footnote:

1. Figures for 2015 to 2017 are based on all respondents who had visited woodland. Weighted totals: 2015 (785), 2017 (851).

2. Results for 2021 (1,000), 2023 (1,037) and 2025 (1,012) are based on all respondents.

3. Results for 2023 exclude those who answered "don't know/can't recall". Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with a number of statements about the importance of forests and woodlands to them. There were high levels of agreement (those selecting 'agree' or 'strongly agree') that forests and woodlands are places where 'I can relax and de-stress' (84%), 'I can have fun and enjoy myself' (76%), and 'I can exercise and keep fit' (73%).

Figure 4: Proportion of respondents and agreement with statements on importance of forests and woodlands, Scotland, 2025



Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents (1,012).

Respondents who had visited woodland in the last 12 months were then asked about the aspects of their health and wellbeing that benefited from visiting woodlands and the outdoors. This covered:

- Physical health - through increased exercise and physical activity;

- Mental health - through relaxation, stress relief and improved mood; and
- Social health and wellbeing - through meeting other people/ spending time with people and/ or talking with family or friends.

The vast majority of respondents who had visited woodland said they benefited from at least one of these aspects (95%), while just over a quarter (26%) said they benefited from all three (Table 13).

Looking at individual aspects:

- 77% felt their mental health had benefited;
- 73% felt their physical health had benefited by visiting woodlands and the outdoors; and
- 38% said their social health had benefited.



**Table 13: Proportion of respondents and health benefits derived from visiting woodlands and the outdoors, Scotland, 2015 to 2025**

<b>Answer</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2025</b>
Mental health	89	88	92	81	77
Physical health	89	87	91	76	73
Social health and wellbeing	73	73	77	43	38
Other	[x]	[x]	[x]	3	[x]
All of these	64	62	63	33	26
None of these	3	5	2	1	5

Footnote:

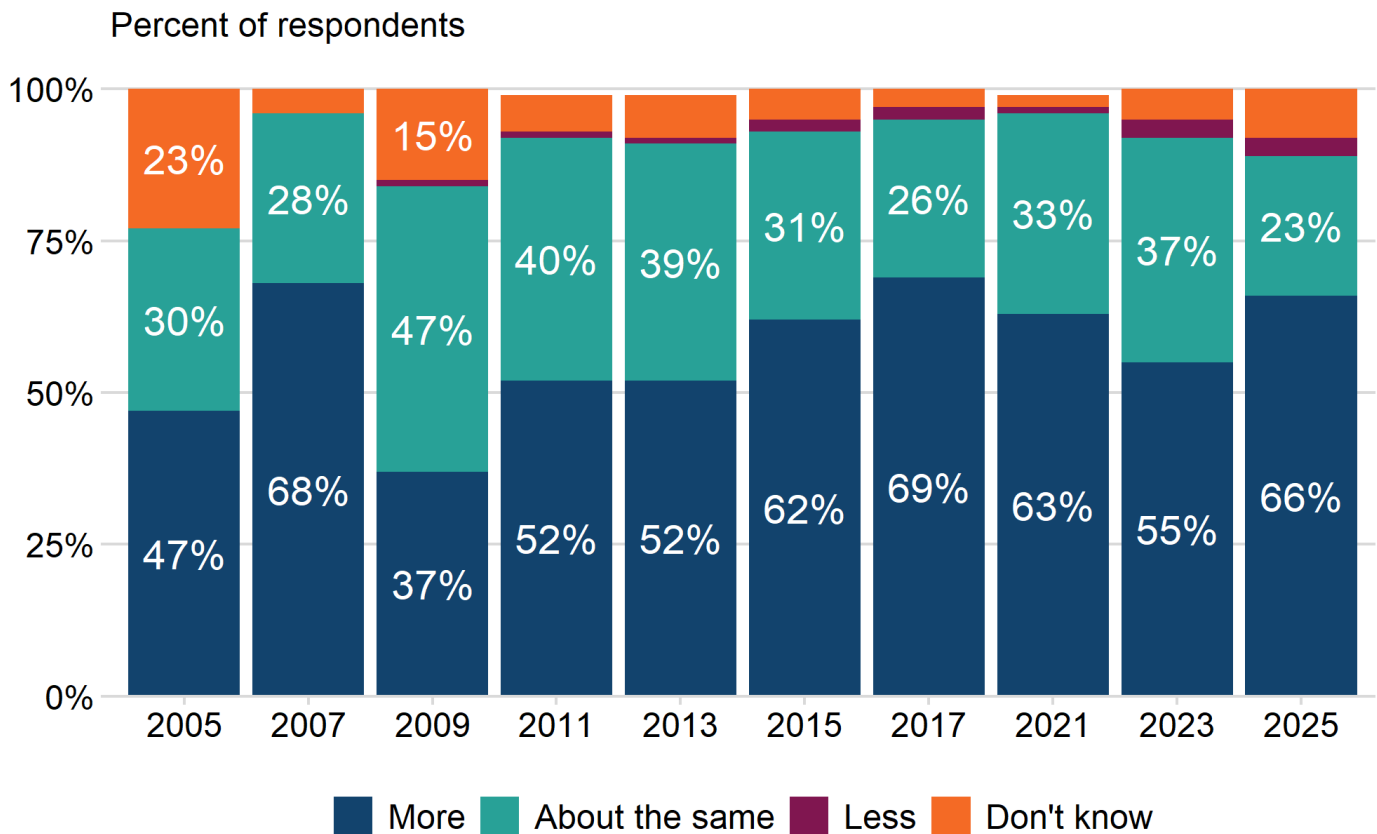
1. Results are based on all respondents who had visited woodland. Weighted totals: 2015 (785), 2017 (851), 2021 (863), 2023 (817), 2025 (909).
2. [x]: data not available (statement not included in that year's survey).

