



Forestry England

The Forestry England Woodland Partnership

A leasehold scheme creating new
woodlands across England

The Forestry England Woodland Partnership – creating new woodlands that work for us all

The Forestry England Woodland Partnership is a leasehold scheme creating new woodlands across England in partnership with private and public landowners.

Supporting government plans for woodland creation and nature recovery, the partnership offers a commercial rent to landowners, with Forestry England responsible for designing, planting and managing every woodland.

If you're a new or established landowner, a farmer, a public body or a land agent acting on behalf of landowners, with a minimum of 50 hectares of land suitable for woodland creation, this scheme offers an opportunity to diversify your business and bring significant environmental and community benefits.



The woodlands we create will provide thriving habitats for wildlife. © Simon Bound

The benefits for you



A guaranteed rental income without the need for significant investment

We will negotiate with you to agree a commercially competitive rent based upon agreed objectives and in many cases benchmarked against support payments. As a landowner, you will receive a guaranteed annual rent for 60 to 120 years.



An expert partner

As England's largest land manager, with 1,500 woods and forests in our care, Forestry England has the expertise and resources to design, plant and manage resilient and thriving woodlands. We will provide the staff, knowledge and forestry machinery needed to turn your land from its current use into healthy, established woodland and carry the costs of this work.

Every woodland we create will support nature recovery. © Simon Bound



The benefits for nature and the local community



Thriving habitats for wildlife

Each woodland will contribute to nature recovery across the wider landscape. We'll carefully consider the site design to protect and improve existing habitats, and create new habitats to provide crucial corridors and stepping stones through the landscape for wildlife.



Ecosystem services for your land and the wider landscape

Woodlands provide a wide range of ecosystem services including carbon storage, helping mitigate soil erosion and flooding, and improving soil health and air quality. We'll choose sites which have the greatest potential to provide these services, which will benefit your land and the wider environment.



Public access for health and wellbeing

These woodlands will be places for people of all ages to enjoy and explore. Every new woodland will have public access, providing health and wellbeing opportunities to communities.



Woodlands provide a wide range of ecosystem services. © Wild Ennerdale

From application to thriving woodland: the steps involved

Application:



Applying for a Forestry England Woodland Partnership lease is a free and quick process, and you are under no obligation to proceed further.

Selection:



If we select your site for negotiation, you'll find out quickly, usually within six to eight weeks of applying.

Site visits:



We'll arrange site visits to develop a design and carry out surveys.

Option and lease agreements:



As we develop our designs for these woodlands, we will negotiate the commercial terms of the lease. We will enter an option agreement with you to allow us to make the investment in planning the woodland. This is the longest part of the process as we compile detailed surveys to ensure our schemes protect and improve nature on each site. When this is completed, we'll apply for consent to create these woodlands from the Forestry Commission, who are responsible for licensing and regulating new woodlands. Once we have this, we will sign the lease.

Woodland creation:



Following the completion of the lease and approval to plant, we will start creating the woodland. As well as using traditional planting techniques, we'll use methods such as natural colonisation. We will incorporate species trials and seed orchards into some of these woodlands to support the development of resilient woodlands in the future.

Phases of growth:



In the first years following woodland creation you'll see regular visits from Forestry England as we care for the growing woodland. We'll replace trees that have failed, and protect them by controlling weeds, deer and grey squirrels. We'll maintain footpaths and talk to the communities visiting our woodlands. And we'll do regular habitat surveys to make sure these woodlands are delivering the benefits we want.

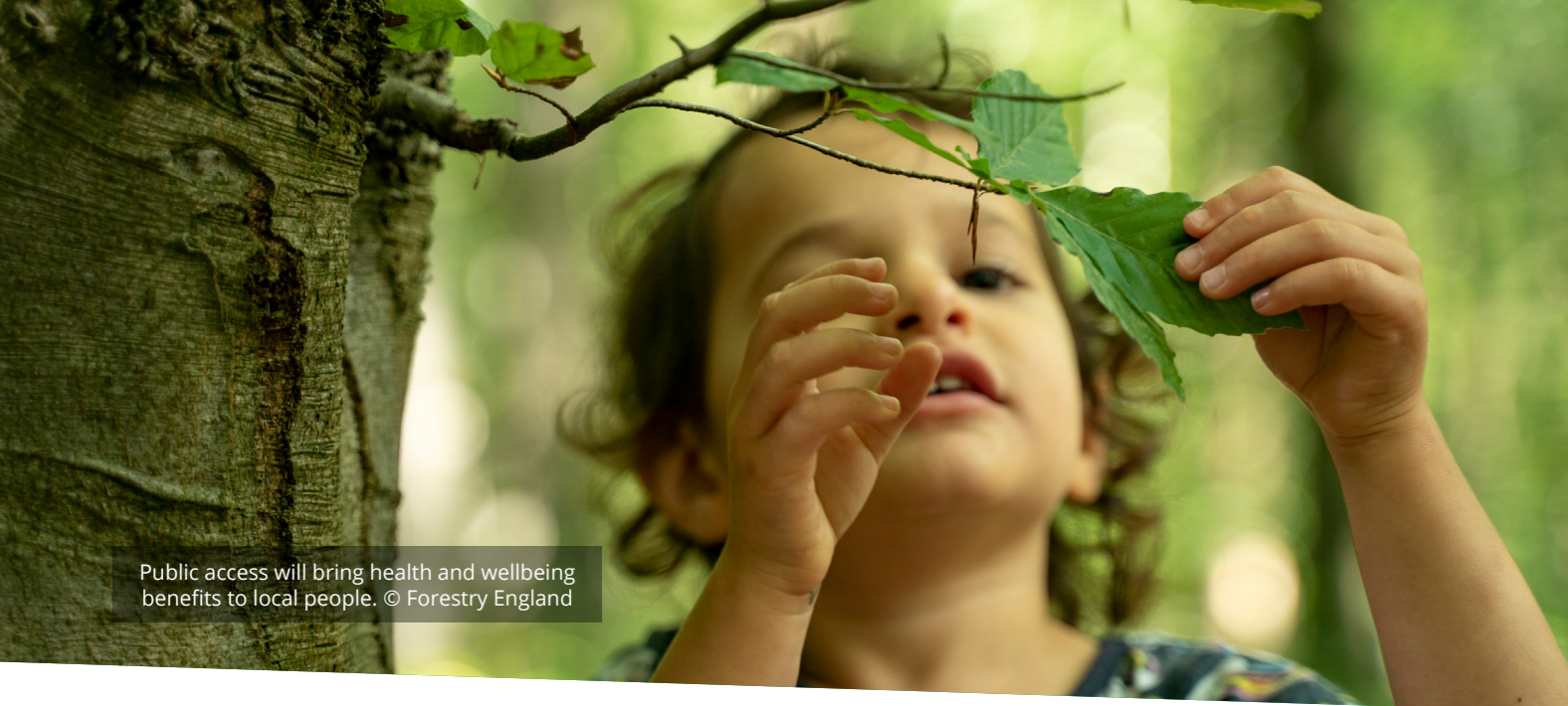
As these woodlands mature, we'll start to manage the site for timber, initially by selectively thinning the trees, and later harvesting mature specimens and replanting in line with our agreed forest plan.

