

# Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators

Report for 2021-22

# Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators: Report for 2021-22 (First Release)

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## Introduction

The Forestry Commission publishes a range of key performance indicators (KPIs) to show our contribution towards forestry and woodlands in England and indicate trends in the wider forestry sector in England. The KPIs reflect our priorities to expand, protect, improve and connect England's woodlands. They display some of the contributions Forestry England makes to people, nature and the economy through the nation's forests. Our use of KPIs also reflects our commitment to evidence-based working and to ensuring that there is robust data available to the forestry sector to underpin policies and operational decisions. As such the KPIs reflect our strong commitment to deliver the Government's plans for the environment as set out in the 25 Year Environment Plan<sup>1</sup>, the England Trees Action Plan 2021-2024<sup>2</sup> and the Tree Health Resilience Strategy 2018<sup>3</sup>. This *Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators: Report 2021-22* provides our latest information.

We have recently reviewed and improved our KPIs to ensure that these remain good measures of the positive differences we are making in the real world. All the new suite of KPIs are reported here, and interim updates are published quarterly in our Headline Performance Updates where data are available.

We have added to Forest Services KPIs to pick up on key new areas and have made some changes to the suite of six headline indicators that we intend to report quarterly. Indicators that remain relevant have been enhanced and retained, and a small number of KPIs that are now less relevant removed.

The creation of Forestry England as a refreshed and re-energised organisation to care for the nation's forests and increase their value to society provided the opportunity to consider those KPIs. Assessment of the existing KPIs illustrated that they needed to be updated to better reflect the current purpose of the organisation and connect better to the operational decision making of the business. With guidance from the Forestry England Board and Executive Team a new Performance Evaluation Framework was developed.

Within the Framework, the KPIs published within this report are those measures that relate to overall organisational purpose as well as key policy requirements. They are long-term measures, calculated and reported annually. This is the second year that this new suite of Forestry England KPIs has been used. The indicators will help monitor achievement of Forestry England's five-year plan, *Growing the future: 2021-26*<sup>4</sup>.

This report contains:

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<sup>1</sup> HM Government (2018) *A Green Future: Our Plan to Improve the Environment*, London: Defra, 151 pages at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan>

<sup>2</sup> UK Government (2021) *The England Trees Action Plan 2021-2024*, London: UK Government, 30 pages at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/england-trees-action-plan-2021-to-2024>

<sup>3</sup> Defra (2018) *Tree Health Resilience Strategy*, London: Defra, 63 pages at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tree-health-resilience-strategy-2018>

<sup>4</sup> Forestry England (2021) *Growing the future: 2021-26*, Bristol: Forestry England, 18 pages, at <https://www.forestryengland.uk/growing-the-future>

- Part 1: Forest Services headline key performance indicators, from page 12.
- Part 2: Forestry England headline key performance indicators, from page 24.
- Part 3: Other Forest Services indicators, from page 32.

We publish:

- Updates on the six headline Forest Services indicators quarterly<sup>5</sup>.
- Updates on the six headline Forestry England indicators annually.
- Reports on the full suite of Forestry Commission indicators, 38 in all, annually.

The coverage of all the indicators is England. Most of the indicators are based on statistical and geographical analysis of Forestry Commission administrative data, the National Forest Inventory, surveys conducted and commissioned for us by the Forest Research Statistics team, and data available from other parts of Defra Group and other data collections.

This is an Official Statistics publication, produced with a view to meeting the standards of the *Code of Practice for Statistics* (Office for Statistics Regulation and UK Statistics Authority, 2022). The Government Internal Audit Agency have assured the latest and previous annual out-turn statistics.

See the [Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators web pages on GOV.UK](#) for other reports in this statistical series.

This Forestry Commission report is based on a wide range of contributions from our senior managers, indicator managers and data managers as well as our statistical and geospatial analysts.

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16 June 2022

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<sup>5</sup> Available from the Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators webpage:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/forestry-commission-corporate-plan-performance-indicators>

# Short term trends in the indicators

## Method of assessment

A proper review of this *Indicators Report 2021-22* is best made by reading each report in full, ideally alongside other contextual information on that aspect of the forestry sector. To provide a summary, however, we also provide a simple assessment of short-term trends in each indicator. These show change in the indicator over time. They do not show whether the indicator has reached any actual or implied targets nor whether the current status is 'good' or 'bad'.

This assessment is a simple one made only by comparing the difference between the value of the indicator in the most recent single year for which data is available with the data for five years earlier. They do not account for unusual year(s) nor reflect fluctuations during intervening years. The assessment is made against a simple standard 'rule of thumb' threshold of 3% per 5-year period; see Table 1.

**Table 1: Short term assessment categories and what they represent**

Category of short-term trend	Threshold
Improving	>3% positive change over 5 years
Little or no overall change	Less than 3% change over 5 years
Deteriorating	>3% negative change over 5 years
Not assessed due to insufficient comparable data	Not applicable

Note: In many cases 'little or no overall change' is actually reported where strong performances have been maintained.

For some indicators we do not yet have a time series covering at 5 years. In these cases the assessment covers the longest period available: 1, 2, 3 or 4 years. If change exceeds at least 1% per annum the direction of change is given simply as an acknowledgement of very recent trends and as a possible early indication of a more substantive direction of change that may be found at a later date. These assessments therefore need to be treated with special caution.

The approach is simplistic but broadly consistent in principle with the more sophisticated approach used for the [UK Biodiversity Indicators](#) (Defra, 2022).

Where the above approach is not feasible, trends have been assessed by a sensible comparison with our measure of 'what success looks like' for that indicator.

Readers are recommended not to place much weight on the simple trend assessments alone, and rather to consider the entire report for each indicator presented elsewhere in this document.

Table 2: Short term trends in the indicators

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Short-term trend<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>Part 1. Forest Services Headline Key Performance Indicators</b>		
<b>Expanding</b>		
Area of woodland in England	Marginal increase	12
New planting of woodland and trees in England	Improving	14
<b>Improving</b>		
Percentage of woodland that is sustainably managed	Little change	18
Percentage of the annual growth of trees in English woodlands that is a harvested	Deteriorating	20
<b>Protecting</b>		
Number of additional tree pests and diseases becoming established in England within a rolling 10-year period	Deteriorating	21
Percentage of known tree felling carried out with Forestry Commission approval	Little change	23

Note 1: See page 5 for the method of assessment of short-term trends in the indicators. A fuller version of the short-term trend category labels are shown in the method of assessment.

**Table 2: Short term trends in the indicators continued**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Short-term trend<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>Part 2. Forestry England Headline Key Performance Indicators</b>		
Land area of the nation's forests held by Forestry England	Little change	24
Total natural capital value of the nation's forests	Improving	26
Public engagement: Number of visits per annum to the nation's forests managed by Forestry England	Improving	27
Percentage of Forestry England's income that is self-generated	Improving	28
Health and safety: Number of work-related accidents per 100 employees in Forestry England	Improving	30
Health and safety: Number of accidents per 100,000 visits to the main visitor hubs in the nation's forests	Improving	31

Note 1: See page 5 for the method of assessment of short-term trends in the indicators. A fuller version of the short-term trend category labels are shown in the method of assessment.

**Table 2: Short term trends in the indicators continued**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Short-term trend<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Page</b>	
<b>Part 3. Forest Services Indicators (other than Headline Indicators)</b>			
<b>Expanding and connecting our trees and woodland</b>			
<b>Expanding</b>			
Net change in woodland area, based on the balance between new planting of woodland, and woodland removal	Improving	32	
Percentage of new planting of woodland in England that is broadleaved woodland	Not assessed	35	
Area of tree cover outside woodland in England	Not assessed	36	
<b>Connecting</b>			
Connectivity of woodland in England	Little change	37	
<b>Trees and woodland as a part of the green economy</b>			
Natural capital value of England's woodlands	Not assessed	37	
Gross Value Added from domestic forestry	Improving	39	
Volume of timber brought to market per annum from English sources	Deteriorating	40	
Number of apprentices, those with work based diplomas, and university students entering forestry	Apprentices and those with work-based diplomas	Improving	41
	University students	Deteriorating	41
Forest Services' training support for the English forestry sector (hours of training events)	Improving (note 2)	43	
Carbon captured by English woodlands	Little change	44	
Projected carbon capture in 2050 by Woodland Carbon Code woodland creation projects	Little change (note 2)	45	

Note 1: See page 5 for the method of assessment of short-term trends in the indicators. A fuller version of the short-term trend category labels are shown in the method of assessment.

Note 2: The short-term trend assessment of this indicator covers less than 5 years; treat with more caution.



**Table 2: Short term trends in the indicators continued**

<b>Indicator</b>		<b>Short-term trend<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>Part 3. Other Forest Services Indicators continued</b>			
<b>Protecting and improving our trees and woodland</b>			
Woodland ecological condition in England using information from the National Forest Inventory		Not assessed	47
Percentage of woodland Sites of Special Scientific Interest (by land area) in desired condition in England	Favourable or unfavourable recovering condition	Improving	50
	Favourable condition	Little change	50
Hectares of restoration of plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS) and of open habitat in woodland in England	PAWS	Deteriorating	51
	Open habitat	Improving	51
Measure of what is happening to the number and variety of species that live in woodland; using Woodland Birds data		Little change	52
Number of high priority forest pests in the UK Plant Health Risk Register (UKPHRR)		Deteriorating	54
Area of woodland in England that is certified as sustainably managed		Deteriorating	59
Area of felling licenses issued		Improving	60
<b>Connecting people with trees and woodlands</b>			
Percentage of adults in England who visited a woodland or forest		Little change	62
Percentage of people in Priority Places close to accessible woodland in England		Deteriorating	63

Note 1: See page 5 for the method of assessment of short-term trends in the indicators. A fuller version of the short-term trend category labels are shown in the method of assessment.

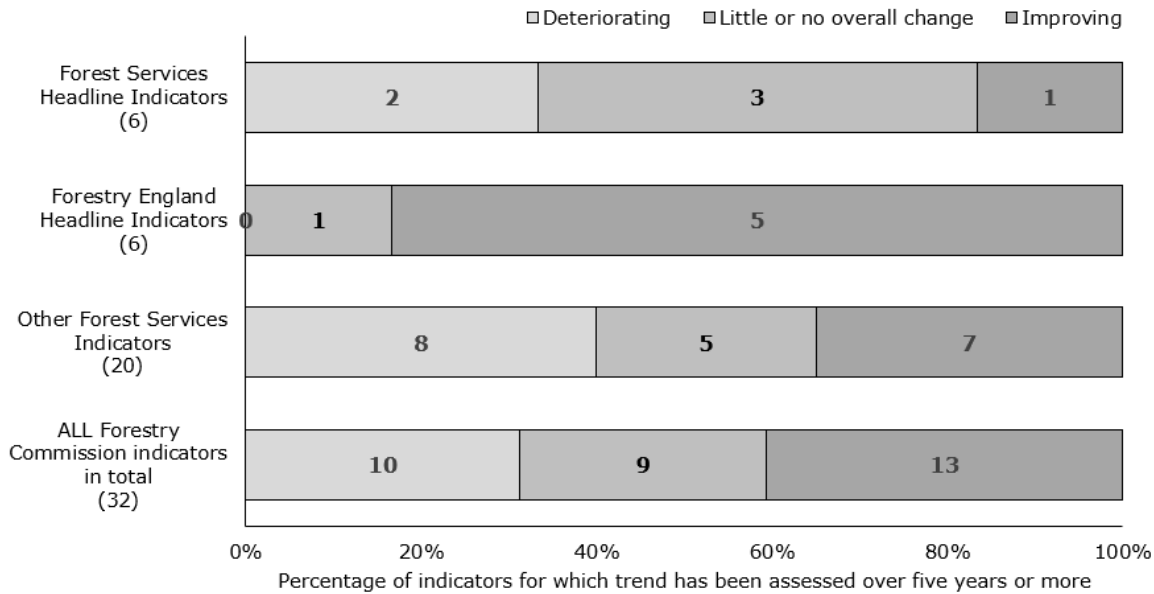
Table 2: Short term trends in the indicators continued

Indicator	Short-term trend <sup>1</sup>	Page
<b>Part 3. Other Forest Services Indicators continued</b>		
<b>Organisational health</b>		
Percentage of grant and felling license transactions completed on time or early	Deteriorating	64
Percentage of Forest Services grants and felling license customers who report their customer satisfaction as either very satisfied or satisfied	Improving	65
Number of work-related accidents per 100 employees (headcount) in Forest Services	Improving	66

Note 1: See page 5 for the method of assessment of short-term trends in the indicators. A fuller version of the short-term trend category labels are shown in the method of assessment.

There are 32 Forestry Commission indicators (out of 38 indicators reported in total) which trend has been assessed over a period of 5 years or more, and for which this simple assessment is more useful (see Figure 1). See page 5 for the method of assessment of short-term trends.

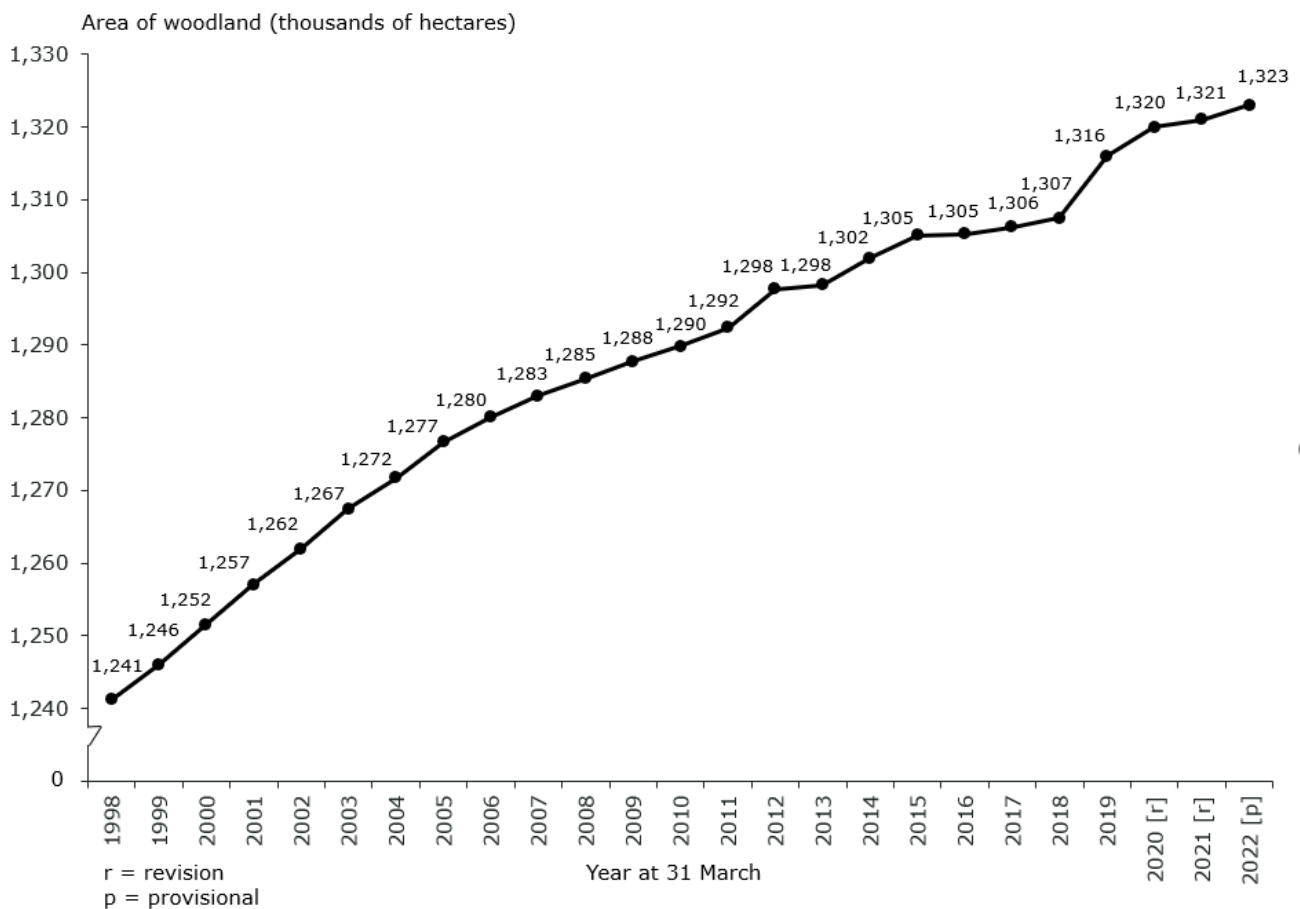
**Figure 1: Summary assessment of short-term trends in the Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators at 31 March 2022**



# Part 1. Forest Services Headline Key Performance Indicators

## Expansion of woodland

### Area of woodland in England

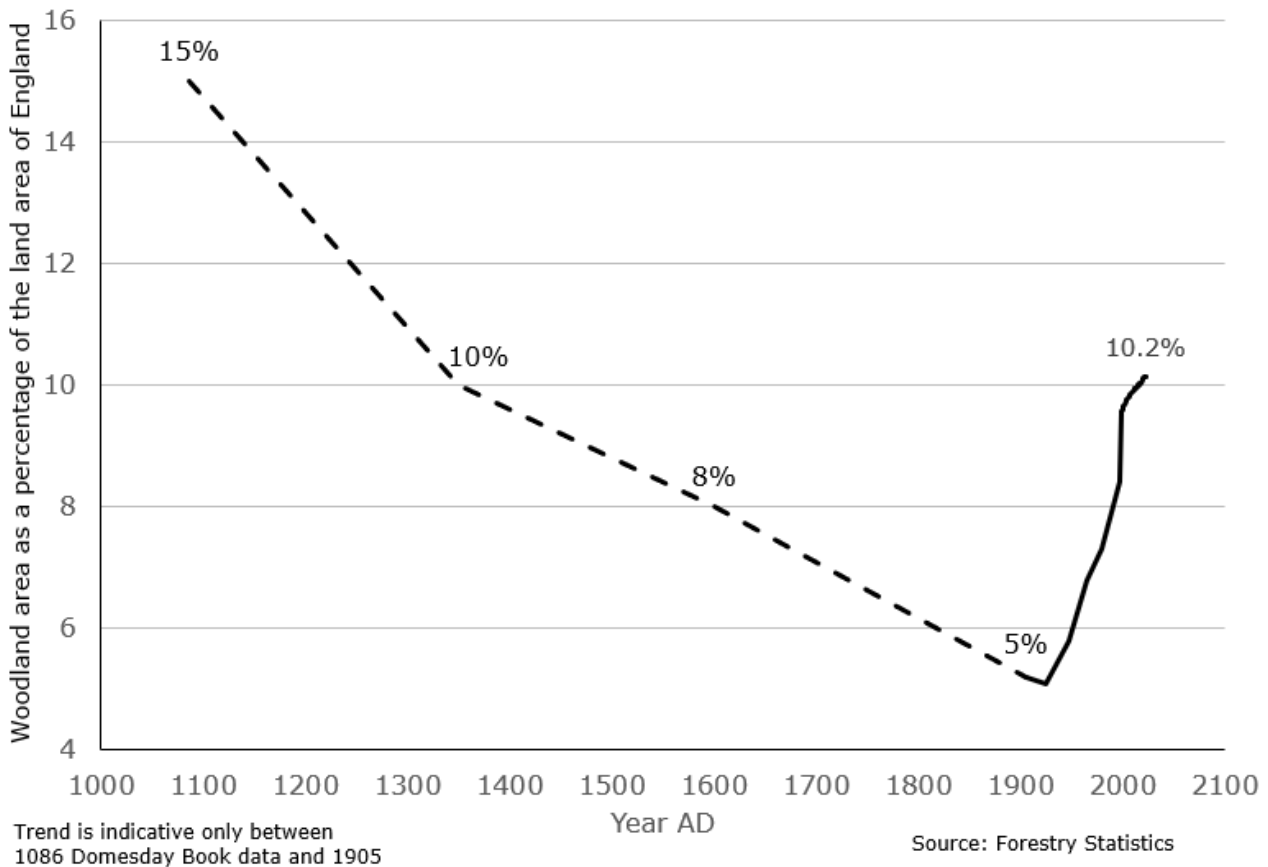


Source: [Forestry Statistics 2021](#) and [Provisional Woodland Statistics 2022](#) (Forest Research), based mainly on the [National Forest Inventory](#) and Forestry Commission administrative data.

The area of woodland in England is 1,323 thousand hectares (10.2% of the land area) at 31 March 2022 (provisional statistics). This statistic is scheduled to be confirmed in Forestry Statistics 2022 (published by Forest Research) later in the year. The March 2022 figure is an increase of 2 thousand hectares on the previous year.