## 7. Changes to woodland

Respondents were asked whether or not they would like to see more woodland in their part of Scotland. Around two thirds (66%) of all respondents in 2025 said they would like to see more woodland in their part of Scotland (Figure 5).

Under one quarter (23%) of respondents in the 2025 survey reported that they would like to see about the same amount of forest woodland in their part of Scotland. Only 3% said they would like to see less woodland.

Figure 5: Proportion of respondents and desire for change in local woodland area, Scotland, 2005 to 2025



Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents. Weighted totals: 2005 (1,009), 2007 (1,007), 2009 (1,040), 2011 (1,018), 2013 (1,001), 2015 (1,010), 2017 (1,013), 2021 (1,000), 2023 (1,037), 2025 (1,012).

Respondents who had indicated that they would like to see more woodland in their part of Scotland were then asked a follow up question to find out where they thought new woodlands should be created.

In 2025, three fifths of respondents (60%) who would like to see more woodland in their part of Scotland thought that the new woodlands should be created in urban and

industrial areas, under one half (47%) thought new woodlands should be created in uplands, and one third (31%) reported intensively farmed areas as a good location for new woodlands (Table 14).

**Table 14: Proportion of respondents and preferred locations of new woodland, Scotland, 2015 to 2025**

<b>Location</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2025</b>
Urban and industrial areas	64	69	75	66	60
Uplands	50	50	53	44	47
Intensively farmed areas	35	36	48	33	31
Other	4	3	10	3	1
Don't know	9	6	5	11	15

Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents who would like more woodland. Weighted totals: 2015 (624), 2017 (695), 2021 (631), 2023 (570), 2025 (667).
2. Respondents could select more than one option.

## 8. Woodland learning activities

Respondents were asked whether they, or any member of their family, had attended any organised learning activities or events to do with woodlands in the last 12 months.

Table 15 shows that, in the previous 12 months, around 30% of respondents to the 2025 survey said that they or a family member had attended an organised learning activity or event. In particular:

- 13% participated in a guided walk or tour;
- 9% had attended a school visit; and
- 13% participated in an event at a woodland visitor centre.