How to apply

You can apply through the Forestry England website and we will ask you information about the site including its current use, any special designations, and when it is available for ground preparation and tree planting:
forestryengland.uk/woodland-creation

Get in touch

To find out more and discuss whether your land is suitable, contact Forestry England's Woodland Creation Team:
woodland.creation@forestryengland.uk



Public access will bring health and wellbeing benefits to local people. © Forestry England

Our partnership in practice – your questions

What kind of woodland will be planted on my land?

We'll create detailed, individual plans for every woodland and plant a mix of tree species. Most of these will be broadleaved trees, resilient to climate change, pests and diseases. The woodlands we create will provide thriving habitats for wildlife as well as inspiring places for local people to enjoy. We'll work with you as well as consulting other local stakeholders, but we'll design and manage each woodland so that it is a good fit as part of the nation's forests.

How do I know if my land is suitable?

To be eligible, you must have a land parcel of at least 50 hectares and tell us when you apply whether there are particular designations for the land. Forestry England believes in 'the right tree in the right place' and some designations may mean planting woodland is not appropriate. We can discuss this with you when you apply if you are unsure.

How much will I get paid in rent?

The rate will vary according to each site but is roughly benchmarked against existing agricultural support payments to ensure that this is an attractive option to diversify your business.

There is no need for you to make any significant financial investment. Your time to apply and any advice you need to negotiate the lease are the only costs you'll bear.

What will happen at the end of the lease?

We are asking for leases of between 60 and 120 years and hope there will be opportunities to renew some of the leases at the end of the term. Although it's impossible to say what rules might govern woodland management so far in the future, we'd expect you to retain the woodland when our lease ends. You will have been consulted on woodland design for the duration of the lease. When our lease ends you will take over the stewardship of high-quality, well-managed woodlands.

Is public access compulsory?

Yes, this is an important priority and all woodlands created under The Forestry England Woodland Partnership will allow public access, offering local people a chance to spend time in them and improve their health and wellbeing.

Can I apply with other landowners?

Yes, as long as the lease and signing can be done efficiently, and the land meets the 50-hectare minimum you can propose a site covering several ownerships.

Where does the funding come from for this scheme?

The Forestry England Woodland Partnership is funded by the government's Nature for Climate Fund to support an increase in tree planting across the UK to 30,000 hectares per year by 2025.

Can I get income from selling timber from my woodland?

No, as part of active woodland management, we will need to harvest timber to promote healthy woodland growth. The income we generate from selling timber will be reinvested into our work caring for the nation's forests.

Can I get income from selling carbon credits or offset my own emissions?

This will be part of the negotiation if the agreed scheme meets required standards. As a minimum, we would like all our new sites to be validated by the Woodland Carbon Code.

How will each woodland be looked after?

It will be our responsibility to manage each woodland using expert woodland management practices. All of our forests and woodlands are certified to the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) licence code FSC-C123214 and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) licence code PEFC/16-40-1001 standards. Part of this management includes controlling deer and grey squirrels to ensure thriving woodlands and healthy mammal populations.

Can I apply with a smaller area than 50 hectares?

We ask for 50ha as a minimum because we're used to operating at scale and have the expertise, machinery, planting and management techniques to be efficient with large areas of land. This is best for nature too as we follow accepted principals that coherent and resilient ecological networks should be 'bigger, better and more joined up'. There are other schemes which support smaller scale woodland creation. You can find out more about these here:

www.gov.uk/guidance/create-woodland-overview



The scheme offers an opportunity to diversify your business. © Wild Ennerdale



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Forestry England

www.forestryengland.uk