Woodland area figures at March 2020 and March 2021 have been revised from those published in Forestry Statistics 2021 to take account of updates to the National Forest Inventory.

Figure 2: Long-term trend in woodland as a percentage of land area of England

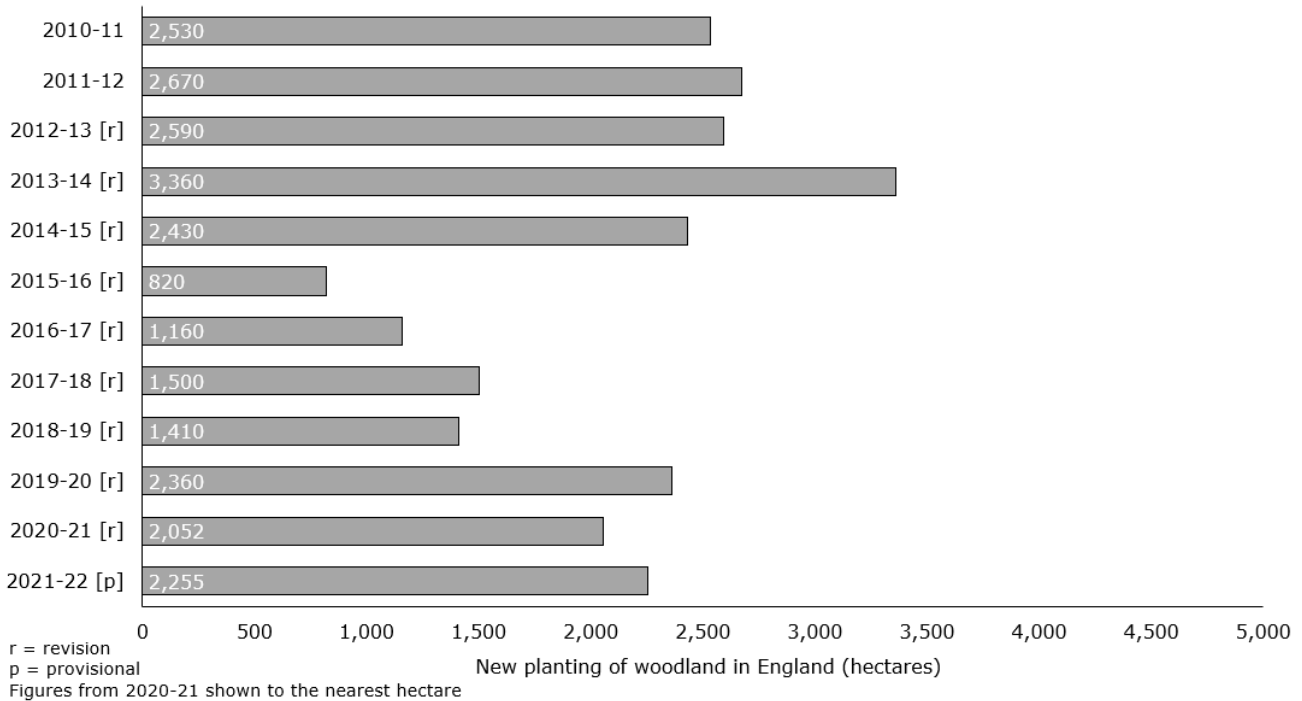


#### Assessment of change in: Area of woodland

Five-year trend, 31-Mar-22 compared to 31-Mar-17

Marginal increase in woodland area

## New planting of woodland and trees in England



Source: [Forestry Statistics 2021](#) and [Provisional Woodland Statistics 2022](#) (Forest Research) and Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators.

A total of 2,255 hectares of new woodland planting was recorded in England in 2021-22. Of this, Government funding supported the planting of 2,022, corresponding to about 3.4 million trees. New delivery mechanisms supported by the Nature for Climate fund, including the England Woodland Creation Offer launched this year and the Community Forests Trees for Climate Programme launched in 2020-21, played a significant new contribution. Other contributions have come with support from the Woodland Carbon Fund, the High Speed 2 Woodland Fund, Forestry England, the Environment Agency, the National Forest Company, and the Northern Forest partnership.

The FC's main grant offers (Countryside Stewardship woodland creation grant and English Woodland Creation Offer) supported the creation of 609 hectares of woodland. This is only about 85% of the area planted the previous year, reflecting the transition between the two schemes and the introduction of new alternative delivery mechanisms for woodland creation funded by the Nature for Climate Fund.

In 2021-22 the Woodland Carbon Fund and Countryside Stewardship Woodland Creation Grant closed to new applications and, although the England Woodland Creation Offer has been widely welcomed and the pipeline of applications is strong, it funded a relatively small area of new planting during the financial year 2021-22. This is because the

planting season 2021-22 extended beyond March 2022, and because some of the planting will take place in the planting season 2022-23. Therefore, projects that were planted in 2021-22 but did not submit claims in time to meet the reporting deadline will be reported in 2022-23.

In addition to 2,255 ha of new woodland being planted in 2021-22, Government funding supported the planting of 577,000 trees outside woodland, with Countryside Stewardship, the Local Authority Treescapes Fund and the Community Forests the largest contributors.

Interest in new planting remains strong as evidenced by management information on the volume of applications to the England woodland Creation grant and woodland Creation Planning Grant.

**Table 3: New planting of woodland and trees in England, 2021-22**

<b>New planting of woodland</b>	<b>Area of woodland newly planted, 2021-22 (hectares)</b>	<b>Area of woodland newly planted, 2021-22 (equivalent in number of trees)</b>
<b>Government-supported</b>		
Countryside Stewardship woodland creation	528	915,000
England Woodland Creation Offer	81	149,000
Woodland Carbon Fund	371	849,000
High Speed 2 Woodland Fund	56	101,000
Forestry England	5	8,000
Countryside Stewardship: other tree planting options	86	137,000
Environment Agency	118	240,000
Northern Forest	150	168,000
National Forest Company	75	129,000
Ministry of Defence	..	..
National Highways	..	..
Community Forests	553	742,000
<b>Sub-total Government supported</b>	<b>2,022</b>	<b>3,436,000</b>
<b>Non-governmental organisations</b>		
Woodland Trust	234	331,000
<b>Total woodland</b>	<b>2,255 hectares of woodland</b>	<b>3,767,000 trees within woodland</b>
<b>New planting of trees outside woodland</b>	<b>(Approximate equivalent in hectares)</b>	<b>Individual trees newly planted (number)</b>
<b>Government-supported</b>		
Countryside Stewardship: single trees	181	289,000
Urban Tree Challenge Fund	16	25,000
Local Authority Treescapes Fund	99	159,000
Environment Agency	25	9,000
Northern Forest	21	24,000
National Forest Company	0	0
Community Forests	53	71,000
<b>Total trees outside woodland</b>	<b>Approx. 394 hectares</b>	<b>577,000 trees outside woodland</b>
<b>Total woodland and trees outside woodland</b>	<b>Approx. 2,650 hectares within and outside woodland</b>	<b>4,344,000 trees within and outside woodland</b>

Notes to Table 3 appear on the next page.



Notes to Table 3:

1. Statistics for woodland are for planting that meets the National Forest Inventory (NFI) definition of woodland, namely as land with a minimum area of 0.5 hectare under stands of trees, and tree crown cover of at least 20%, or the potential to achieve this. The minimum width for woodland is 20 metres.
2. Statistics for new planting of single trees outside woodland are known to be incomplete. The estimations of the equivalent land areas these might represent are approximations.
3. The density of tree planting, in numbers of trees planted per hectare of land, varies between planting schemes.
4. .. denotes no confirmed report of new planting is yet available.
5. Areas of woodland are rounded to the nearest hectare and tree numbers are approximate and rounded to the nearest 1,000 trees.
6. Statistics may not sum due to rounding.
7. The total for new planting in 2020-22 has been revised to 2,052 hectares following inclusion of more up-to-date information; details are available on request.
8. This indicator at present includes new planting of woodland that is either supported by Government or that supported by the Woodland Trust, and for which we have received records. It is anticipated that future reports will include other new planting of woodland and trees in England.

Assessment of change in: New planting of woodland and trees in England

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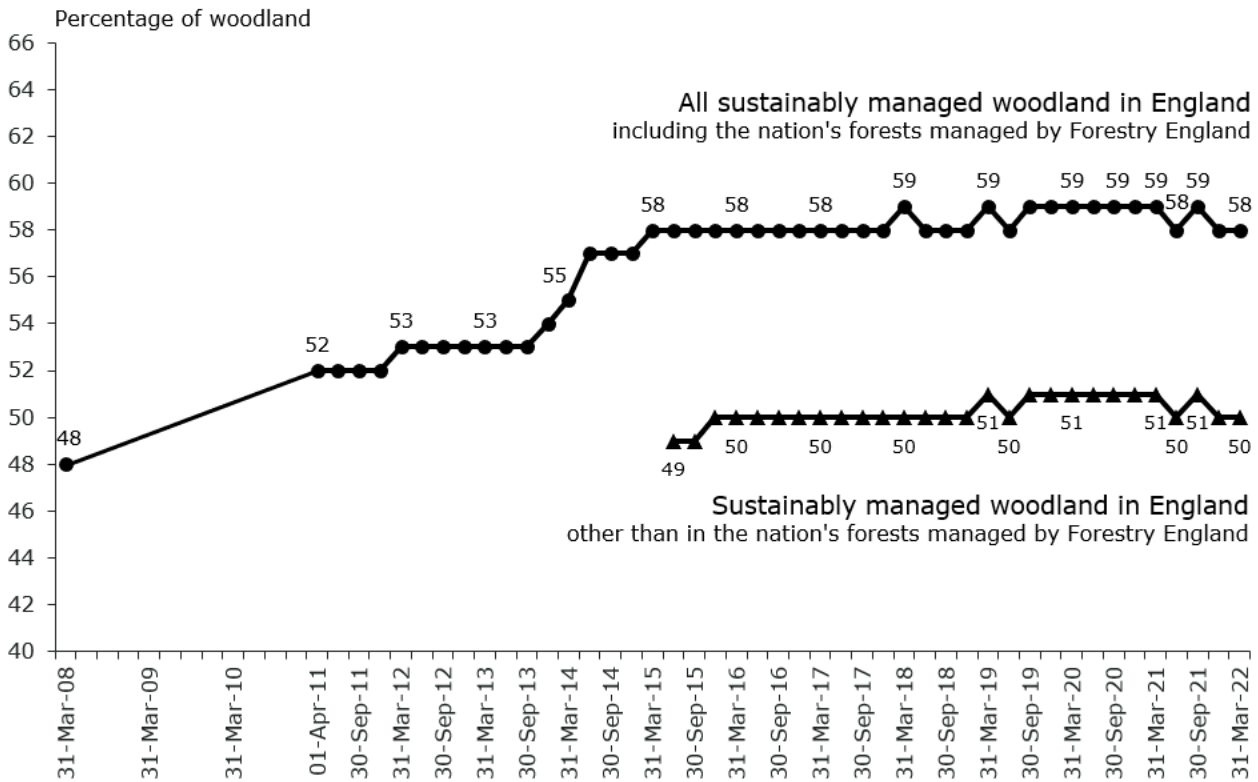
Five-year trend, 2021-22 compared to 2016-17

Improving

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## Improvement of woodland

### Percentage of woodland that is sustainably managed



Source: Forestry Commission administrative data and the [National Forest Inventory](#) (Forest Research).

As at 31 March 2022, 58% of all woodland in England was sustainably managed (ca. 765,000 hectares). The equivalent figure for woodland other than in the nation's forests was 50% (551,000 hectares).

Our definition of 'sustainably managed' is woodland managed to the UK Forestry Standard that has a Woodland Management Plan, or for which we have provided a grant or felling licence in the last 15 years. It also includes all woodland in the nation's forests managed by Forestry England and all woodland on Defence Infrastructure Organisation training areas. It is recognised that other woodland might be considered as managed as well, however, we do not have the data to include this.

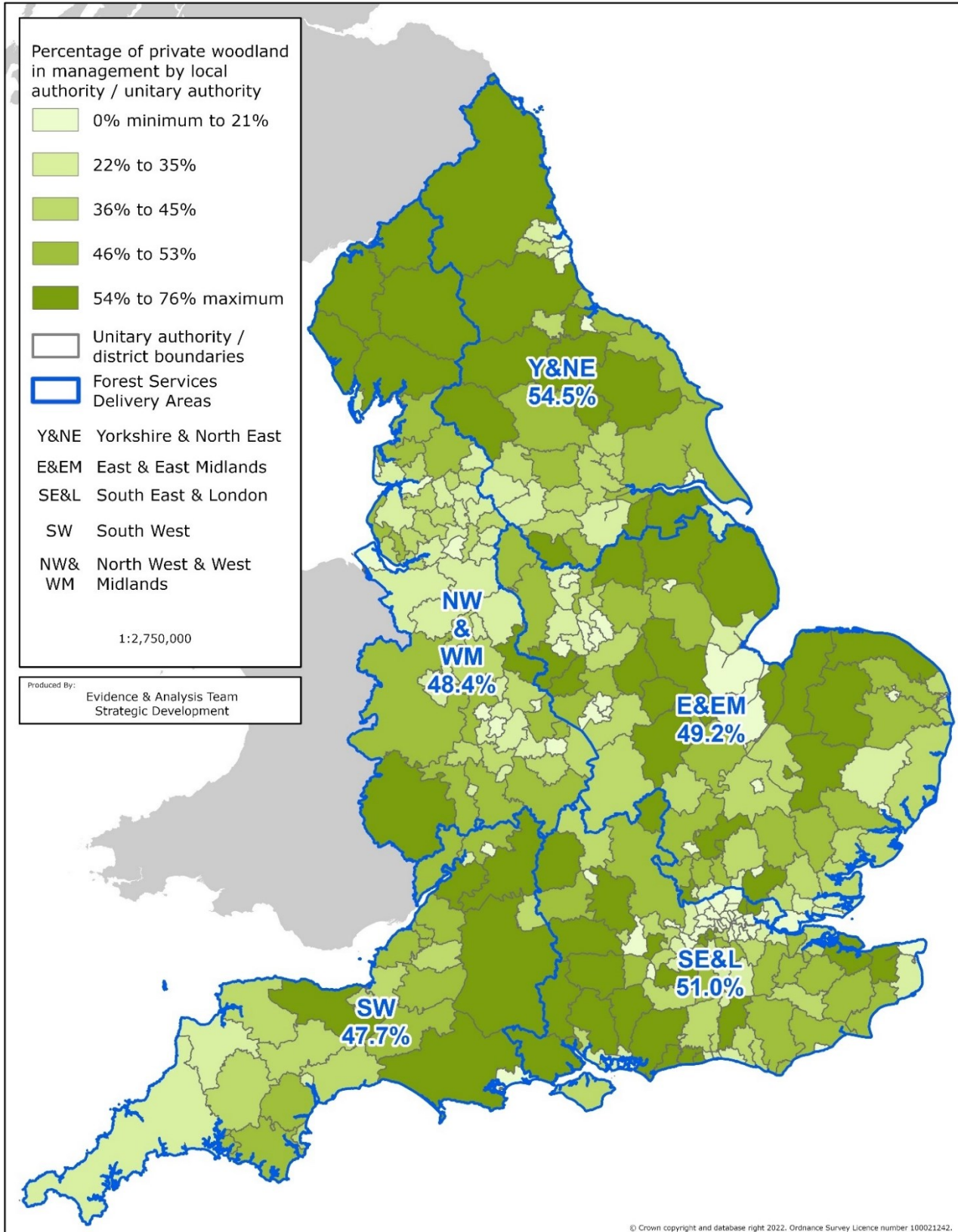
Demand for timber and timber products remains high, and there is scope to further increase the area of woodland sustainably managed to meet demand for UK grown timber and reduce England's reliance on timber imports in the face of global supply-chain uncertainties. Increasing woods into management will also help to improve woodland resilience in the light of climate change and increasing tree pest and disease pressure.

Assessment of change in: Percentage of all woodland that is sustainably managed

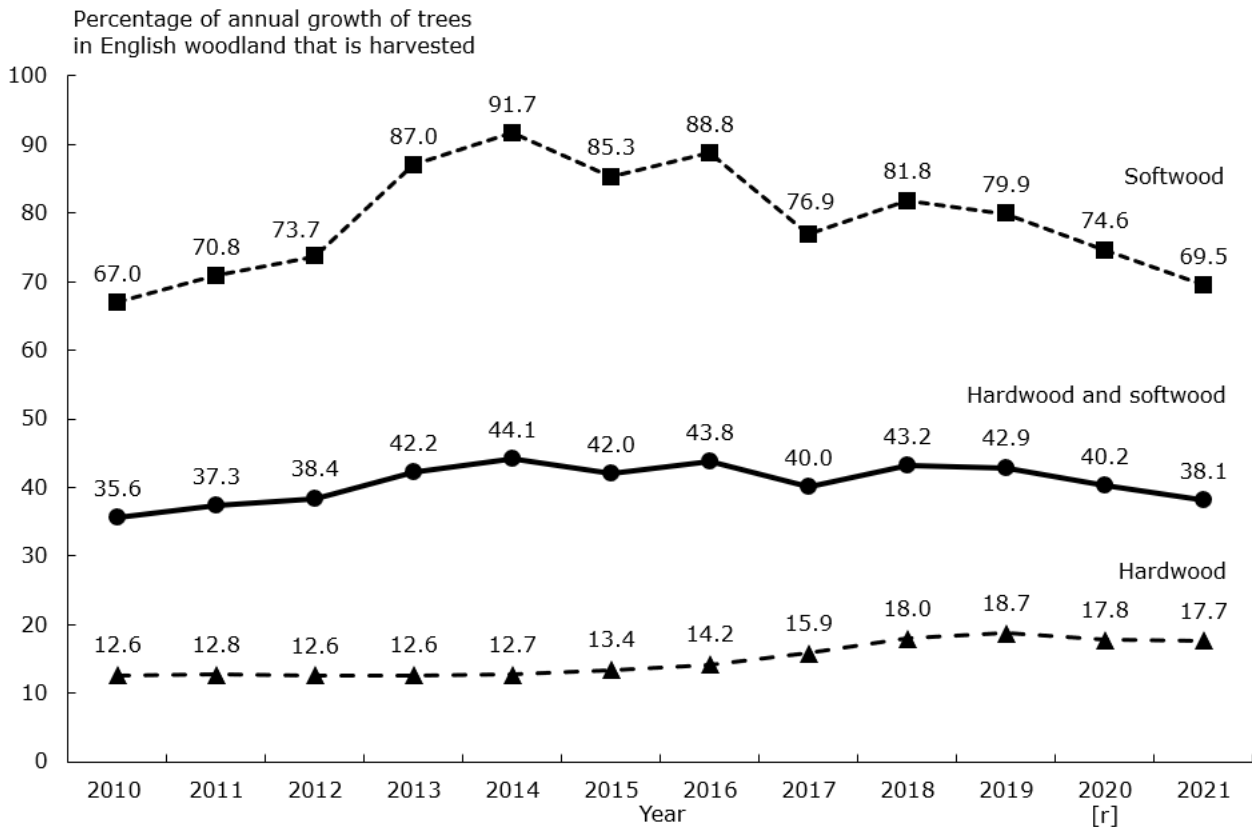
Five-year trend, 31-Mar-22 compared to 31-Mar-17

Little or no overall change

Map 1: Percentage of woodland in sustainable management other than that in the nation's forests managed by Forestry England, 31 March 2022.



## Percentage of the annual growth of trees in English woodlands that is harvested



Source: Forest Research statistics on [UK wood production and trade](#) and [National Forest Inventory](#) team forecasts.

There is an opportunity to considerably increase the hardwood harvest if new markets are developed. The Woods into Management Innovation Fund includes a Timber in Construction Innovation Fund that should help to develop and promote these new markets. The proportion of softwood annual increment that is harvested remains high (ca. 70%), reflecting strong demand as well as the age structure of the conifer woodland resource.