**Table 15: Proportion of respondents who reported attending woodland learning activities in the last 12 months, Scotland, 2015 to 2025**

Activity	2015	2017	2021	2023	2025
A guided walk or talk	5	7	4	8	13
A school visit	9	11	5	6	9
An event at a woodland visitor centre	6	7	5	6	13
Another learning event	2	3	6	7	7
Other	1	1	2	[x]	1
None of these	81	80	85	69	70

Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents. Weighted totals: 2015 (1,010), 2017 (1,013), 2021 (1,000), 2023 (1,037), 2025 (1,012).
2. [x]: data not available (statement not included in that year's survey).
3. Respondents could select more than one option.
4. Results for 2023 exclude those who answered "don't know/can't recall".

## 9. Tree health

Respondents were presented with a series of statements relating to tree health and asked to indicate their level of agreement. Table 16 and Figure 6 show that the majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that:

- 'Everyone should take action when visiting woodlands to help prevent the spread of damaging tree pests and diseases' (75% in 2025); and that
- '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' (69%).

Conversely, few respondents agreed or strongly agreed that:

- "I understand what is meant by the term 'biosecurity'" (44%); and that
- 'There is very little anyone can do to prevent the spread of damaging tree pests and diseases' (24% in 2025).

**Table 16: Proportion of respondents and agreement with statements regarding tree health, Scotland, 2015 to 2025**

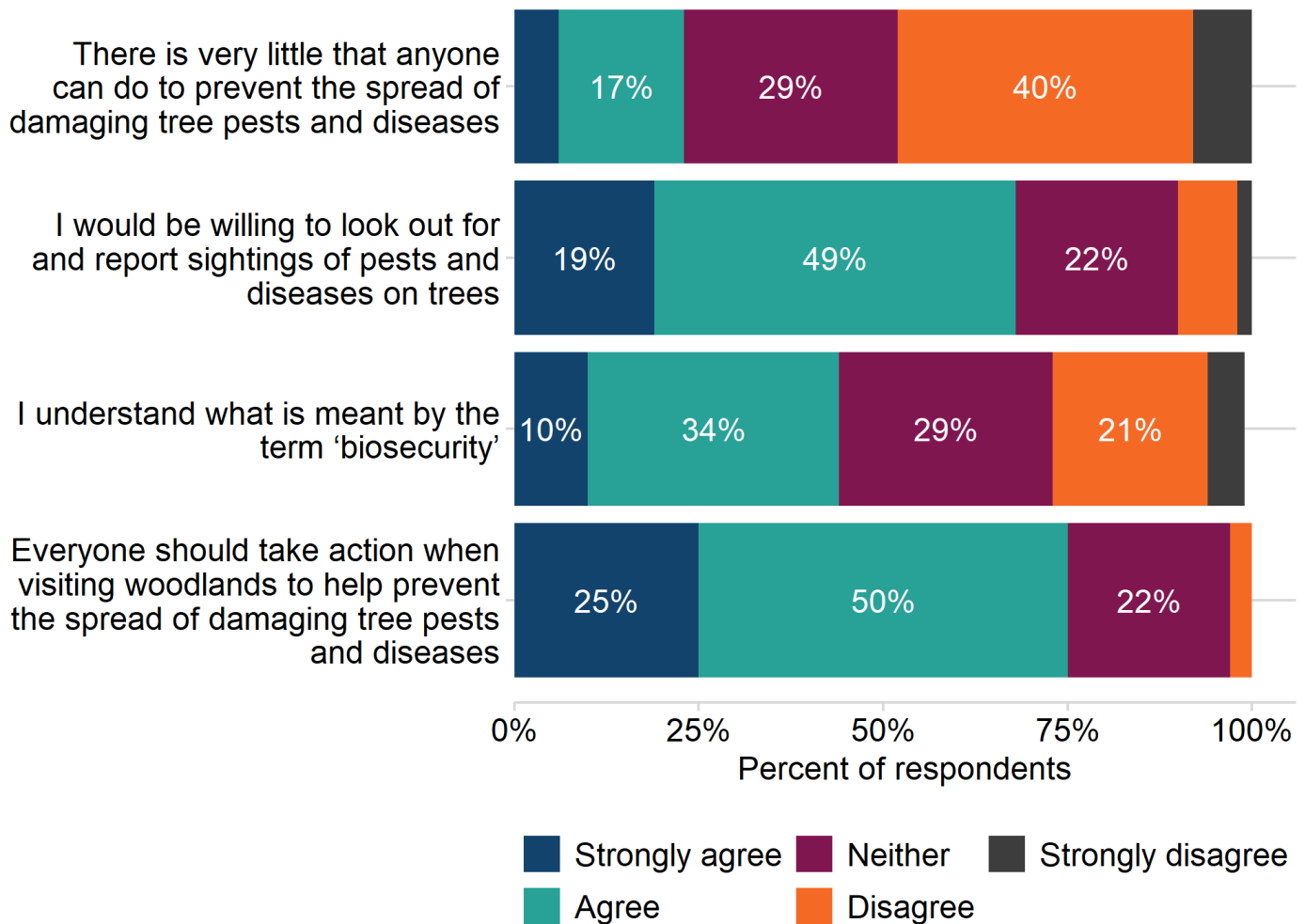
<b>Statement</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2025</b>
Everyone should take action when visiting woodlands to help prevent the spread of damaging tree pests and diseases	69	72	83	65	75
I would be willing to look out for and report sightings of pests and diseases on trees, if appropriate information and advice was available to me	68	69	83	63	69
I understand what is meant by the term 'biosecurity'	34	36	41	35	44
There is very little that anyone can do to prevent the spread of damaging tree pests and diseases	17	14	17	16	24

Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents. Weighted totals: 2015 (1,010), 2017 (1,013), 2021 (1,000), 2023 (1,037), 2025 (1,012).



Figure 6: Proportion of respondents and agreement with statements regarding tree health, Scotland, 2025



Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents (1,012).

## 10. Urban trees

In 2017, a question was added asking respondents if they would be prepared to support urban trees in various ways.

Over two fifths (43%) of respondents to the 2025 survey would be prepared to raise concerns with the Local Authority if they noticed a problem with trees, and 36% would be willing to plant and tend trees in a garden or community residential area (Table 17). One third would be willing to monitor the health and condition of public trees (33%), and around one third would be willing to water newly planted trees during periods of dry weather (33%).

**Table 17: Proportion of respondents and willingness to undertake activities to support urban trees, Scotland, 2017 to 2025**

Activity	2017	2021	2023	2025
Raising concerns with the Local Authority if you notice a problem with trees	60	74	39	43
Planting and tending trees in your garden or your community residential area	56	70	37	36
Monitoring the health and condition of public trees	68	58	32	33
Watering newly planted trees in public areas during periods of dry weather	55	61	32	33
Participating in community planting programmes	51	58	29	31
Accepting higher council taxes which will be used for community tree programmes	34	47	13	18

Footnote:

1. Results are based on all respondents. Weighted totals: 2017 (1,013), 2021 (1,000), 2023 (1,037), 2025 (1,012).
2. Results for 2023 exclude those who answered "don't know/can't recall".

# 11. Annex 1

## 11.1. Introduction

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

## 11.2. Data Sources and Methodology

### 11.2.1. Background

Forest Research (and previously 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) were 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 (approximately 1,000 adults) carried out in 2005, 2007, 2010, 2014 and 2019;
- In 2023, four separate surveys were carried out; for the UK (from which England results were derived), for Wales, for Scotland and for Northern Ireland;
- In 2025, three separate surveys were carried out for UK (and England), Wales and Scotland. Some questions were asked in all of the surveys conducted in 2025, but a number of questions have become survey specific.