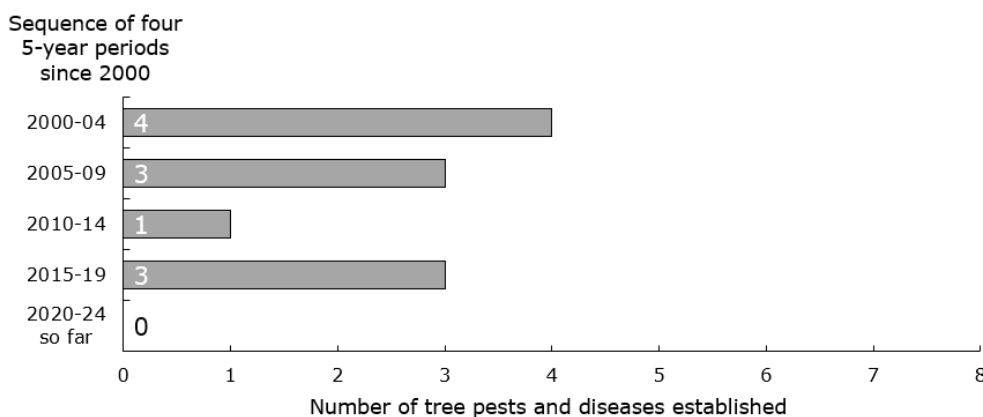
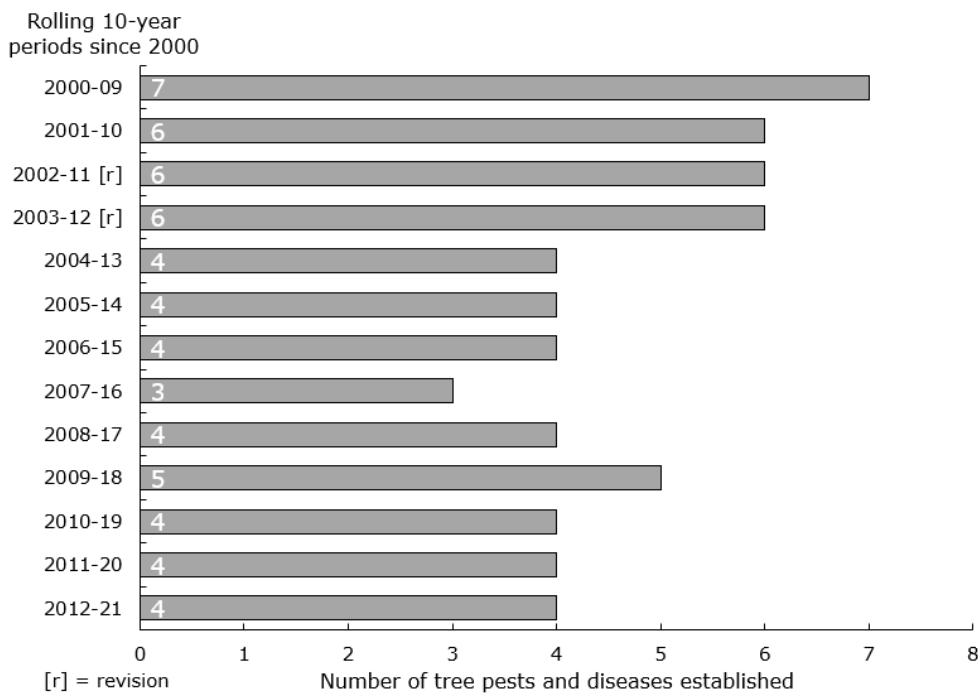
### Assessment of change in: Percentage of the annual growth of trees in English woodlands that is a harvested

Five-year trend, 2021 compared to 2016  
(hardwood and softwood element)

Deteriorating

## Protection of woodland

### Number of additional tree pests and diseases becoming established in England within a rolling 10-year period



Source: Forestry Commission administrative data.

The number of additional tree pests and diseases becoming established in England within a rolling 10-year period fell from a peak of seven in the 10-year period 2000-09 to a low of three in 2007-16.

In the most recent ten-year period (2012-22), four tree pests and diseases became 'established' in England:

1. Chalara Ash dieback (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*): This is present in most parts of the United Kingdom and continues to spread. The Forestry Commission continues to provide guidance, advice and support to landowners to aid management operations via the Local Authority Treescapes Fund (LATF).
2. Oriental chestnut gall wasp (*Dryocosmus kuriphilus*): The wasp population continues to spread and is now present at over 150 sites across southern England and the Midlands.
3. Sweet chestnut blight (*Cryphonectria parasitica*): Surveillance has continued across England to determine the extent of the disease, with a view to removing infected trees where possible, and whilst there have been no significant new findings the infection has re-emerged on several sites previously subject to statutory control measures.
4. Elm zigzag sawfly (*Aproceros leucopoda*): This continues to spread across a wide area of southeast England and the East Midlands. The full potential extent of its distribution is unknown, but the expectation is still that it will continue to spread and become a major competitor of other foliage-feeding species on elm trees.

Assessment of change in: Number of additional tree pests and diseases becoming established in England within a rolling 10-year period

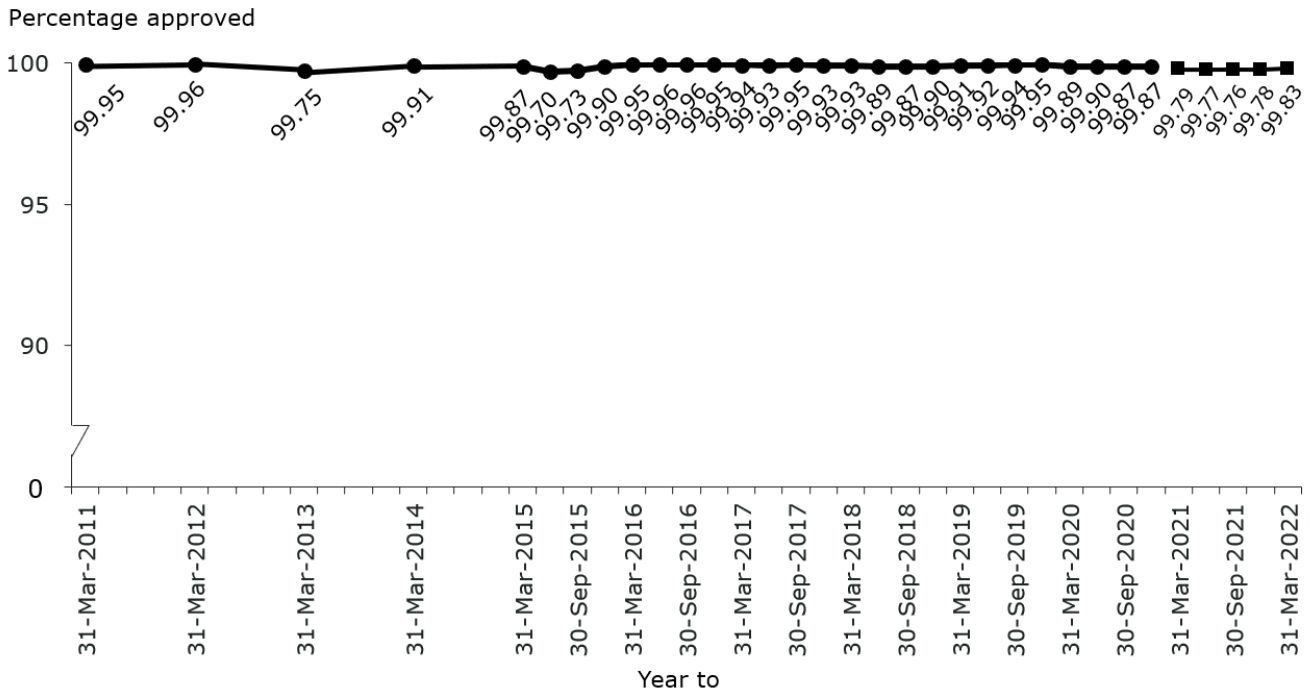
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Five-year trend, 2012-2021 compared to 2007-2016

Deteriorating

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## Percentage of known tree felling carried out with Forestry Commission approval



Source: Forestry Commission administrative data.

In the year to 31 March 2022, some 99.83% of known tree felling was carried out with Forestry Commission approval. This indicator is based on the date that a felling licence is approved, and so only accounts for known felling associated with those approvals. Previously, this metric was measured against felling applications received, and as such included metrics for a relatively small proportion of applications that were either amended, withdrawn, or refused.

Over recent years, the figures for tree felling where approval was sought has remained significantly greater than the known level of tree felling undertaken without Forestry Commission approval. However, we continue to see an increasing number of reports of unlicensed tree felling.

When we become aware of illegal felling, we gather relevant evidence to determine if an offence has been committed, and we take appropriate enforcement action where the evidence demonstrates this. We are currently bringing together an in-house enforcement investigation team to address the continuing increase in enforcement cases. Unlicensed tree felling is frequently, although not always, in anticipation of property development, and we continue to explore other means of changing behaviour in this sector to reverse this increasing trend.

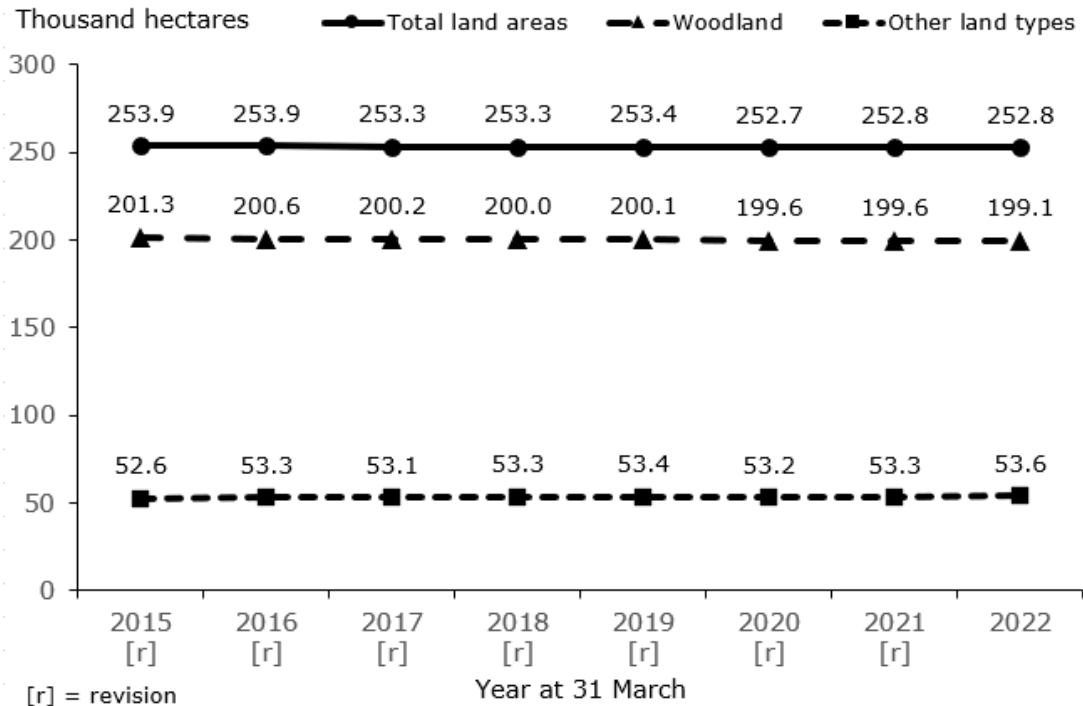
Assessment of change in: Percentage of known tree felling that is carried out with Forestry Commission approval

Five-year trend, 31-Mar-22 compared to 31-Mar-17

Little or no overall change

## Part 2. Forestry England Headline Key Performance Indicators

### Land area of the nation's forests held by Forestry England



Source: Forestry England administrative data.

The total area of the nation's forests - those forests which are owned freehold or through leasehold by Forestry England - has been maintained, with very little change since last year. 'Woodland' area has gone down by approximately 400 hectares in line with longer term trends, but this KPI rarely sees substantial annual change, and has broadly remained the same since 2014.

NOTE: 'Woodland' here is a broad category that includes some open spaces within woodlands (for example, recently clearfelled sites), rather than just those areas with current forest cover as of 31/03/2022. The chart shows the area in thousands of hectares. At the end of 2021 22 our total area is 252,785 hectares. Previous years' woodland and other land types areas have been adjusted due to an amendment in the method of calculation and rounding from the total land areas. The total land areas are unchanged.

Assessment of change in: Land area of the nation's forests held by Forestry England

Five-year trend, 31 March 2022 compared to 31 March 2017

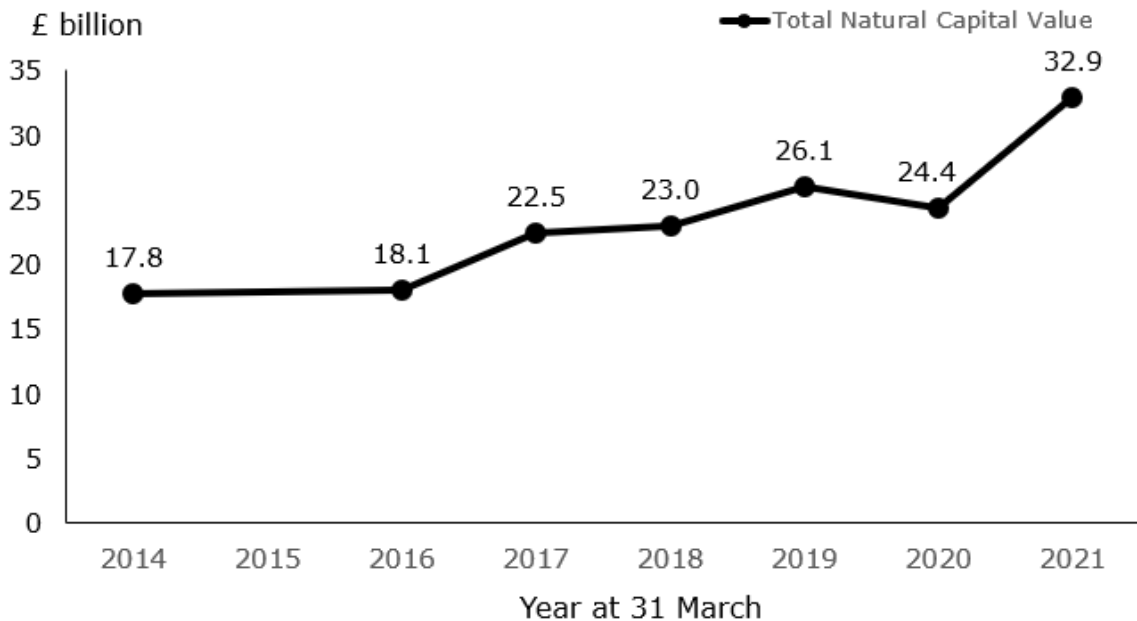
Little or no overall change



Map 2: Distribution of all woodland and woodland managed by Forestry England, March 2022



## Total natural capital value of the nation's forests



Source: [Forestry England Natural Capital Accounts](#) (Forestry England, 2021).

Note: These statistics were previously released in the Forestry England Natural Capital Accounts.

The total calculated natural capital value for the reporting year 2020-21 is £32.9 billion. Approximately £22 billion of this is due to recreation and public access, and £11 billion due to carbon sequestration. Due to the timing of producing our natural capital accounts, this figure is based on data from the previous financial reporting year, and so is always one year behind the Annual Report and Accounts. This year's increase is due largely to the change in the estimated visits number to the nation's forests within 2020-21. The 2020-21 estimated visit numbers saw a substantial increase compared to 2019-20 (see below), and because the natural capital value is primarily comprised of recreation and carbon sequestration, this has led to the large increase in natural capital accounts valuation.

NOTE: The natural capital accounts include monetary flow figures for each ecosystem service. The total natural capital value is the net present value projected across the next 50 years. The net value of the annual monetary account for 2020-21 is £842 million.

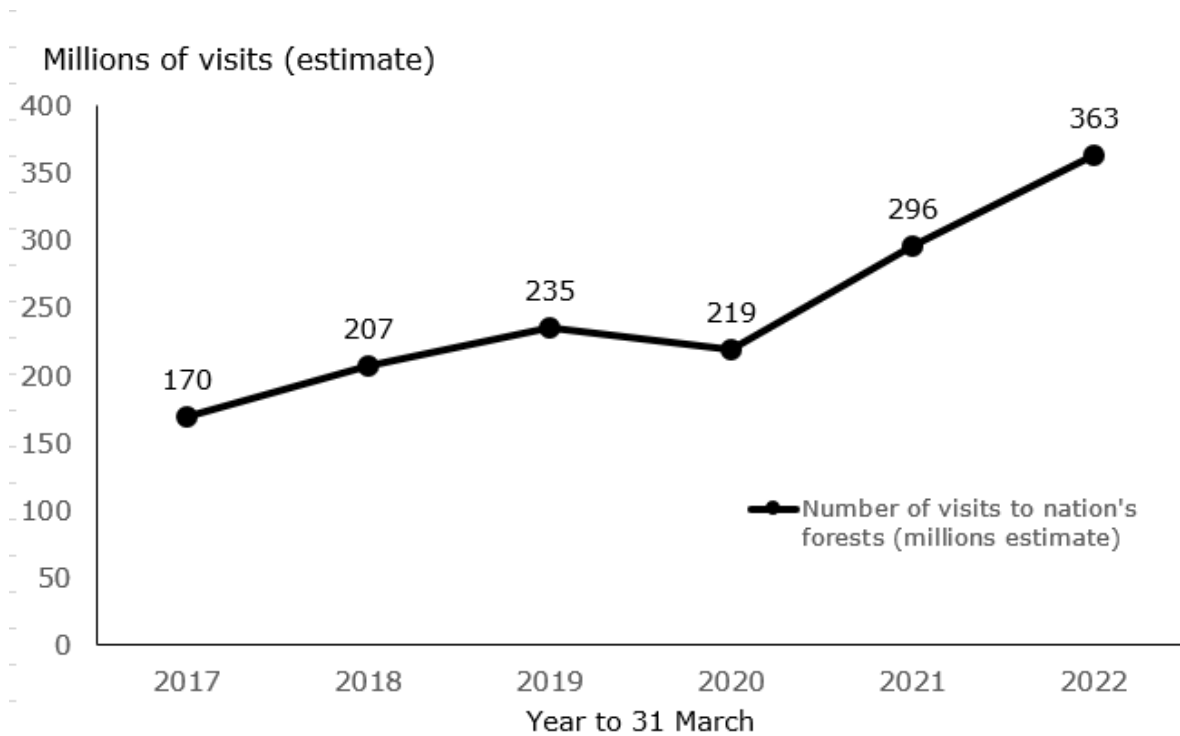
We did not produce a value for 2014-15.

### Assessment of change in: Total natural capital value of the nation's forests

Five-year trend, March 2022 compared to March 2017

Improving

## Public engagement: Number of visits per annum to the nation's forests managed by Forestry England



Source: Surveys conducted for Forestry England.

The total modelled estimated visits to forests managed by Forestry England is 363 million visits for 2021-22. This is the second consecutive year to see a substantial increase compared to the previous year, with estimated visits to our entire estate rising from 296 million in 2020-21 to 363 million this reporting year.

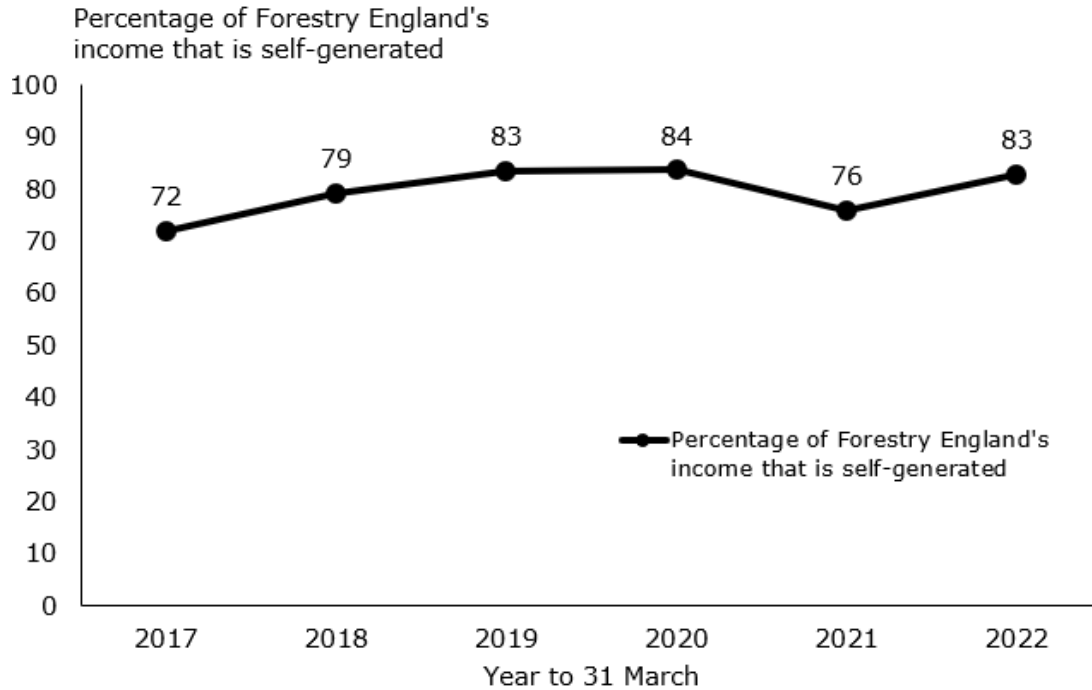
Although we cannot determine the precise reasons for this increase, the survey results that inform this measure suggest that the bulk of this increase has been driven by more people visiting between once a month and twice a week, and that fewer people this year are saying that they do not visit our woodlands for outdoor recreation visits when choosing to visit forests.