All surveys run until 2019 were conducted using face-to-face interviewing. The restrictions in place across the UK in early 2021 as a result of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic led to a change in methodology for the three surveys conducted that year. The 2021 survey in Scotland changed to use telephone interviews, whilst the surveys across the UK and in Wales were changed to use an online methodology. For the 2023 survey, Scotland and Northern Ireland changed to an online methodology, meaning all surveys from 2023 were conducted online. Consequently, results for the 2021, 2023 and 2025 surveys may not be fully consistent with previous surveys.

Results from the 2025 survey are published for the first time in this release and are shown alongside results from earlier surveys, where appropriate. Results for earlier years have not been revised from those previously released.

Table A1 below is a summary of the previous surveys and presents the approximate numbers of adults interviewed for each country. Results for England are a subset of the UK survey.

Table A1: Approximate sample sizes for the Public Opinion of Forestry surveys, UK, 2001 to 2025

Year	UK <sup>1</sup>	England <sup>2</sup>	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
2001	2,000	[x]	1,000	1,000	[x]
2003	4,000	3,400	1,000	1,000	[x]
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	[x]
2010	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	1,000
2011	2,000	1,700	1,000	1,000	[x]
2013	2,000	1,600	1,000	1,000	[x]
2014	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	1,000
2015	2,000	1,500	1,000	1,000	[x]
2017	2,000	1,800	1,000	1,000	[x]
2019	2,200	1,800	1,000	[x]	1,000
2021	5,000	4,300	1,000	1,000	[x]
2023	11,100	9,300	1,000	1,000	1,000
2025	10,300	8,800	1,000	1,000	[x]

Footnote:

1. 2001 and 2005 surveys covered Great Britain only (i.e. excluding Northern Ireland).
2. Results for England are derived from UK surveys.
3. [x]: data not available (survey not run that year).

### 11.2.2. Survey Methodology

The 2003, 2007, 2011, 2013, 2015 and 2017 surveys were obtained from the TNS Scottish Opinion Survey. The 2005 and 2009 surveys were obtained from the mruk Scottish In-Home Omnibus Survey. Both of these surveys used face-to-face interviewing.

The 2021 survey data were obtained from Survation. Restrictions that were in place in early 2021 as a result of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic included limitations on people from different households meeting (particularly indoors). This meant that the 2021 survey could not be conducted using face-to-face interviewing, and was instead conducted using telephone interviewing.

The 2023 survey used an online survey format and the data were obtained from Ipsos Mori. The changes in survey design and data collection each year will have led to some inconsistencies with previous surveys, but it is not possible to quantify how much of the changes observed are a result of adopting a different survey design and how much are a result of genuine change. Care should therefore be taken when comparing the results between years.

The results presented in this report were gathered by Survation, on behalf of Forest Research and Scottish Forestry. Survation is an MRS (Market Research Society) company partner and member of the British Polling Council; data collection was digital and fieldwork was conducted according to MRS standards.

The 2025 survey was conducted via an online panel, with differential response rates from different demographic groups taken in account. Participants received an invitation by email to participate in the online survey.

Survation interviewed a sample of 1,012 adults in Scotland via online panel between 7 to 14 March 2025. Data were weighted to the profile of Scottish Adults aged 16+,

weighting by age group, sex, Scottish parliamentary region and highest level of qualification. Each respondent is assigned a weight which reflects the number of people that they represent in the population.

### 11.2.3. Questionnaire

A copy of the 2025 questionnaire is provided at the end of this release, in Annexe 2. This covers the questions requested by Forest Research and Scottish Forestry. In addition, a small number of demographic questions are included as standard in the survey conducted by Survation. Variables such as age, sex, Scottish parliamentary region and highest level of education were included.

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. Some of the changes introduced for the 2023 survey were not included in the 2025 questionnaire such as including the option to select 'Don't know' for all questions.

### 11.2.4. Design effect

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

The Survation Survey uses a quota sampling approach, which means that the likelihood of individuals within the population being interviewed cannot be measured. Any confidence intervals calculated are also indicative. Due to the survey design, a 'design effect' of 1.5 should be applied to confidence intervals calculated for data from this survey, which is commonly assumed for surveys of this type.

Confidence intervals are 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 results in this report on the basis of a 95% confidence interval and assuming design factor of 1.5:

- For questions asked to the whole Scotland sample of around 1,012, the margin of error should be no more than  $\pm 4.6\%$ .

For questions not asked of the whole sample and sub-groups within the sample, margin of error will increase. For example:

- By gender (male  $n=505$ ; female  $n=507$ ), the confidence intervals should be no more than  $\pm 6.5\%$ ;
- For those who visited woodland in the last few years ( $n=909$ ), the confidence interval should be no more than  $\pm 4.9\%$ .

For questions asked to whole samples, differences of more than  $\pm 6.5\%$  between the 2023 and 2025 surveys are statistically significant.

### 11.3. Revisions

Results for 2025 are published for the first time in this release. All results are final. Results for earlier years have not been revised. [Our revisions policy](#) sets out how revisions and errors to these statistics are dealt with.

### 11.4. Further information

[Accompanying tables to this release](#), provide more detailed figures, showing standard breakdowns. Weighted proportions have been independently rounded, so may not add to the totals shown.

Scotland's People and Nature Survey, carried out by TNS for Scottish Natural Heritage (now NatureScot), Forestry Commission Scotland (now Scottish Forestry), national



park authorities and Greenspace Scotland, was last run in 2023/24 and included four questions specifically related to forestry. Results for this can be found at the [NatureScot website](#). Reports from previous editions of the Scottish People and Nature Survey as well as related research are also available from the NatureScot website.

Results for these forestry questions were included in [Public Opinion of Forestry 2015: Scotland](#). Smaller-scale versions of the Scotland's People and Nature Survey were run in 2017/18 and 2019/20. NatureScot also commissioned research to provide an understanding of people's outdoor visit behaviour and engagement with nature during the Coronavirus lockdown.

### 11.5. Release schedule

The Scotland Public Opinion of Forestry is a biennial survey, next due to run in early 2027 with results likely to be available in summer 2027.

### 11.6. Official Statistics

This is an Official Statistics publication. Visit the [UK Statistics Authority](#) for more information about Official Statistics.

### 11.7. 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.

#### 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.

### Confidence interval

An estimated range of values that is likely to include an unknown population parameter (i.e., a fixed value for the population as a whole). The confidence interval around an estimate is derived from the sample data and is used to indicate the reliability of the estimate.

### Design factor

A factor applied in the calculation of confidence intervals to take account of the survey design (clustering, weighting, stratification) used in selecting the sample. A design factor of 1.5 is commonly assumed by market research companies for omnibus surveys of the population.

### 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 Research (FR)

The Forestry Commission agency responsible for forestry and tree related research (including statistics).

### Forestry Commission (FC)

The government department responsible for forestry matters in England. The Forestry Commission’s functions in Wales transferred to the Welsh Government and to Natural Resources Wales on 1 April 2013. The Forestry Commission’s functions in Scotland transferred to Scottish Forestry and to Forestry and Land Scotland on 1 April 2019.

The Forestry Commission is supported by two agencies; Forestry England and Forest Research.

### Great Britain (GB)

England, Wales and Scotland.

### Proportion

A weighted percentage.

### Quota sampling

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

### Scottish Government (SG)

The Scottish Government is the devolved government for Scotland. The devolved government for Scotland is responsible for most of the issues of day-to-day concern to the people of Scotland, including health, education, justice, rural affairs, and transport.

### 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. Stratification 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.

## Urban trees

Trees and woodland located in towns or cities. Includes trees in urban woods, parks, gardens, streets and other urban areas.

## 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 minimum size of 0.5 hectares and 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. Generally (including the UK) woodland is defined as having a minimum area of 0.5 ha.