Assessment of change in: Number of visits per annum to the nation's forests managed by Forestry England

Four-year trend only, 2021-22 compared to 2016-17

Improving

## Percentage of Forestry England's income that is self-generated



Source: Forestry England accounts.

This indicator shows how much of our income is self-generated and indicates the level of our reliance on government funding. Mineral income is classified as public sector income and is not included as self-generated income.

Due to Covid-19, the additional support funding provided by Defra and the Forestry Commission reduced the percentage of self-generated income in 2020-21. Scheme specific grants, for example the England Tree Planting Programme, would reduce the percentage of self-generated income and can also alter the composition of funding over time.

In 2021-22 we self-generated £93 million of income (83% of total), compared to £82 million in 2020-21 (76% of total).

**Table 4: Components of Forestry England’s income that is attributable to government.**

<b>Attributable to government</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2021-22</b>
Percentage of total incoming resources	28%	21%	17%	16%	24%	17%
<b>Consisting of:</b>						
Mineral and CJRS income	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Scheme specific Defra grant funding				0%	1%	0%
Forestry Commission core funding	28%	20%	16%	15%	22%	16%

Assessment of change in: Percentage of Forestry England’s income that is self-generated

Five-year trend, 2021-22 compared to 2016-17 Improving

## Health and safety: Number of work-related accidents per 100 employees in Forestry England



Source: Forestry Commission administrative data.

The number of accidents per 100 employees (headcount) for the financial year 2021-22 was 6.12. Staff headcount is approximately 5% higher than it was at the end of 2020 21, and so is relatively stable, whereas accidents reported are up slightly to 72, from 68.

The proportional increase in accidents reported (5.9%) is slightly higher than the proportional increase in headcount, meaning that the staff accident rate this year is slightly higher than last year's. At this point, there is no reason to believe that this slight increase is part of a trend, and small fluctuations will always occur on a year-to-year basis.

The long-term trend shows a general decline in the accident rate with a peak in 2016-17. We moved to the Airsweb system for collating and reporting accident figures in August 2020. This has improved our reporting accuracy and has likely driven some of the decline over the last few years.

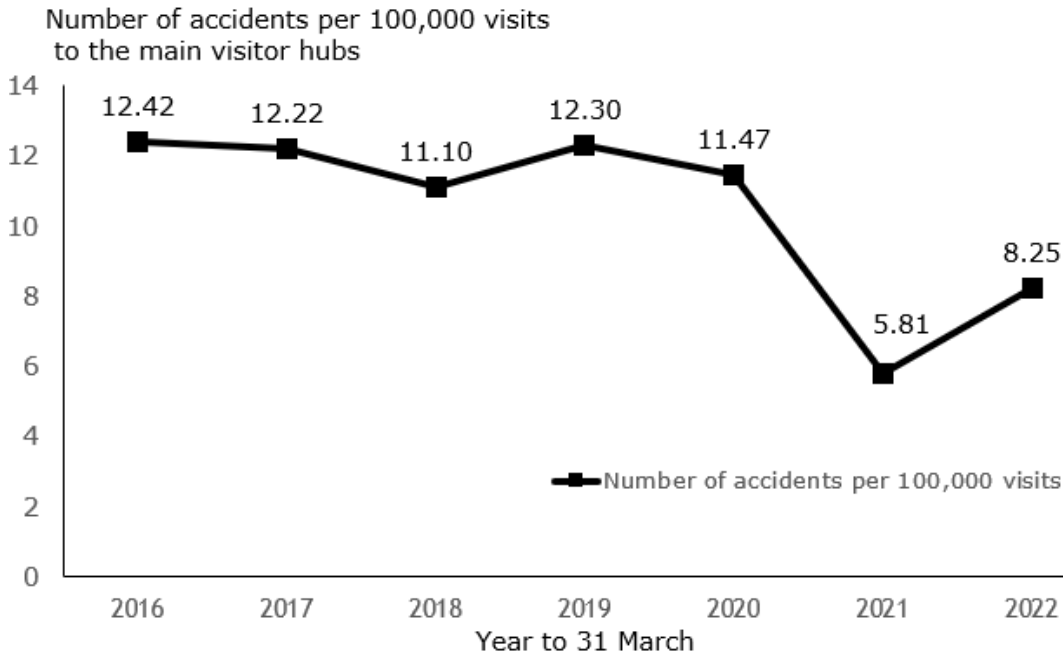
NOTE: Previous years' accident rates have been amended due to subsequent updates to end-of-year headcounts. Some of the revisions have led to substantial percentage changes in reported accident rates, but the general trends are unchanged.

Assessment of change in: Number of work-related accidents per 100 employees in Forestry England

Five-year trend, 2021-22 compared to 2016-17

Improving

## Health and safety: Number of accidents per 100,000 visits to the main visitor hubs in the nation's forests



Source: Forestry England administrative data.

The public accident rate is calculated from the total number of accidents over the financial year divided by the total visits to main hubs, per 100,000 visits. The accident rate for 2021-22 was 8.25 per 100,000 visits. There were substantially more public accidents reported during 2021-22 compared to the previous financial year (59% increase), compared to a smaller proportional increase to the estimated visits to hubs (7%). This translates to a higher public accident rate.

The increase in visits to hubs after the easing of Covid-19 lockdowns that occurred in the second half of 2020, has been maintained into 2021-22. We are at this point unable to determine what the precise driver of this is.

2020-21's public accident total was anomalously low. This is due to visit numbers being high, whilst the number of accidents reported was low, and is likely the result of the change in staffing and resourcing at hubs during lockdowns, even when sites were open. The number of public accidents in 2021-22 is more in line with figures prior to 2020-21.

Overall, this means that the 2021-22 public accident rate is 42% higher than that for 2020-21, but still substantially lower than previous years. Understanding the anomalous nature of a year dominated by Covid-19 restrictions (2020-21) means that this increase, though substantial, cannot be seen as indicative of any deeper trend.

Assessment of change in: Number of accidents per 100,000 visits to the main visitor hubs in the nation's forests

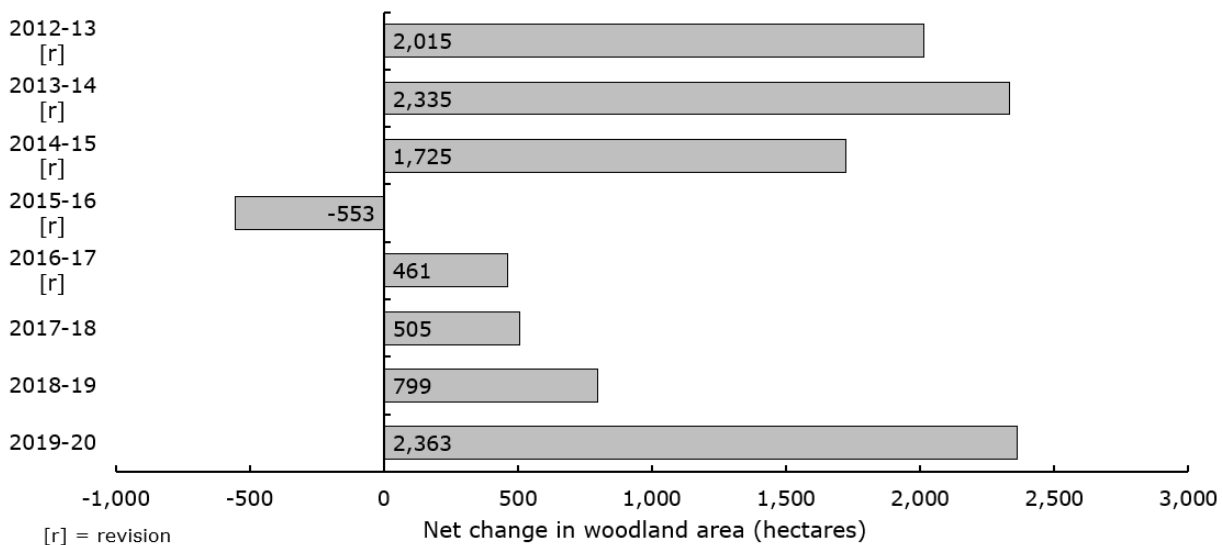
Five-year trend, 2021-22 compared to 2016-17

Improving

## Part 3. Other Forest Services indicators

### Expanding and connecting our trees and woodland

Experimental Statistics: Net change in woodland area, based on the balance between new planting of woodland and woodland removal



Sources: Forestry Commission administrative data and statistics – see Table 5 for detailed sources.

During 2018-19 and 2019-20, the two years for which new data are presented, there was a net increase in woodland area of 799 hectares and 2,363 hectares, respectively, once woodland removal for open habitat restoration and woodland loss to development is accounted for. The area of woodland lost to development (433 hectares) in 2018-19 was broadly equivalent to the average over the preceding five years (476 hectares), however, the area lost to development in 2019-20 was much lower at 75 hectares, in part possibly reflecting the impact of Covid-19 on development activity in April to June 2020 (reporting period for this indicator being June 2019 to June 2020). The area reported as converted to open habitat other than in the nation's forests in 2019-20 was also lower than in previous years. The negative figure for woodland loss to open habitat in the nation's forests in both 2018-19 and 2019-20 in part reflects disposals of land including open habitat, as reported previously. The net increase in woodland area in 2018-19 is slightly higher than the previous two years (799 hectares compared with 461 hectares and 505 hectares) while the net increase in woodland area in 2019-20 (2,363 hectares) is higher than in any previous year in the time series and is a result of the combination of lower rates of reported woodland loss and higher levels of new planting.



**Table 5: Components of net change in woodland area in England, 2012-13 to 2019-20 (Experimental Statistics)**

	hectares							
<b>Year ending 31 March</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
	[r]	[r]	[r]	[r]	[r]			[p]
<b>Contribution to change in woodland area (Hectares)</b>								
<b>Woodland creation (+)</b>								
<b>a. Total new planting of trees in England (Source 1)</b>	<b>2,595</b>	<b>3,361</b>	<b>2,426</b>	<b>824</b>	<b>1,159</b>	<b>1,501</b>	<b>1,413</b>	<b>2,358</b>
<b>Woodland removal (-)</b>								
Open habitat restoration other than in the nation's forests (Source 2)	341	693	273	434	200	197	286	89
Open habitat restoration in the nation's forests <sup>1</sup> (Source 2)	119	213	70	116	85	138	-105	-169
Attributable to development <sup>2</sup> (Source 3)	120	120	358	827	413	661	433	75
<b>b. Total woodland removal</b>	<b>580</b>	<b>1,026</b>	<b>701</b>	<b>1,377</b>	<b>698</b>	<b>996</b>	<b>614</b>	<b>-5</b>
<b>c. Total net change in woodland area<sup>3</sup> (a. minus b.)</b>	<b>2,015</b>	<b>2,335</b>	<b>1,725</b>	<b>-553</b>	<b>461</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>799</b>	<b>2,363</b>

[r] = revision, [p] = provisional

Sources:

1. Forestry Commission (2021) *Forestry Statistics 2021*, Edinburgh: Forestry Commission.
2. Forestry Commission (2022) *Key Performance Indicators: Report for 2021-22*, Bristol: Forestry Commission.
3. Forestry Commission (2016) *Preliminary estimates of the changes in canopy cover in British woodlands between 2006 and 2015*, Edinburgh: Forestry Commission, National Forest Inventory. Table 14 on page 53. Plus unpublished sample-based updates for 2015-16 and a revised figure for 2016-17 from the [National Forest Inventory](#) team.

Notes:

1. Current statistics for woodland removal in the nation's forests currently include both land sales as well as open habitat restoration. We propose to refine this for future reports to focus solely on open habitat restoration.
2. A single figure for woodland loss attributable to development was available for 2012-13 and 2013-14 combined. This was simply split evenly between these two years.
3. The net change in woodland area the years from 2012-13 to 2016-17 has been revised due to revisions to the new planting statistics.

## Summary of methodology

### Purpose

The aim is to have an indicator that combines all relevant known sources of woodland creation (gross) and woodland removal (gross), to show the balance between these (net) over the short term. This is to add to the fuller picture of change provided by the area of woodland in England statistics that incorporate methodological improvements such as better recognition techniques and more detailed sources of satellite remote sensing data.

### Principles of what is counted

The indicator generally reports woodland creation and loss in England that conforms to the National Forest Inventory definition of woodland (of at least 0.5 hectares in area with a minimum width of 20 metres, and that have at least 20% canopy cover, or the potential to achieve this). Creation of integral open space of less than 1 hectare within existing woodland is not reported as woodland loss within the National Forest Inventory woodland loss data, but some of the losses to achieve open habitats restoration recorded as a part of open habitats in the nation's forests and elsewhere can be of smaller areas of woodland.

In this indicator figures are largely for financial years to 31 March except figures for area of woodland removal attributable to development that are for years June to June.

Figures are by year of records, not necessarily the year of woodland creation or woodland removal. In particular, unconditional felling licenses allow private woodland owners a number of years over which to conduct open habitat restoration.

Assessment of change in: Net change in woodland area, based on the balance between new planting of woodland, and woodland removal (Experimental Statistics)

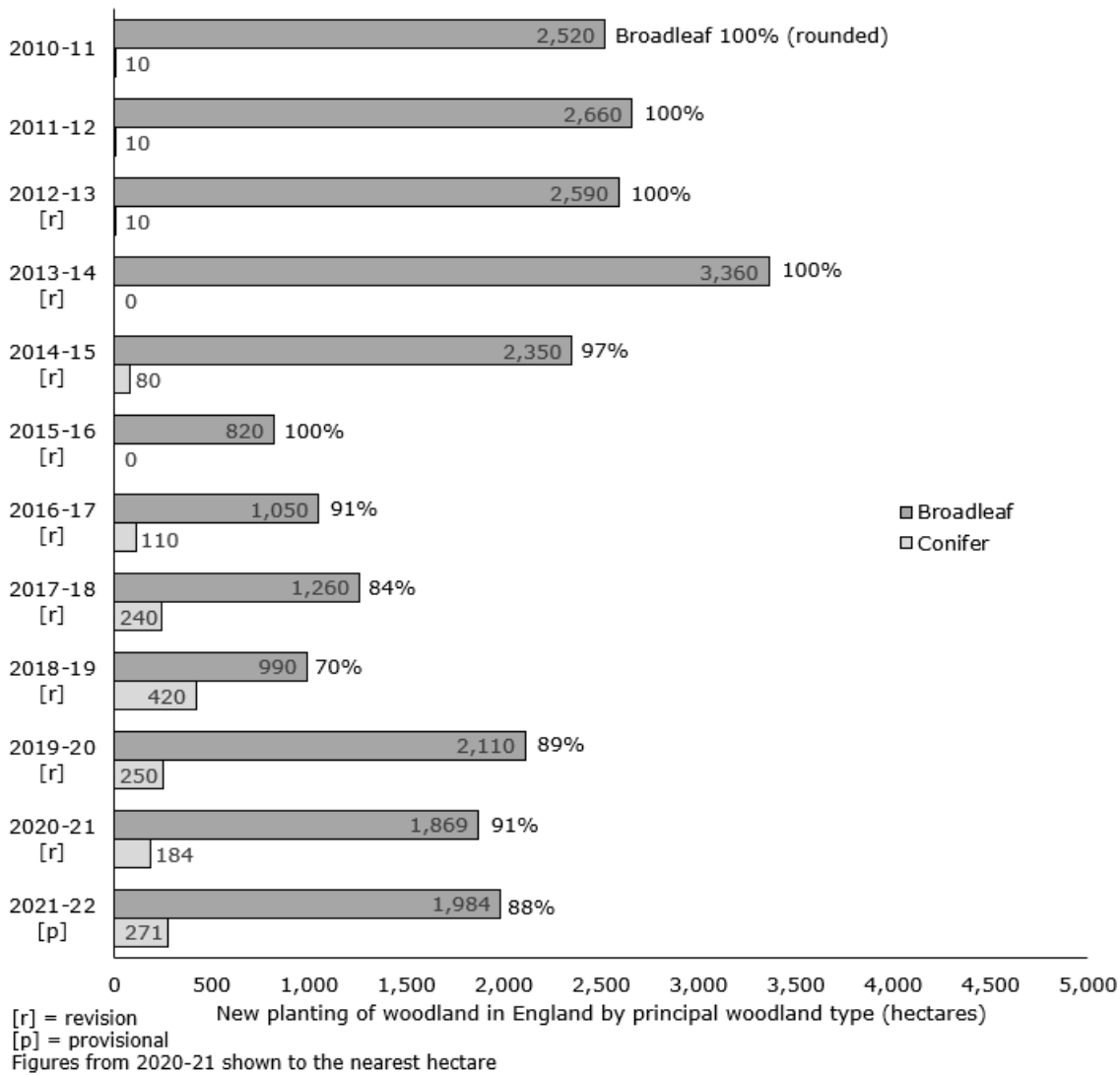
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Five-year trend, 2019-20 compared to 2014-15

Improving

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## Percentage of new planting of woodland in England that is broadleaved woodland



Source: [Forestry Statistics 2021](#) and [Provisional Woodland Statistics 2022](#) (Forest Research)

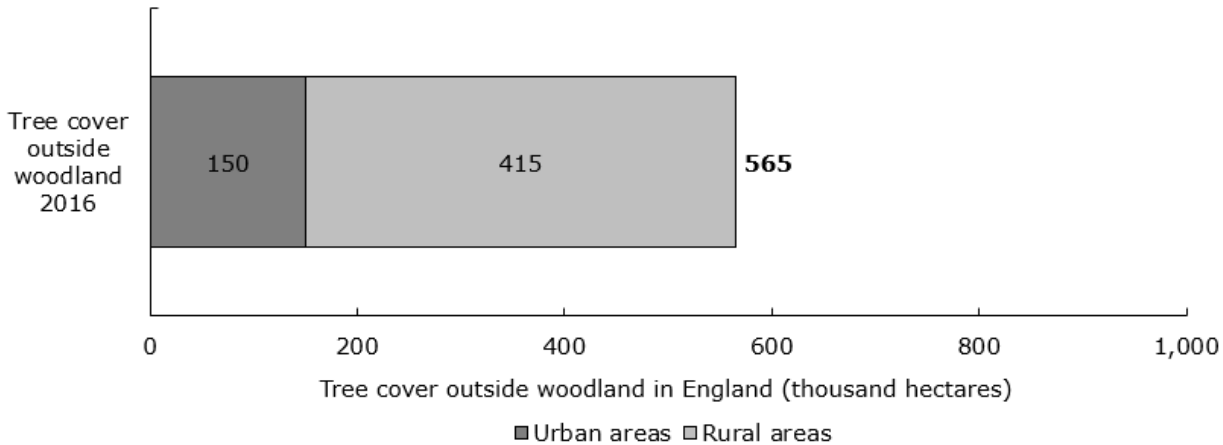
Since 2011 the prevailing trend has been that the majority of trees planted in new woodlands are broadleaf. In 2021-22, 88% of the woodland reported as planted in England was broadleaf, with the remainder conifer species.

Assessment of change in: Percentage of new planting of woodland in England that is broadleaved woodland

This indicator

Not assessed for this indicator

## Area of tree cover outside woodland in England



Source: [Tree cover outside woodland in Great Britain](#) summary report (Forest Research, 2017).

Tree canopy cover outside National Forest Inventory woodland (where woodland is over 0.5 hectares in extent and greater than 20 metres in width) amounted to 565,000 hectares in England as of January 2016. This represented 30% of total tree canopy and woodland cover at that time, bringing combined total cover to around 15% of the land area of England within the consistent methodology. Some 150,000 hectares of this tree cover outside woodlands is in English urban areas, with the South East and London region having the largest area of such tree cover; 124,000 hectares. The total area of tree cover outside woodland comprised three elements, namely 295,000 hectares (52%) in small woods (between 0.1 and 0.5 hectares), 193,000 hectares (34%) in groups of trees (clusters and linear features of less than 0.1 hectare) and 78,000 hectares (14%) associated with lone trees. This is a new indicator presenting the latest and most suitable data available. We plan to update this in future.

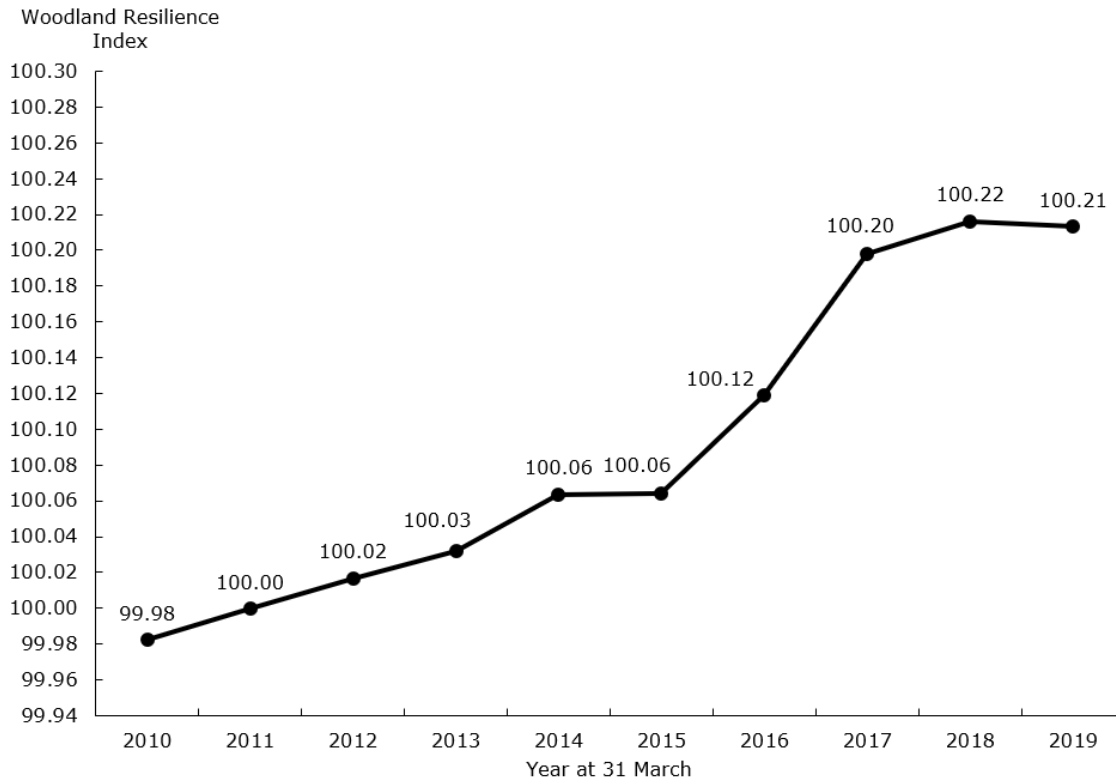
Note 1: The area figures shown are statistical estimates based on a methodology that combined remote sensing data with samples of aerial photography and field surveying across the country. The figure for total tree cover outside woodland in England therefore has a standard error of +/- 5%, as does that for rural areas; this is +/- 10% for urban areas.

Note 2: Full details of methodology and terms used can be found in the [Tree cover outside woodland in Great Britain](#) statistical report (Forest Research, 2017).

### Assessment of change in: Area of tree cover outside woodland in England

This indicator	Not assessed due to insufficient comparable data
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## Connectivity of woodland in England



Source: Forestry Commission administrative data and the [National Forest Inventory](#) woodland map, modelled by the Urban Forest Research Group, [Forest Research](#).

Maintaining and improving connectivity is important in promoting nature recovery in fragmented habitats, especially under a changing climate. When habitats are more connected, species populations can expand or migrate at different rates in response to threats and pressures. Greater connectivity makes it easier for woodland ecological communities to gradually adapt to changes in climate. Connectivity of woodland is measured according to the size and distribution of patches of forests and woodlands, relative to a value of 100 assigned to 2011. This indicator shows an increase in connectivity for forests and woodlands in England between 2011 and 2019, which is the last date for which data is available.

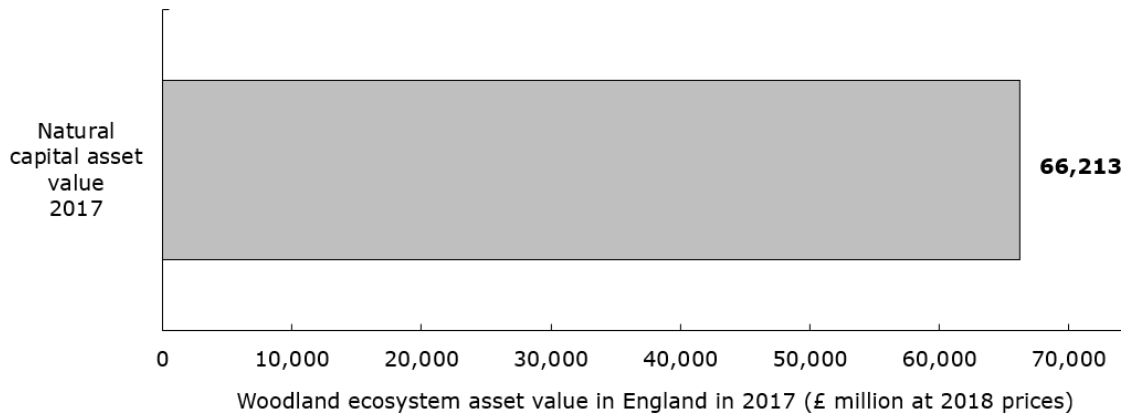
### Assessment of change in: Connectivity of woodland in England

Five-year trend, 31-Mar-19 compared to 31-Mar-14

Little or no overall change

## Trees and woodland as a part of the green economy

### Natural capital value of England's woodlands



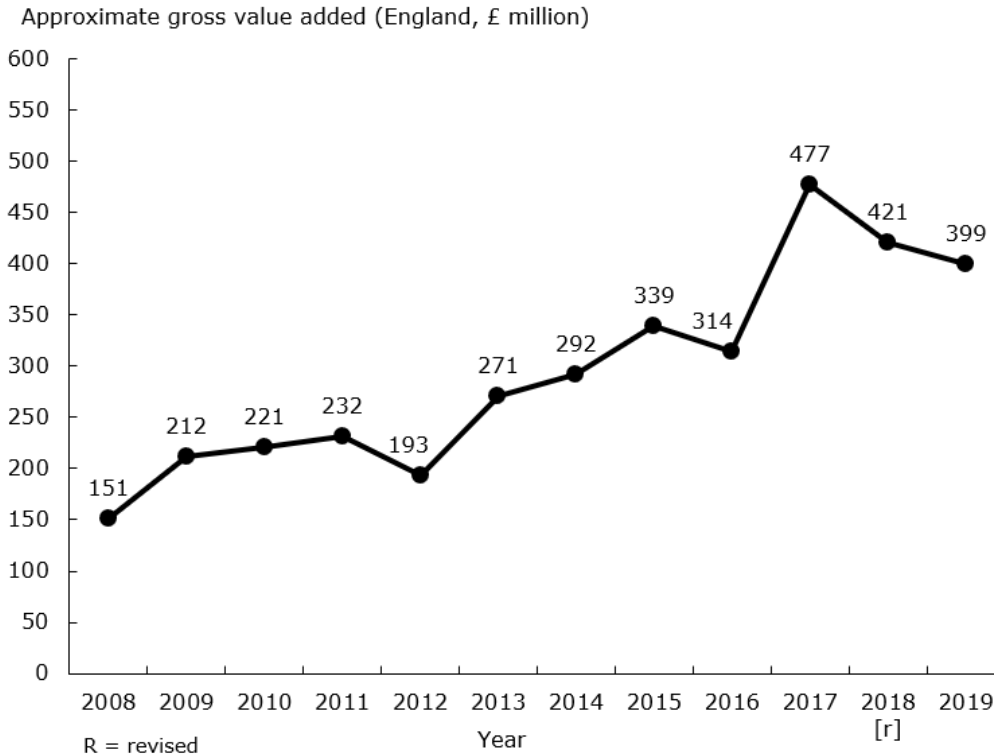
Source: *Woodland natural capital accounts: ecosystem services for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, 2020* (Office for National Statistics, 2021).

The Office for National Statistics have recently published new statistics estimating the natural capital asset value of England's woodland as £66.2 billion in 2017 (at 2018 prices). These figures add to their previous reports of figures for the UK as a whole. Within England the largest contributors to this total were carbon sequestration (38%), recreation (24%), and pollution removal (20%). The other contributions that it has been possible to measure so far are urban woodland cooling (7%), flood prevention (7%), timber (3%), noise reduction (1%) and wood fuel (1%). The figures are new and so represent a baseline for future reporting. These are the most up-to-date statistics available.

#### Assessment of change in: Natural capital value of England's woodlands

This indicator	Not assessed due to insufficient comparable data
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## Gross Value Added from domestic forestry



Source: [Annual Business Survey 2018 regional results and quality measures \(Office for National Statistics\)](#).

Note: The graph shows the Gross Value Added from domestic forestry figures for each year with their respective standard errors.

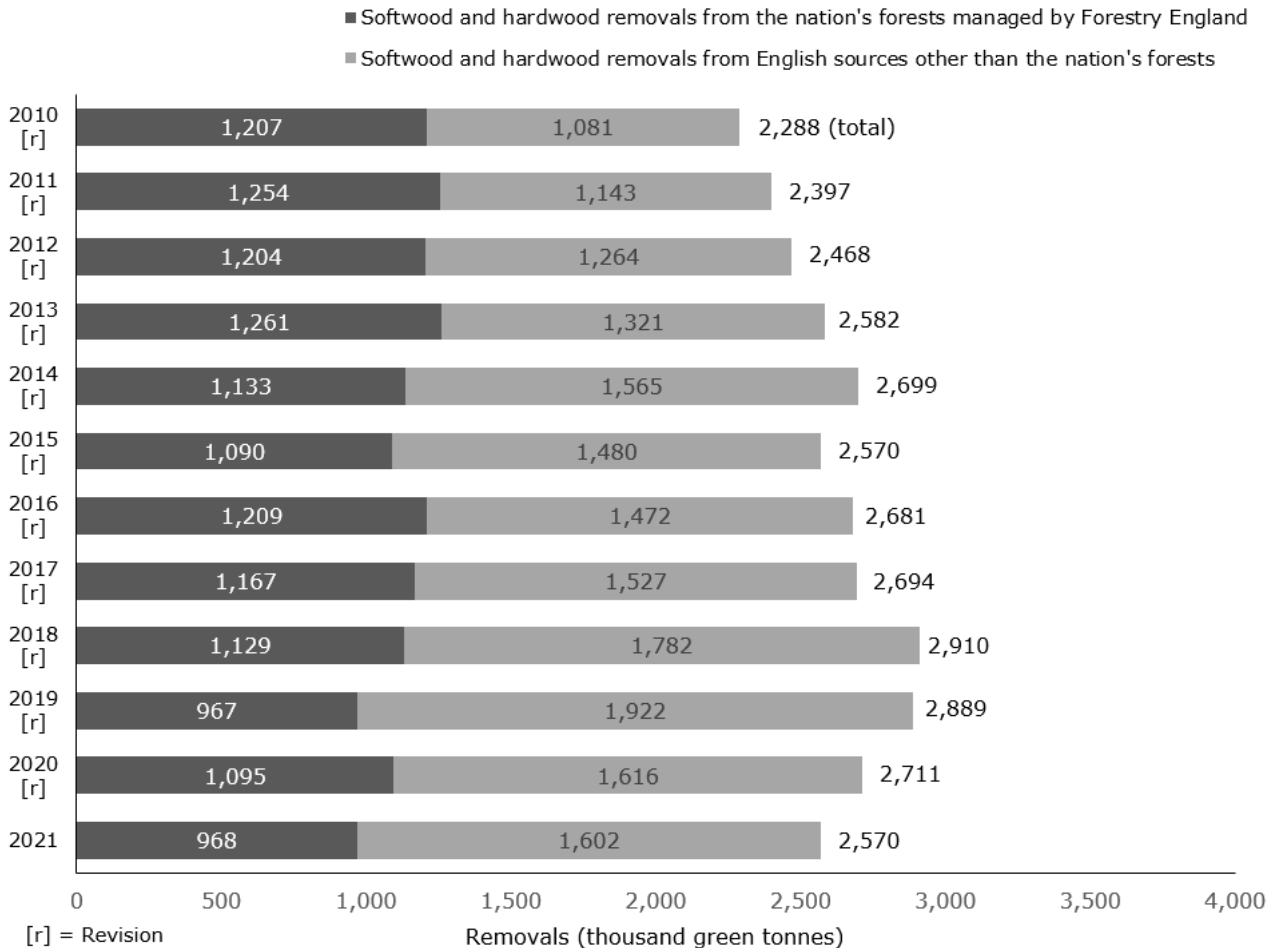
Generally favourable trading conditions and a continued strong demand for timber helped forestry contribute £399 million to the economy in 2019. This is down on 2018 figures but remains reasonably healthy.

Assessment of change in: Gross Value Added from domestic forestry

Five-year trend, 2019 compared to 2014

Improving

## Volume of timber brought to market per annum from English sources



Source: Forest Research statistics on [UK wood production and trade](#).

Timber supply chains continued to experience some disruption caused by COVID-19 and shortages in the workforce in 2021, plus a series of storm events over winter 2021-22. Market demand for softwood remains strong and prices continue to be high, maintaining relatively high levels of production in privately owned conifer woodlands. Uncertainty remains around estimated hardwood production, especially volumes of hardwood delivered to energy markets, and particularly considering increasing levels of management of ash dieback.

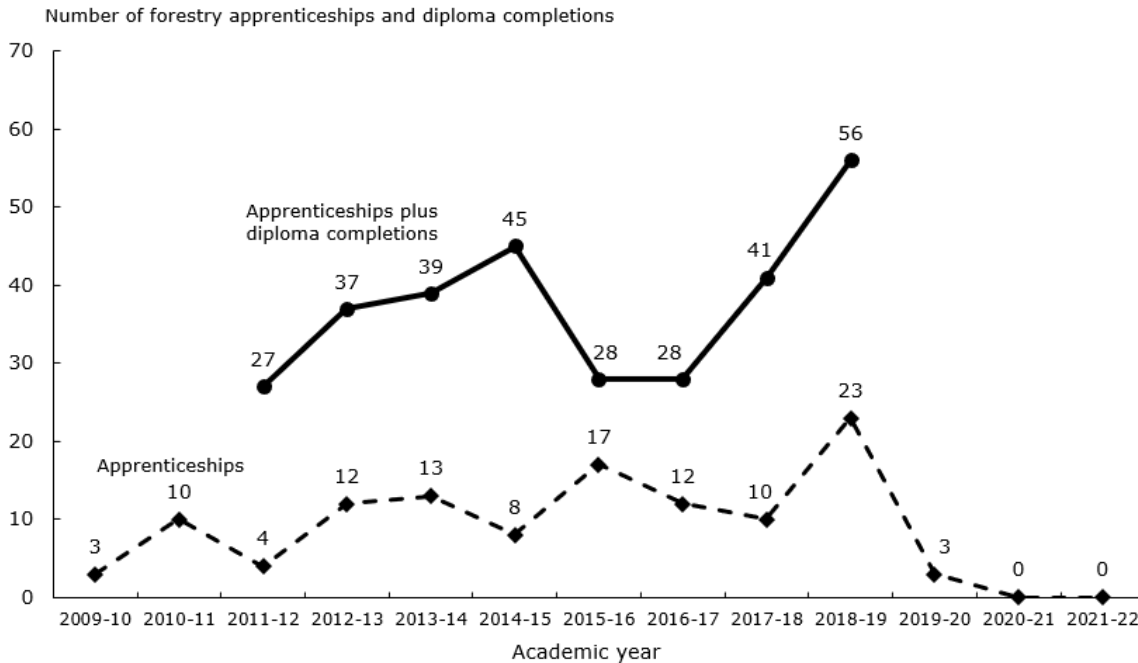
Assessment of change in: Volume of timber brought to market per annum from English sources (Total)

Five-year trend, 2021 compared to 2016

Deteriorating

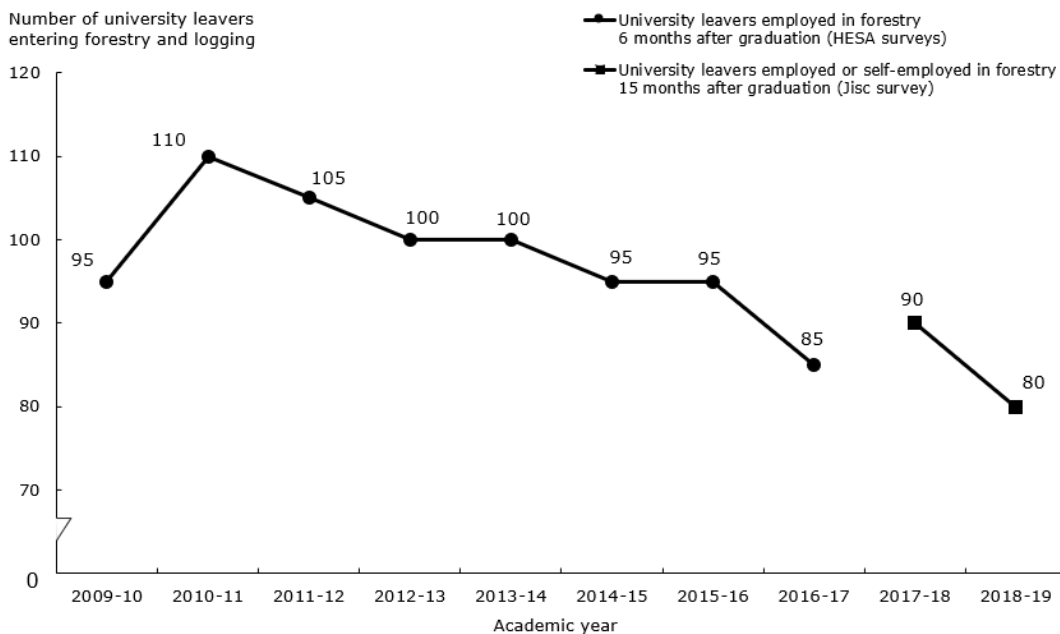


## Number of apprentices, those with work-based diplomas, and university students entering forestry



Source: [LANTRA](#).

Note: Data on diploma completions was unavailable to us for the three years 2019-20 to 2021-22.



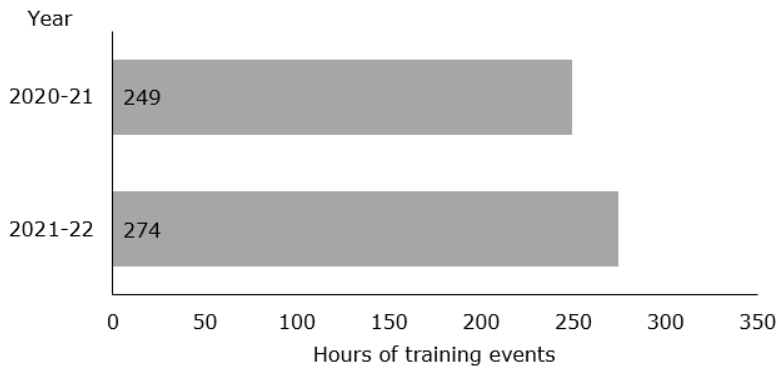
Sources: [Destination of Leavers of Higher Education survey](#) (Higher Education Statistics Agency, HESA). and the [Higher Education Graduate Outcomes Survey](#) (HESA and Jisc).

The after-effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, coupled with ongoing changes to the Forest Operative apprenticeship standard following its review by the Institute for Apprenticeships & Technical Education mean that training providers have been unable to increase numbers of apprenticeship completions.

Assessment of change in: Number of apprentices, those with work-based diplomas, and university students entering forestry

Apprentices <u>and</u> diploma completions, five-year trend, 2018-19 (latest data) compared to 2013-14	Improving
University leavers, five-year trend, 2016-17 (latest comparable data) compared to 2011-12	Deteriorating

## Forest Services' training support for the English forestry sector (hours of training events)



Source: Forestry Commission administrative records.