## 12. Annex 2

### 12.1. Introduction

This annex provides the full 2025 questionnaire.

### 12.2. Public Opinion of Forestry Survey 2025: Scotland Questionnaire

#### Q1 [All]

You may have seen or read about Scottish forests, woods or trees on the television, radio or in the newspapers. Which, if any, of the following topics have you seen, heard or read anything about in the last 12 months in Scotland?

(Multi answer)

- Birds and other animals in woodlands
- Flowers and other plants in woodlands
- Forests and woodlands as places to visit
- Forests and woodlands helping to tackle climate change
- Community woodlands
- Woods in and around towns, new local woods, improved local access to woods
- Tree planting
- Tree pests and diseases
- Wood for fuel, short rotation coppice
- Loss of ancient or native woodlands
- Restoration of ancient or native woodlands
- Creation of new native woodlands

- Public rights of access to woodlands
- Protests about roads or other developments on woodlands
- Labelling/certification of wood products
- Farmers and crofters integrating trees on their land
- Other (please specify)
- None of these

## Q2 [All]

In Scotland, public money is given to plant new woodland and to manage existing woodland for public benefit. This includes funding from Government and local authorities.

In your opinion, for which of the following reasons, if any, should public money be used to create new woodland and/or manage existing woodland?

(Multi answer)

- To support the economy in rural areas
- To provide timber for sawmills and wood processing
- To provide renewable energy including wood as fuel
- So that Scotland can buy less wood products from abroad
- To help tackle climate change
- To provide places for wildlife to live
- To provide places for recreation (such as walking, cycling, horse-riding)
- To provide places for relaxation and stress release
- To provide places for families to play
- To provide places for learning
- To improve the countryside landscape

- To improve the appearance of towns and cities
- To restore former industrial land
- None of these

### Q3 [All]

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the ways in which forests and woodlands in Scotland can impact on climate change?

(1 Strongly agree, 2 Agree, 3 Neither agree nor disagree, 4 Disagree, 5 Strongly disagree)

- 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, oil 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, steel and plastics
- Scotland 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

#### Q4 [All]

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding how Scottish forests and woodlands should be managed in response to the threat of climate change?

(1 Strongly agree, 2 Agree, 3 Neither agree nor disagree, 4 Disagree, 5 Strongly disagree)

- 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
- 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

#### Q5 [All]

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

(Single answer)

- Yes (Go to Q6)
- No (Go to Q8)

#### Q6 [Ask if answered yes to Q5]

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

(Single answer)

- Main fuel



- Something else (specify)

#### Q7 [Ask if answered yes to Q5]

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 (specify)

#### Q8 [Ask if answered no to Q5]

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

(Single answer)

- Never thought about it
- Happy with the existing system
- Concerned about costs
- Not practical for my property
- Concerned about efficiency
- Concerned about ease of use
- Concerned about environmental issues
- Do not own property
- Lack of local help/suppliers
- Do not own property
- Other, please specify

### Q9 [All]

How often, would you like to visit forests and woodlands in the next 12 months?

(Single answer)

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

### Q10 [All]

In the last 12 months, how often on average have you visited forests or woodlands for walks, picnics or other recreation?

(Single answer)

- More than once per day
- Every day
- Several times a week
- Once a week
- Once or twice a month
- Once every 2-3 months
- Once or twice
- Never

### Q11a [All]

How has the number of visits you have taken to forests or woodlands changed in the last 12 months?

(Single answer)

- I have visited forests or woodlands more often than usual
- The number of visits I have taken to forests or woodlands is about the same as usual
- I have visited forests or woodlands less often than usual

### Q11b [Ask if answer to Q10 is not 'Never']

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

(Single answer)

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

### Q12 [Ask if answer to Q10 is not 'Never']

How much time did you spend on-site during your last visit to a forest or woodland?

(Single answer)

- Less than 1 hour
- 1 – 2 hours
- 2 – 3 hours
- 4 – 5 hours
- 5 – 8 hours

- 8 hours or more

Q13 [Ask if answer to Q10 is not 'Never']

In which, if any, of the following activities did you engage in during your last visit to a forest or woodland?

(Multi answer)

- Walking
- Running/ jogging
- Cycling
- Horse riding
- Swimming
- Other
- None of the above

Q14 [Ask if answer to Q14 is not 'none of these']

For how long did you engage in each of the activities you did on your last visit to a forest or woodland?

(Single answer for each activity selected in the previous question)

Activity	1-15 minutes	16-30 minutes	31-60 minutes	1-2 hours	2-3 hours	3-5 hours	5 hours or more
Walking							
Running/jogging							
Cycling							
Horse riding							
Swimming							

### Q15 [All]

Please answer the following question on the basis of your general feelings (not your present state). Overall, how satisfied are you with life nowadays on a scale of 0 to 10? Where 0 denotes not at all satisfied and 10 denotes completely satisfied.

(Single answer)

- 0 = Dissatisfied
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10 = Satisfied

### Q16 [All]

Please answer the following question on the basis of your general feelings (not your present state). How would you rate the level that best describes your general health on a scale of 1 to 10? 1 denotes poor health and 10 denotes good health.

(single answer)

- 1 = Poor health
- 2

- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10 = Good health

### Q17 [All]

How healthy or not do you generally feel when spending time outdoors in forests and woodlands on a scale of 1 to 10 - where 1 denotes poor health and 10 denotes good health?

(Single answer)

- 1 = Poor health
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10 = Good healthy

### Q18 [All]

Now thinking specifically about woodlands and forests you have visited and why they are important to you personally, please tell me how strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements. Woodlands and forests are important to me because...

(1 Strongly agree, 2 Agree, 3 Neither agree nor disagree, 4 Disagree, 5 Strongly disagree)

- 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

### Q19 [Ask if answer to Q10 is not 'Never']

What aspects of health and wellbeing do you feel benefit from visiting woodlands and the outdoors?

(Multi answer)

- Physical health: through increased exercise and physical activity
- Mental health: through relaxation, stress relief and improved mood
- Social health and wellbeing: through meeting other people/spending time with people and/or talking with family or friends
- None of these

## Q20 [All]

Would you like to have more, less or about the same woodland in your local area?

(Single answer)

- More (Go to Q21)
- Neither more nor less (Go to Q22)
- Less (Go to Q22)
- Don't know (Go to Q22)

## Q21 [Ask if answered "More" to Q20.]

Where do you think new woodlands should be created?

(Multi answer)

- Urban and industrial areas
- Intensively farmed areas
- Uplands
- Other (specify)
- Don't know

## Q22 [All]

Have you and/or your family attended any of the following organised learning activities or events to do with woodlands in the last 12 months?

(Multi answer)

- A school visit
- A guided walk or talk
- An event at a woodland visitor centre



- Another learning event
- Other (specify)
- None of these

### Q23 [All]

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

(1 Strongly agree, 2 Agree, 3 Neither agree nor disagree, 4 Disagree, 5 Strongly disagree)

- Everyone should take action when visiting woodlands to help prevent the spread of damaging tree pests and diseases (e.g., by removing soil & plant material from footwear, clothing, bikes, buggies and dogs before their visit).
- There is very little that anyone can do to prevent the spread of damaging tree pests and diseases.
- 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.
- I understand what is meant by the term 'biosecurity'.

### Q24 [All]

Thinking about your nearest urban area (town or city) where you live or visit regularly, would you be prepared to support trees by...?

(Multi answer)

- Participating in community planting programmes
- Watering newly planted trees in public areas during periods of dry weather
- Accepting higher council taxes which will be used for community tree programmes

- Planting and tending trees in your garden or your communal residential area
- Monitoring the health and condition of public trees
- Raising concerns with the Local Authority if you notice a problem with trees
- None of the above

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