This is a relatively new indicator to demonstrate support given to the forestry sector through provision of training. The training was provided through numerous events and covered a range of topics including tree health (identification and management of specific pests and diseases), woodland creation and woodland management. Forest Services provides a range of other support for the forestry sector, including the range of forestry grants.

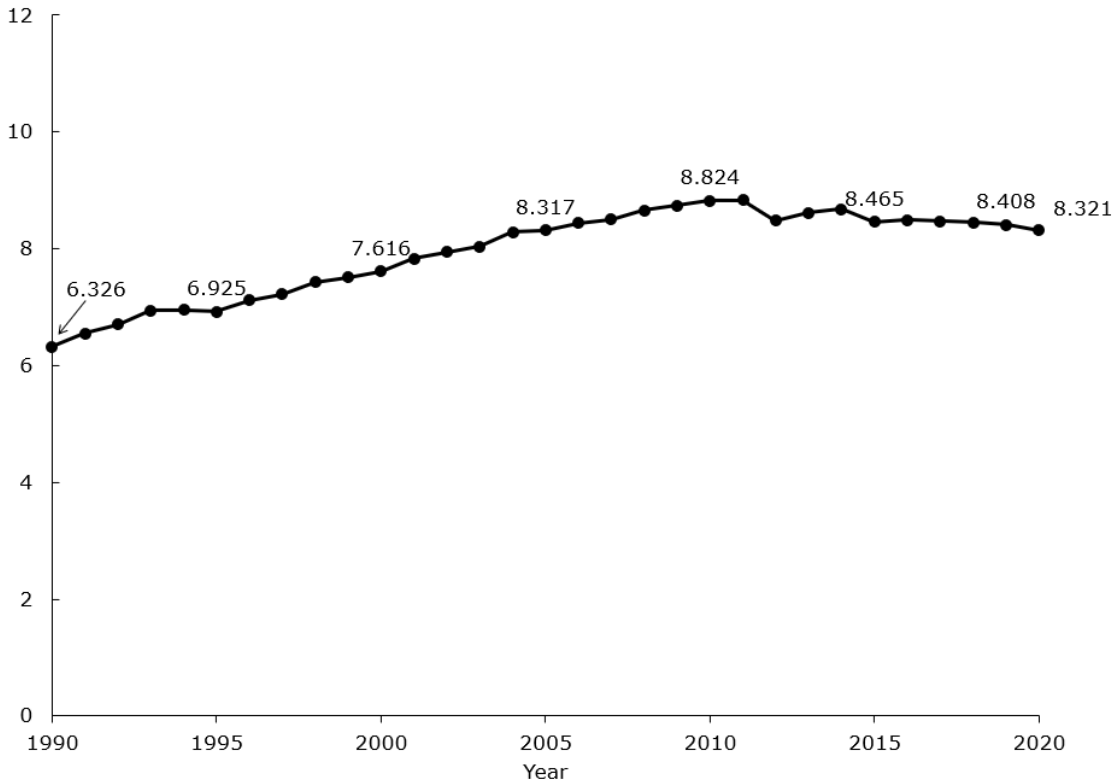
### Assessment of change in: Forest Services' training support for the English forestry sector (hours of training events)

One-year trend only, 2021-22 compared to 2020-21

Improving

## Carbon captured by English woodlands

Million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (MtCO<sub>2</sub>e)



Source: Data from the [Final UK greenhouse gas emissions national statistics 1990-2020](#), (Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, 2022).

The figures represent the net exchange of carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide and methane, corrected for their global warming potential and expressed as million tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent, for 'forestland'. It does not include removals associated with harvested wood products in service or the emissions of forestland converted to other landcovers.

The sink strength for 2019 is not consistent with (and should not be compared with) the sink strength reported for 2018 (or previous years) in the 2020 KPI report, as a result of the continual programme of improvements to the methodology used to prepare the UK Greenhouse Gas Inventory. When the methodology is changed, the entire time series of the inventory is updated.

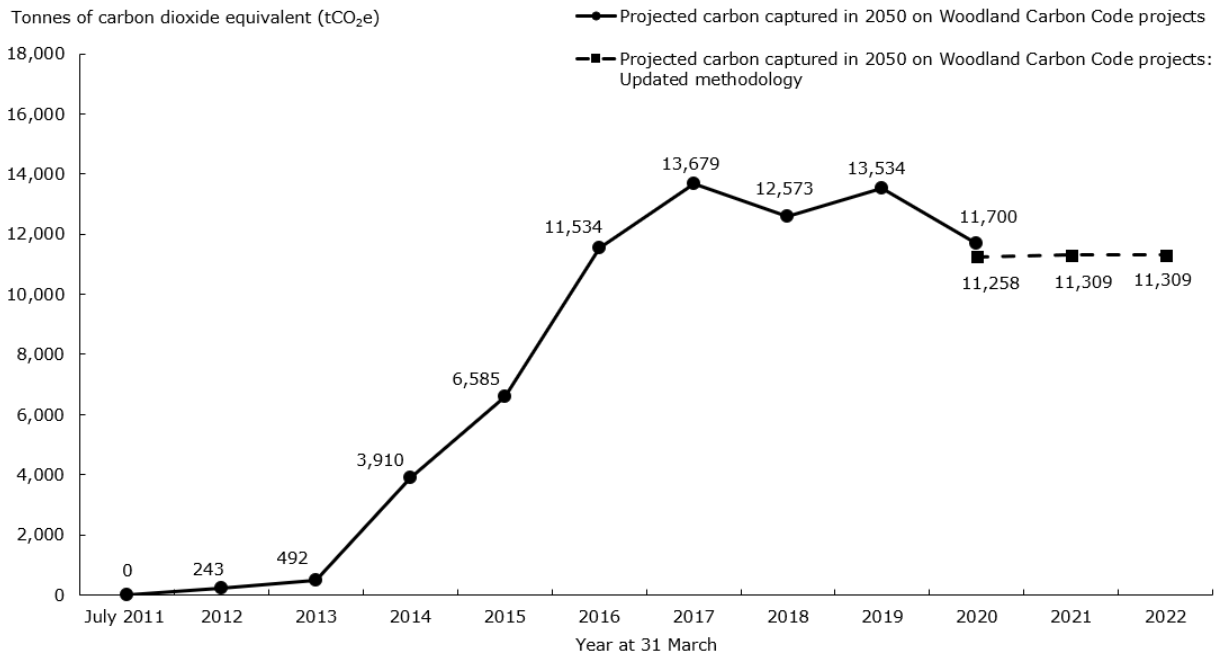
The net greenhouse gas sink strength of England's woodlands has decreased slightly from 8.408 MtCO<sub>2</sub>e in 2019 to 8.321 MtCO<sub>2</sub>e in 2020 (based on the updated time-series), but remaining broadly stable; however, it is expected to decline in the medium term as the greenhouse gas sink strength is dominated by past planting rates and subsequent harvesting activity. A removal (or sink) of 8.321 MtCO<sub>2</sub>e is equivalent to 2.1% of total UK greenhouse gas emissions for 2020, or 19% of agricultural emissions.

### Assessment of change in: Carbon captured by English woodlands

Five-year trend, 2020 compared to 2015

Little or no overall change

## Projected carbon capture in 2050 by Woodland Carbon Code woodland creation projects



Source: [Provisional Woodland Statistics 2022](#) (Forest Research)

At March 2022, 108 projects were validated by the Woodland Carbon Code, compared to 99 in 2021. The 108 projects validated by March 2022 are expected to sequester 11,309 tCO<sub>2</sub>e in 2050 and a total of 387,000 tCO<sub>2</sub>e by 2050 (compared with 373,000 tCO<sub>2</sub>e in March 2021). Of the validated projects, 45 have also been verified at year five to ensure they are well-established and on track to deliver the predicted carbon savings. Verified projects had sequestered 2,283 tCO<sub>2</sub>e by March 2022 compared to 2,021 tCO<sub>2</sub>e by March 2021.

There has been a rapid growth in the number of projects registering with the WCC. A further 443 projects in England are currently registered and going through the validation process compared to 165 in 2021 and 47 in 2020. The large increase in registrations – overall 287 new projects this year – is due to continuing interest in the UK voluntary carbon market. This means registered project numbers in England doubled between March 2021 and 2022 (from 264 to 551), having also doubled between March 2020 and March 2021 (from 134 to 264). It is anticipated that a larger proportion of these projects will be validated over the next year.

All projects registered/validated by March 2022 are predicted to sequester 3.2 Million tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e over their lifetime of 100 years (compared to 2.5 Million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e over their lifetime for projects registered/validated by March 2021), and would create 7,392 hectares of new woodland (compared to 5,348 hectares for projects registered/validated by March 2021).



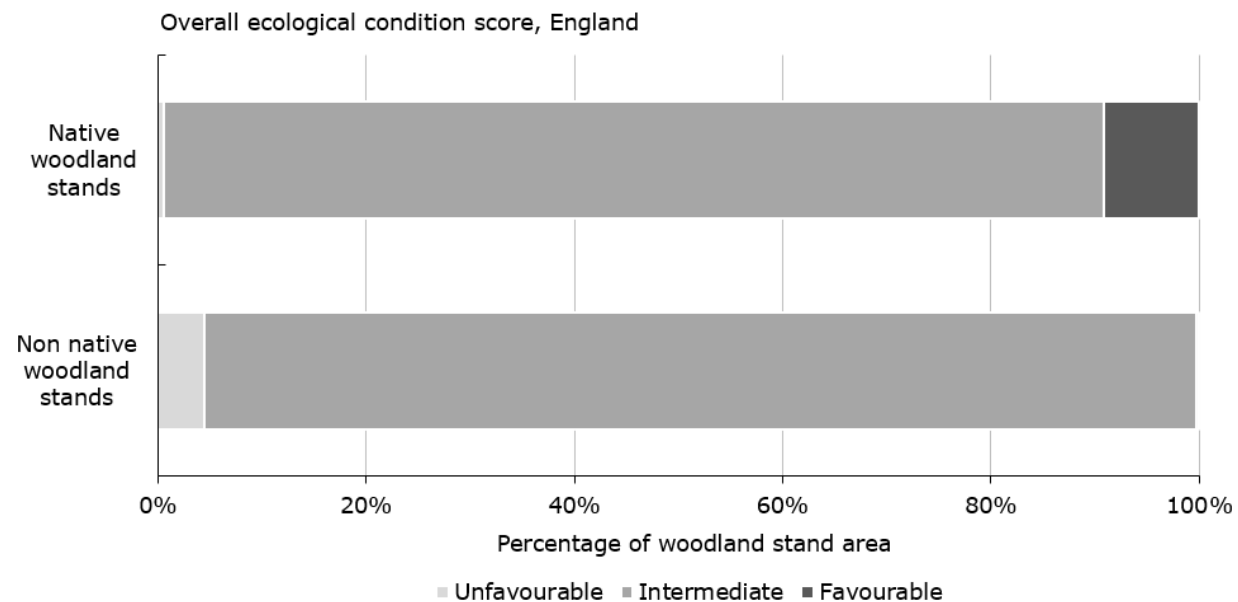
Assessment of change in: Projected carbon capture in 2050 on Woodland Carbon Code woodland creation projects

Two-year trend only (new methodology),  
31-Mar-22 compared to 31-Mar-20

Little or no overall change

## Protecting and improving our trees and woodland

### Woodland ecological condition in England using information from the National Forest Inventory



Source: Forestry Commission (2020) *NFI woodland ecological condition in England: classification results*, National Forest Inventory.

There are 914 thousand hectares of native woodland in England (around 68% of all woodland) and 419 thousand hectares of non-native woodland (30%). 99.5% of native woodland, and 95.6% of non-native woodland, is in favourable or intermediate condition, based on the latest available National Forest Inventory (2010-15) survey cycle data.

Up to 2020, biodiversity strategy interim reporting of condition drew on the Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) data and area of priority habitat in management to indicate progress against Biodiversity 2020 targets. In early 2020 work concluded to analyse and agree the condition status of England’s woodland. Fifteen ecological condition indicators were measured as part of the National Forest Inventory survey cycle 2010-15 and compared to a benchmark of a stand of ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW) in good condition. This enabled native, near native and non-native woodland stands (outside of protected sites) to be classified as favourable, intermediate or unfavourable in terms of their ecological condition for the first time.

Ten reports were published in 2020 in relation to woodland ecological condition; executive summary, methodology, statistics and classification results, by country and for Great Britain. These reports and data can be found on the [National Forest Inventory Woodland Ecological Condition](#) pages of the Forest Research website.

Assessment of change in: Woodland ecological condition in England using information from the National Forest Inventory

This indicator

Not assessed due to insufficient comparable data

Figure 3: The proportion of each woodland ecological condition (WEC) class, for each WEC indicator type in native woodland stands in England

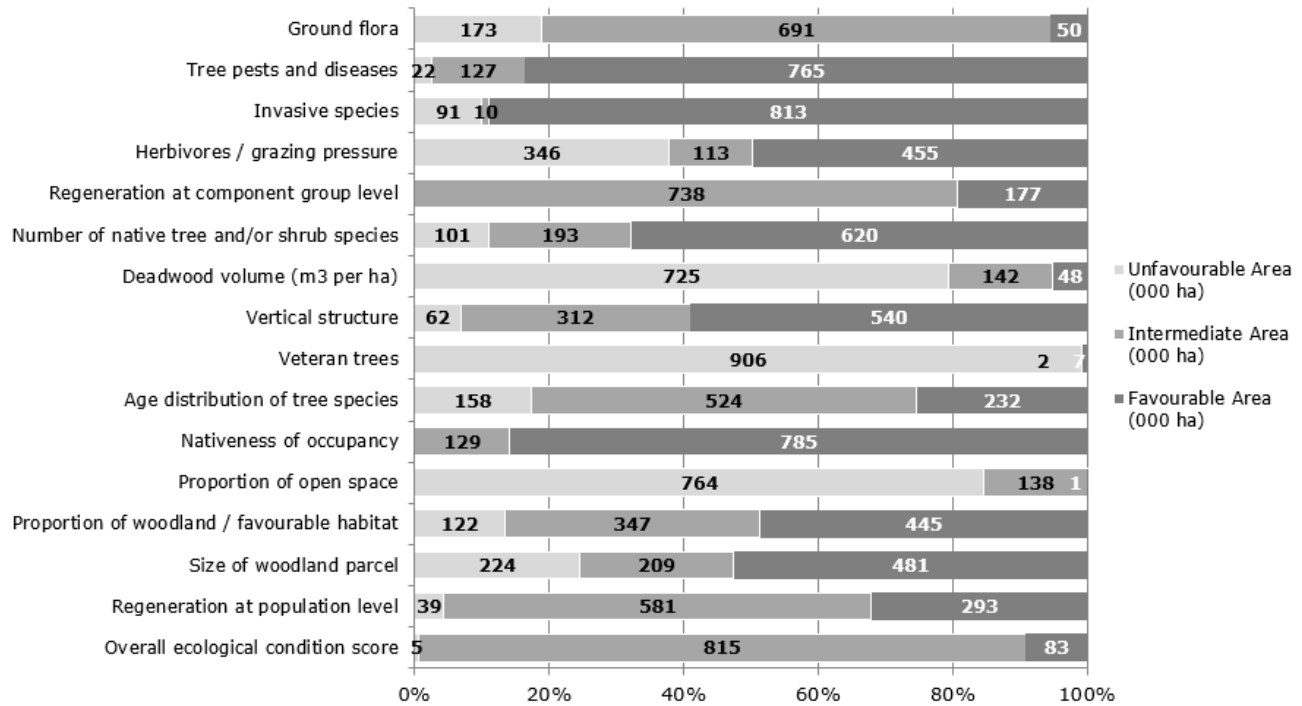
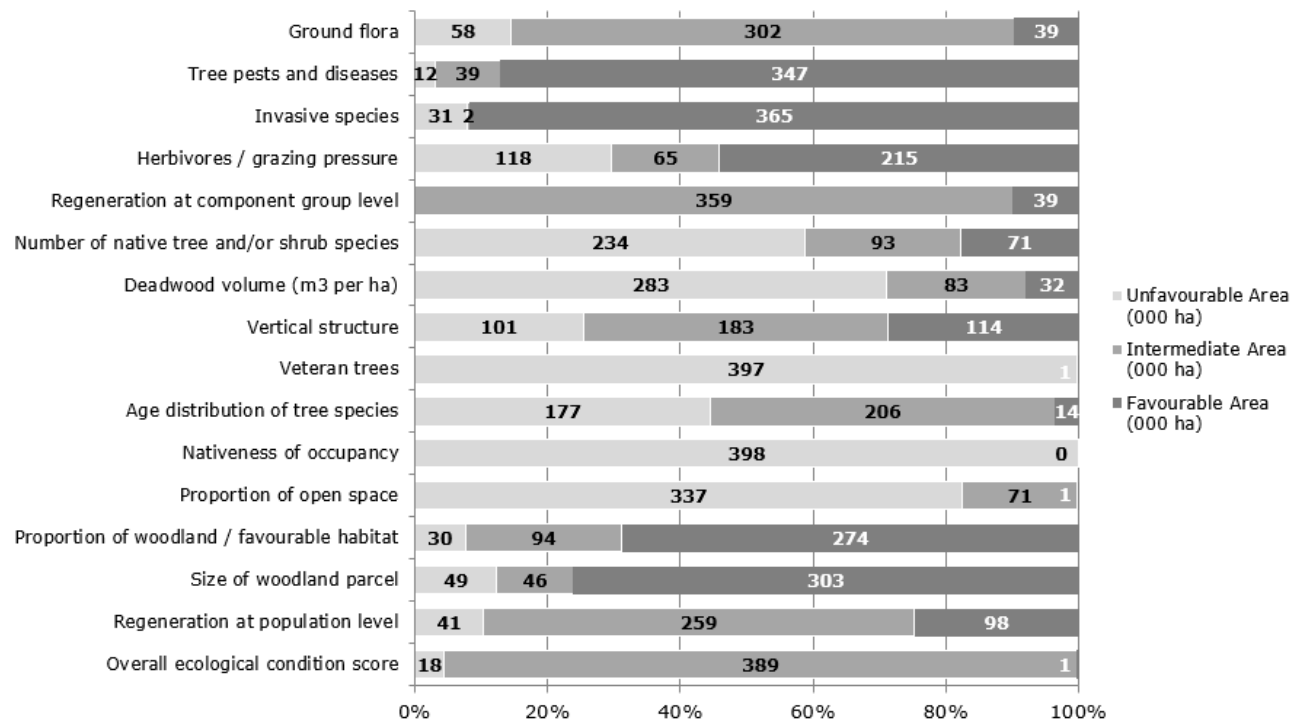


Figure 4: The proportion of each woodland ecological condition (WEC) class, for each WEC indicator type in non-native woodland stands in England





## Notes on woodland ecological condition in England

### Note 1: Native woodland

Native woodland is defined as stands with 50% or more native tree species occupancy in the upper canopy that either:

- form a discrete woodland parcel with a minimum area of 0.5 ha.
- form a woodland stand with a minimum area of 0.1 ha that is part of a woodland that is 0.5 ha or larger.

### Note 2: Non-native woodland

Non-native woodland is defined as stands with less than 40% native tree species occupancy sitting within a woodland of any size.

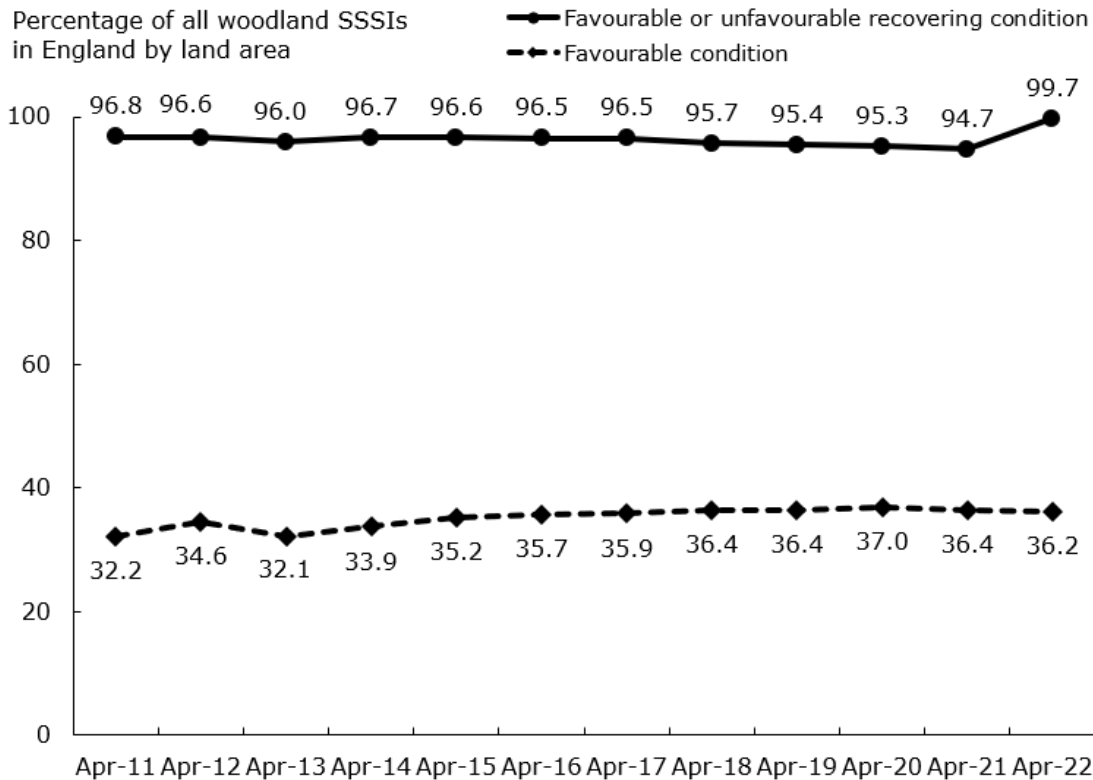
### Note 3: Definition of the indicators:

The woodland ecological condition classification categories and indicators are defined in the methodology report: Forestry Commission (2020), *NFI woodland ecological condition in Great Britain: Methodology* National Forest Inventory.

### Note 4: Classifications for each indicator and overall scoring

The National Forest Inventory woodland condition classifications for each of the 15 separate WEC indicators shown are shown in the Table 11.1 classification threshold summary (page 32) in the *NFI woodland ecological condition in England: classification results*. This also shows the overall scores that determine whether woodland habitat is in unfavourable, intermediate or favourable condition.

## Percentage of woodland Sites of Special Scientific Interest (by land area) in desired condition in England



Source: Forestry Commission administrative data on grant schemes and [Natural England](#) data on SSSIs.

This indicator shows the percentage of all woodland Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) which are in either favourable or unfavourable recovering status. In previous years, we reported these figures for Forestry England separately to the figures reported for all other woodland. This year, the figure has been reported using the area of all woodland SSSIs in England, irrespective of ownership. Past figures have been amalgamated and presented to show trends over time. The new figures for April 2022 show an overall decrease of 0.2% (equating to 87 hectares) of woodland SSSIs in favourable condition, and an increase of 5.0% (equating to 15,970 hectares) in unfavourable recovering condition. There are just 973 hectares not in target condition. Woodland SSSIs are condition assessed by Natural England at regular intervals, with the condition status amended as required.

Assessment of change since in: Percentage of woodland Sites of Special Scientific Interest (by land area) in desired condition in England

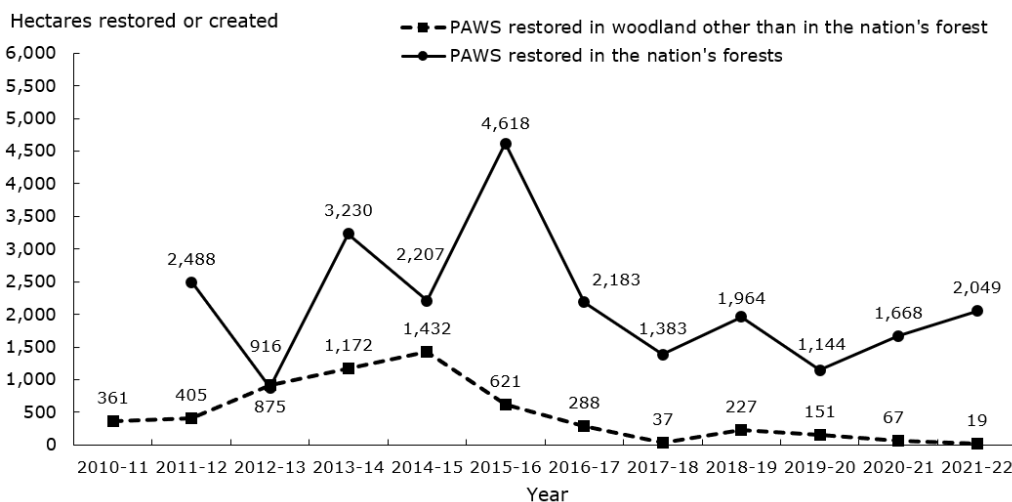
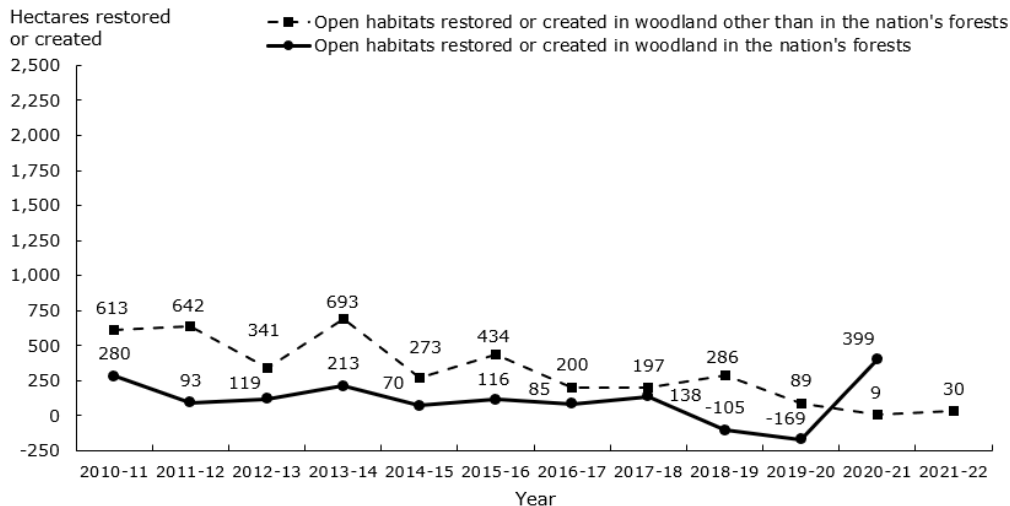
Favourable or unfavourable recovering condition,  
Five-year trend, Apr-22 compared to Apr-17

Improving

Favourable condition,  
Five-year trend, Apr-22 compared to Apr-17

Little or no overall change

## Hectares of restoration of plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS) and of open habitat in woodland in England



Source: Forestry Commission administrative data.

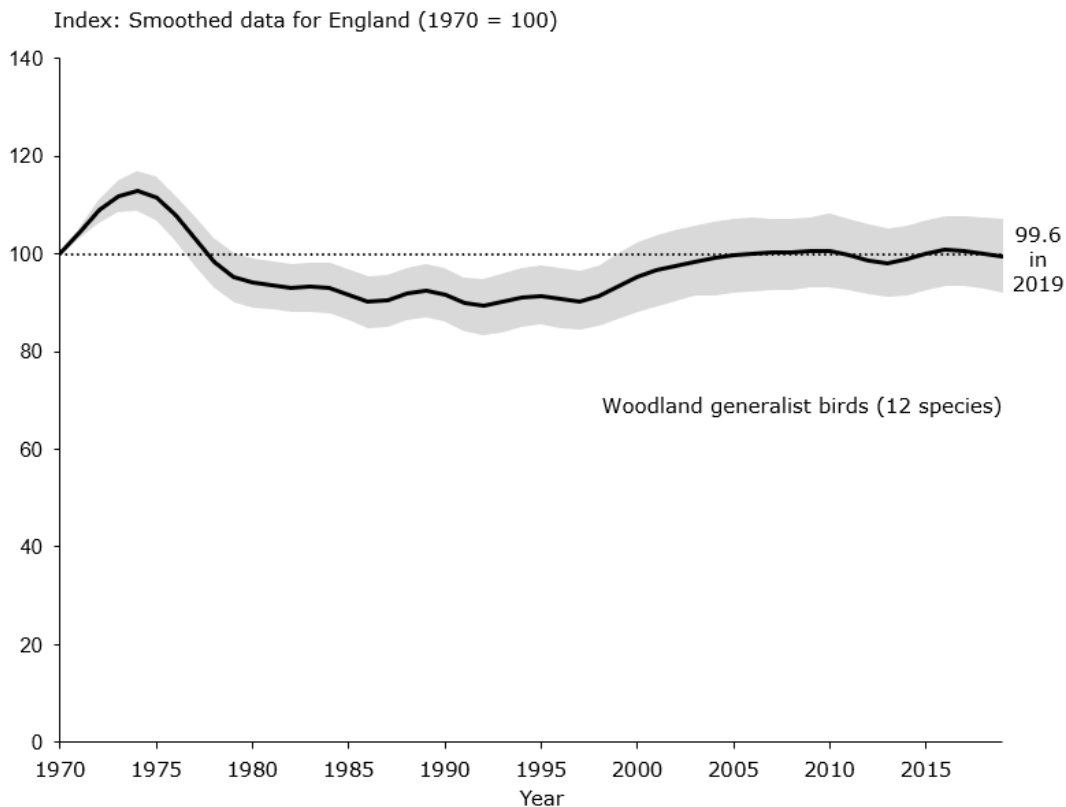
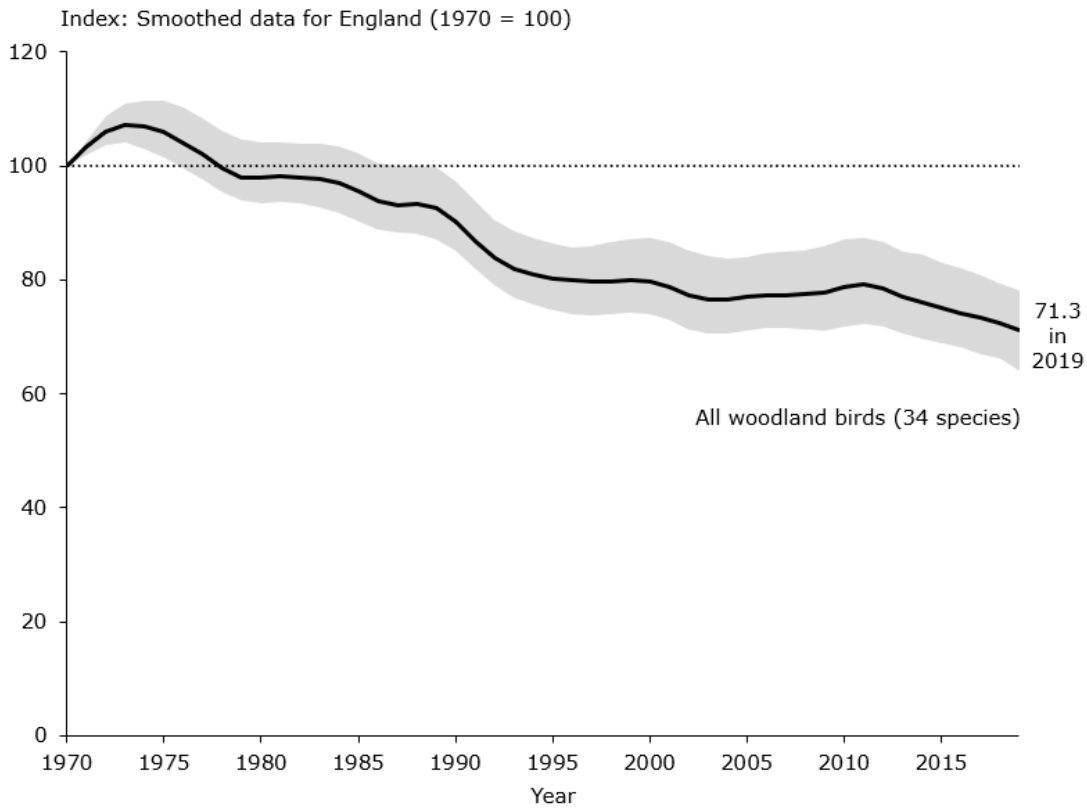
Note: There is no data for PAWS restored in the nation's forests in 2010-11.

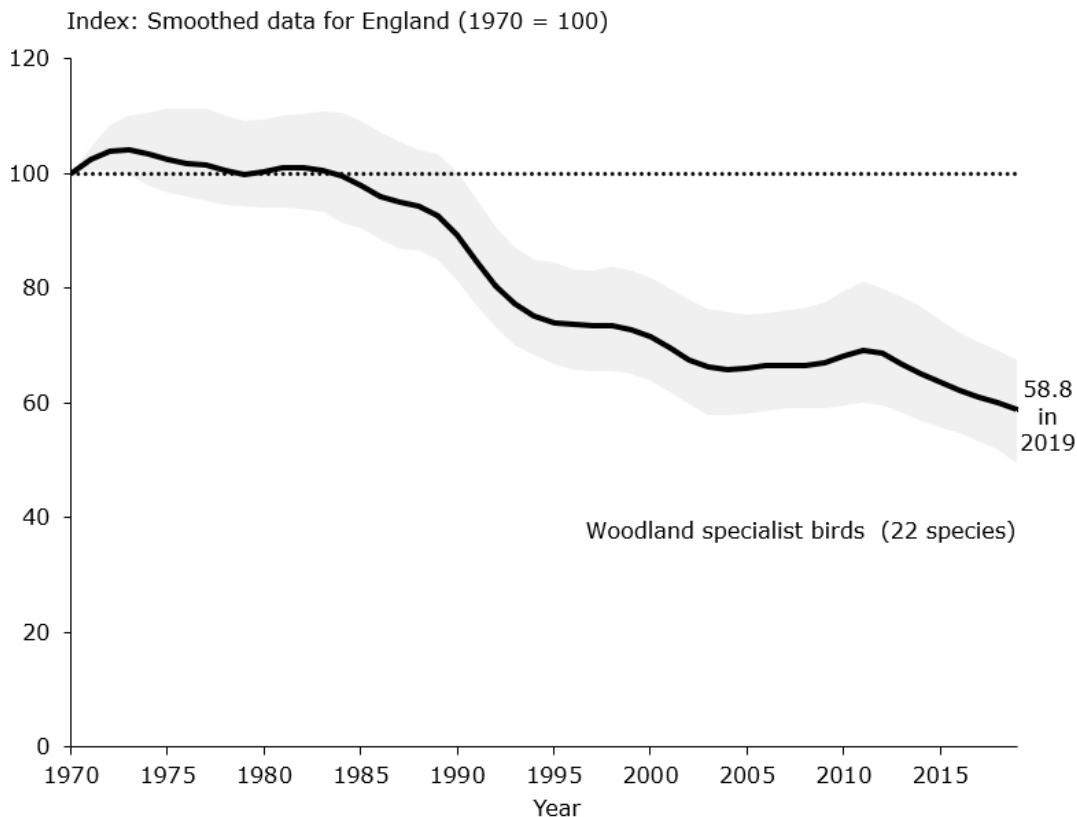
This indicator shows the number of hectares of Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) restored or worked each year, alongside the number of hectares of open habitat created or restored through woodland agreements. The latest figures show an increase to 2,051 hectares of PAWS worked in 2021-22. Forestry England are reclassifying land use and those figures for open habitat created or restored in 2021-22 will be made available after that process is complete.

Assessment of change in: Hectares of restoration of plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS) and of open habitat in woodland in England.

PAWS restored in England	
Five-year trend, totals for 2021-22 compared to totals for 2016-17	Deteriorating
Open habitats restored or created in England	
Five-year trend, totals for 2020-21 compared to totals for 2015-16	Deteriorating

## Measure of what is happening to the number and variety of species that live in woodland; using Woodland Birds data





Source: Data for England related to the report: [Wild bird populations in the UK, 1970 to 2019](#) (Defra, 2020).  
 Note: Each of the three graphs shows a smoothed, unstandardised woodland bird index for England and its 95% confidence interval.

In 2019, the 'all woodland bird index' for England was 28.7% lower than in 1970 (smoothed data). The greatest decline occurred between the early 1980s and the mid-1990s, which is thought to be driven by the nature and extent of woodland management. All three indexes show some slight variation compared to the 2018 figures (decrease for all woodland birds, specialist birds and generalist birds), but none of those are statistically significant.

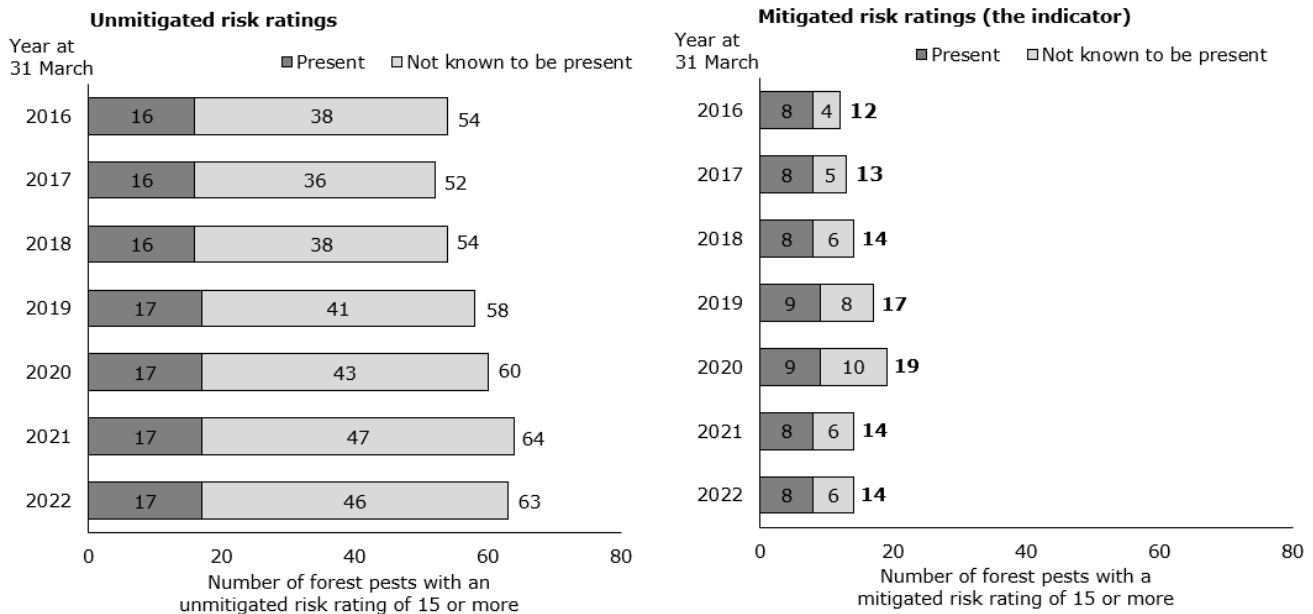
Due to COVID-19 restrictions in the UK, the latest British Trust for Ornithology, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and Joint Nature Conservation Committee Breeding Bird Survey report collected limited data in 2020. Therefore, this indicator has not been updated.

Assessment of change in: Measure of what is happening to the number and variety of species that live in woodland; using Woodland Birds data

All woodland birds index (England),  
 fifteen year trend, 2019 compared to 2004

Little or no overall change

## Number of high priority forest pests in the UK Plant Health Risk Register (UKPHRR).



Source: [UK Plant Health Risk Register \(UKPHRR\)](#) data.

Report at end March 2022: There are now 402 pests identified as forest pests on the [UK Plant Health Risk Register \(UKPHRR\)](#), **14 (3%) of which have been assessed and are considered high priority**. Pests are ranked as high priority if they are assessed as having a mitigated relative risk rating of 15 or more (see Table 2 and Note A below). These high priority pests require actions, in addition to current mitigation measures, to help prevent them having a potentially substantial negative impact on England's woodland.

There has been a slight decrease in percentage consider high priority due to a small increase in the number in the overall number of forest pests and diseases, which has lowered the overall percentage.

The number of high priority forest pests remains at fourteen. Of those fourteen pests and diseases, eight are currently present in England, three being classed as widespread, namely *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus* which causes ash dieback, *Phytophthora alni* which affects all alder species in Great Britain, and *Pseudomonas syringae* pv. *aesculi*, that causes horse chestnut bleeding canker.

Work continues in an effort to eradicate the newly found population of the larger eight-toothed spruce bark beetle (*Ips typographus*) in the South East of England. This pest does not meet the definition as 'high priority' for this indicator because its mitigated risk

rating is less than 15. This is, however, a quarantine (notifiable) pest considered to be a major risk to Norway spruce trees in particular<sup>6</sup>.

**Table 6: The 14 high priority forest pests in the UK Plant Health Risk Register with a relative risk rating (mitigated) of 15 or more at end March 2022.**

<b>Pest or disease: common name</b>	<b>Pest or disease: Latin name</b>	<b>Type of pest or disease</b>	<b>Present in the UK?</b>	<b>Mitigated likelihood score</b>	<b>Mitigated impact rating</b>	<b>Mitigated likelihood multiplied by impact risk rating</b>
Bleeding canker of horse chestnut	<i>Pseudomonas syringae pv. aesculi</i>	Bacterium	Present: widespread	5	4	<b>20</b>
Shoot blight on cedar/Tip blight on eastern hemlocks	<i>Sirococcus tsugae</i>	Fungus	Present: unknown distribution	5	4	<b>20</b>
Two-lined chestnut borer	<i>Agilus bilineatus</i>	Insect	Absent	4	5	<b>20</b>
Sudden oak death; ramorum dieback	<i>Phytophthora ramorum</i>	Oomycete <sup>7</sup>	Present: limited	4	4	<b>16</b>
Chalara ash dieback	<i>Hymenoscyphus fraxineus</i>	Fungus	Present: widespread	4	4	<b>16</b>
Phytophthora disease of alder	<i>Phytophthora alni</i>	Oomycete <sup>6</sup>	Present: widespread	4	4	<b>16</b>
Stem dieback of hazel nut	<i>Pseudomonas avellanae</i>	Bacterium	Absent	4	4	<b>16</b>
Zigzag elm sawfly	<i>Aproceros leucopoda</i>	Insect	Present: unknown distribution	5	3	<b>15</b>
Emerald ash borer	<i>Agilus planipennis</i>	Insect	Absent	3	5	<b>15</b>

<sup>6</sup> There is more information on the larger eight-toothed European spruce bark beetle (*Ips typographus*) here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/eight-toothed-european-spruce-bark-beetle-ips-typographus>

<sup>7</sup> An oomycete is an algae-like fungus.

Table 6 continued: The 14 high priority forest pests in the UK Plant Health Risk Register with a relative risk rating (mitigated) of 15 or more at end March 2022.

<b>Pest or disease: common name</b>	<b>Pest or disease: Latin name</b>	<b>Type of pest or disease</b>	<b>Present in the UK?</b>	<b>Mitigated likelihood score</b>	<b>Mitigated impact rating</b>	<b>Mitigated likelihood multiplied by impact risk rating</b>
Acute oak decline	<i>n/a</i>	Other	Present: limited	3	5	<b>15</b>
Two spotted oak buprestid	<i>Agrilus biguttatus</i>	Insect	Present: limited	3	5	<b>15</b>
Sachalin fir bark beetle	<i>Polygraphus proximus</i>	Insect	Absent	3	5	<b>15</b>
Cypress jewel beetle or juniper buprestid	<i>Lamprodila festiva</i>	Insect	Absent	5	3	<b>15</b>
Fan-leaf virus nematode <sup>8</sup>	<i>Xiphinema index</i>	Nematodes	Absent	5	3	<b>15</b>

Source: UK Plant Health Risk Register (UKPHRR) data.

### **Unmitigated risk ratings**

The number of forest pests assessed as having an unmitigated risk rating of 15 or more at the end of March 2021 is 63 (16%) of pests identified as forest pests on the UKPHRR.

<sup>8</sup> A nematode is a very small elongated roundworm.



## Notes

- A) **Definition, source and summary:** This indicator seeks to report trends in forest pests from the UK Plant Health Risk Register (UKPHRR) that records and rates risks to UK crops, trees, gardens and ecosystems from plant pests and pathogens. 'High priority' pests and diseases are defined for the purposes of this indicator as those with a mitigated relative risk rating (the mitigated likelihood score multiplied by the mitigated impact score) of 15 or more. The individual ratings for likelihood and impact are each on a scale from 1 to 5. Relative risk ratings therefore can have values from a minimum of 1 to a maximum of 25. Taking into account the economic, environmental and social importance of the host species, these risk scores are used to help prioritise additional actions to combat the threats posed by the pests. It should be noted that the data are for the UK. Nearly all listed forest pests present in the UK will also be present in England and listed forest pests absent from the UK are very likely to pose a threat to England.
- B) **Pests included in the scope of this indicator:** This indicator only includes pests listed on the UK Plant Health Risk Register that have been professionally assessed and where the assessment provides the information needed to identify which are forest pests, and of those which are high priority according to the indicator definition.
- C) **Likelihood** provides an assessment of the probability of entry and establishment of a pest for those pests that are absent from the UK which, when combined, can result in the introduction of the threat to a new area. Some pests on the UKPHRR are already present in the UK. In these cases the risk is that of the pest spreading to its maximum extent in the UK. The likelihood scale has a minimum value of 1 (lowest risk) through to 5 (highest risk). There is more information on the factors taken into account in the Phase 1 UK Plant Health Risk Register – Summary Guide<sup>9</sup> (page 6).
- D) **Impact** is an indication of the relative consequence of the pest for the host plant or sector, should the risk materialise. It does not take account of the size or value of the host or sector. Where the pest is already present, the impact is that caused by further spread, against a baseline of damage already occurring. Thus for a pest which is already widespread, the additional impact of it spreading to its full potential distribution may be limited, even if the pest itself is very damaging or expensive to control. The impact scale has a minimum value of 1 (lowest risk) through to 5 (highest risk). There is more on the factors taken into account in the Phase 1 UK Plant Health Risk Register – Summary Guide (page 6-7).
- E) **Value at risk:** Value at risk is not taken into account in this indicator.
- F) **Mitigations:** can reduce likelihood, impact or both and the risks remaining after mitigation provide the basis for this indicator. Mitigations may reduce risk by enhancing regulation, surveillance, awareness and research, or by providing an industry scheme or a contingency plan. The difference between unmitigated and mitigated risk represents an expert judgement of the effectiveness of the current mitigations. See Phase 1 UK Plant Health Risk Register – Summary Guide (page 4) for details.
- G) **Possible relative risk ratings:** Relative risk ratings can take values from a minimum of 1 (lowest risk) through to 25 (highest risk). For the purposes of this indicator 'high priority' pests have been defined as those with a relative risk rating of 15 or more.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/phiw/riskRegister/Summary-of-Guidance-for-phase-1-Public-Ver2.pdf>

**Table 7: Possible Relative Risk Ratings**

**Impact**

<b>5</b>	5 Green	10 Yellow	15 Amber	20 Red	25 Red
	4 Blue	8 Green	12 Yellow	16 Amber	20 Red
<b>3</b>	3 Blue	6 Green	9 Green	12 Yellow	15 Amber
	2 Blue	4 Green	6 Green	8 Green	10 Yellow
<b>1</b>	1 Blue	2 Blue	3 Blue	4 Blue	5 Green
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

**Likelihood**

- H) **Other forest pests and diseases affecting English woodland.** The indicator is only based on the pests included in the UKPHRR. In so doing it effectively captures the major non-native pests threatening UK forestry together with a limited selection of native pests that are the subject of major Government campaigns of action. There are many native and non-native forest pests that are not included in the UKPHRR.
- I) **Precise end of year report dates are:** 9 April 2014, 30 March 2015, 29 December 2015, 30 December 2016, 30 March 2017, 31 March 2018, 31 March 2019, 31 March 2020, 6 April 2021 and 31 March 2022.

Source: [UK Plant Health Risk Register \(UKPHRR\)](#)<sup>10</sup> data.

Open Data: Source spreadsheet data is available from the [UK Plant Health Risk Register \(UKPHRR\)](#).

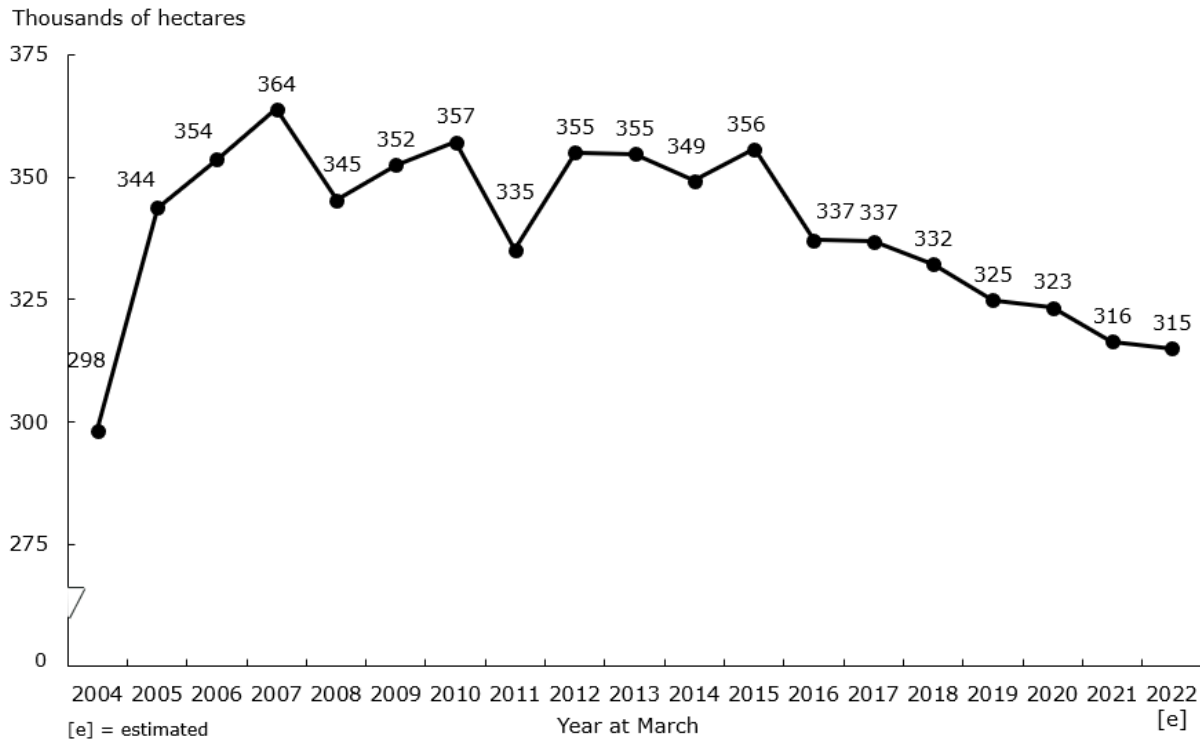
**Assessment of change in: Number of high priority forest pests in the [UK Plant Health Risk Register \(UKPHRR\)](#)**

Five-year trend, Mar-22 compared to Mar-17

Deteriorating

<sup>10</sup> <https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/phiw/riskRegister/>

## Area of woodland in England that is certified as sustainably managed



Source: [Provisional Woodland Statistics 2021](#) (Forest Research). This statistic is based on [Forest Stewardship Council](#) and [Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification \(PEFC\)](#) data.

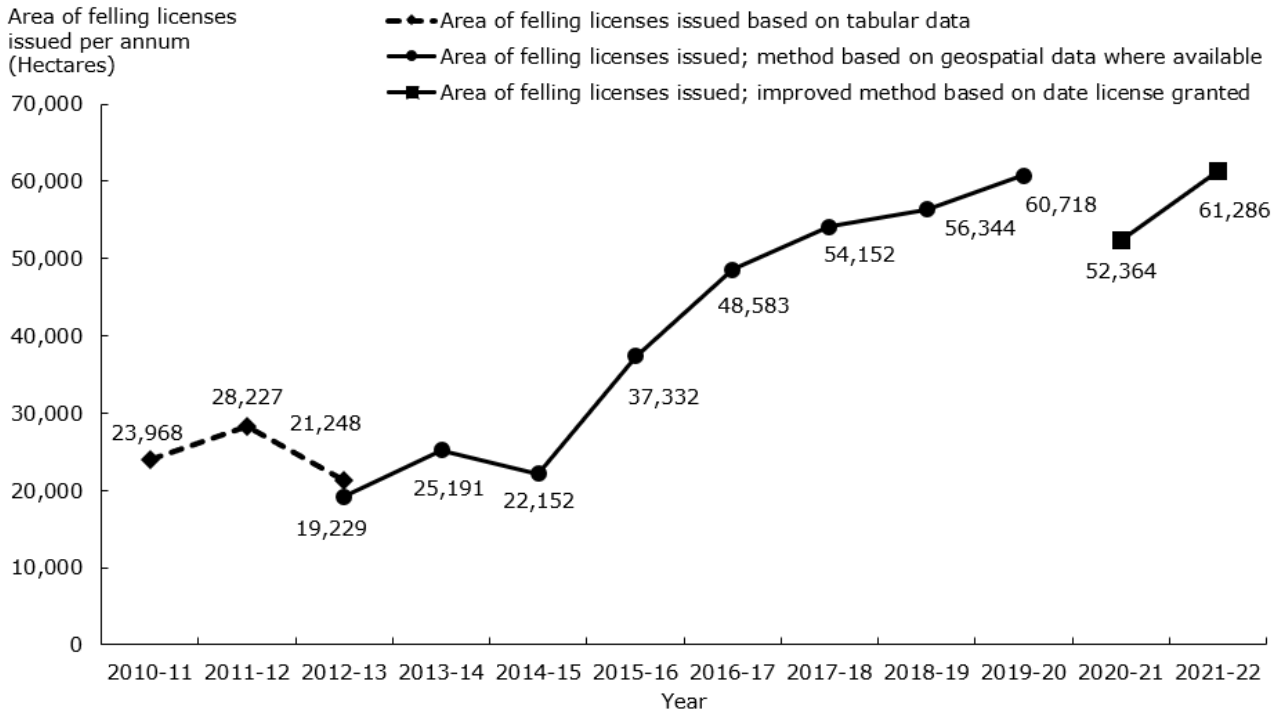
Demand for wood products from woodlands managed in accordance with voluntary certification schemes remains high. Many owners of larger (typically, softwood) woodlands and other businesses in the supply chain respond to this demand by joining internationally recognised schemes such as Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC) and Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC). Local supply chains may not receive sufficient economic or environmental benefit to make joining voluntary schemes worthwhile. This may limit the area of woodland certified by international schemes in England.

Assessment of change in: Area of woodland in England that is certified as sustainably managed

Five-year trend, 31-Mar-22 compared to 31-Mar-17

Deteriorating

## Area of felling licenses issued



Source: Forestry Commission administrative data.

The area of woodland under felling licence remains at a high level and has returned to levels of pre-Covid. We continue to see a modest increase in annual numbers of felling applications, with a clear proportion submitted to address established tree disease such as ash dieback and the impact of windblown trees and woodland resulting from severe winter storms.

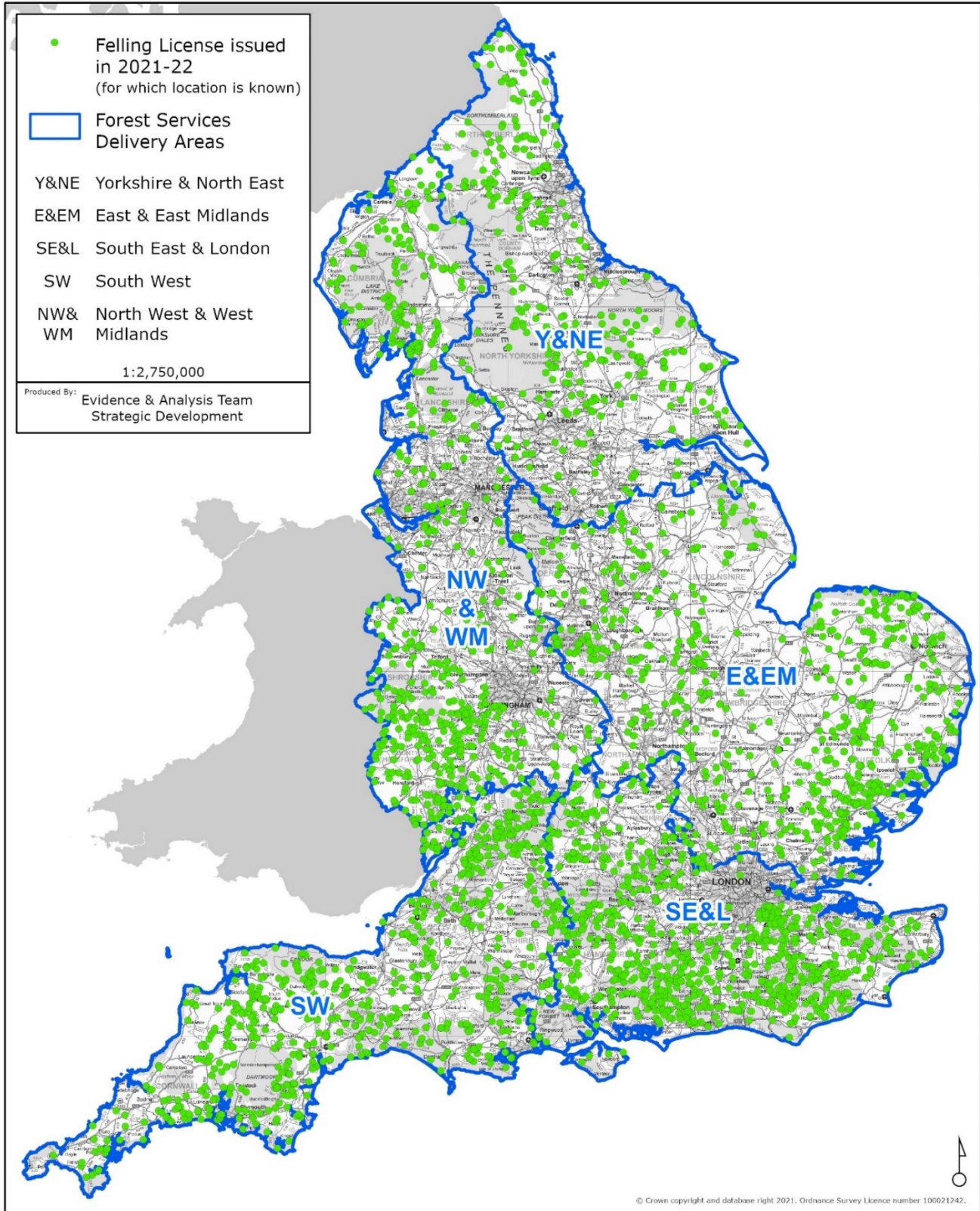
From data that can be disaggregated we can report that 74% of felling licenses granted in 2021-22 were unconditional, and very nearly all of these for thinning of woodland. Some 26% of licenses were conditional whereby woodland owners must restock or regenerate the woodland after felling, to support future woodland regeneration.

### Assessment of change in: Area of felling licenses issued

Five-year trend, 2021-22 compared to 2016-17

Improving

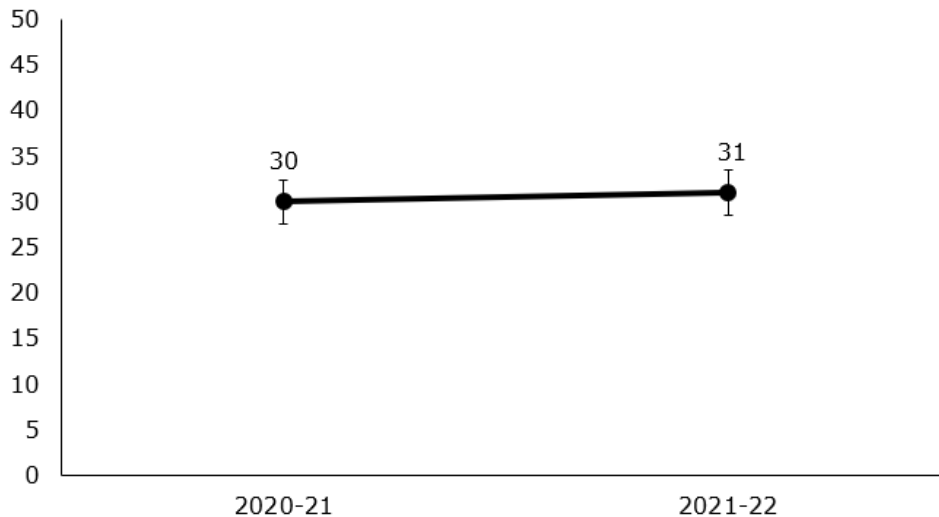
Map 3: Locations of felling licenses issued in England, 2021-22



## Connecting people with trees and woodlands

### Percentage of adults in England who visited a woodland or forest

Average monthly percentage of adults (aged 16+) in England who reported having visited a woodland or forest



Source: [People and Nature Survey for England](#) (Natural England).

Note: The indicator is an average of the 12 monthly survey findings for each respective year and shown with approximate confidence limits.

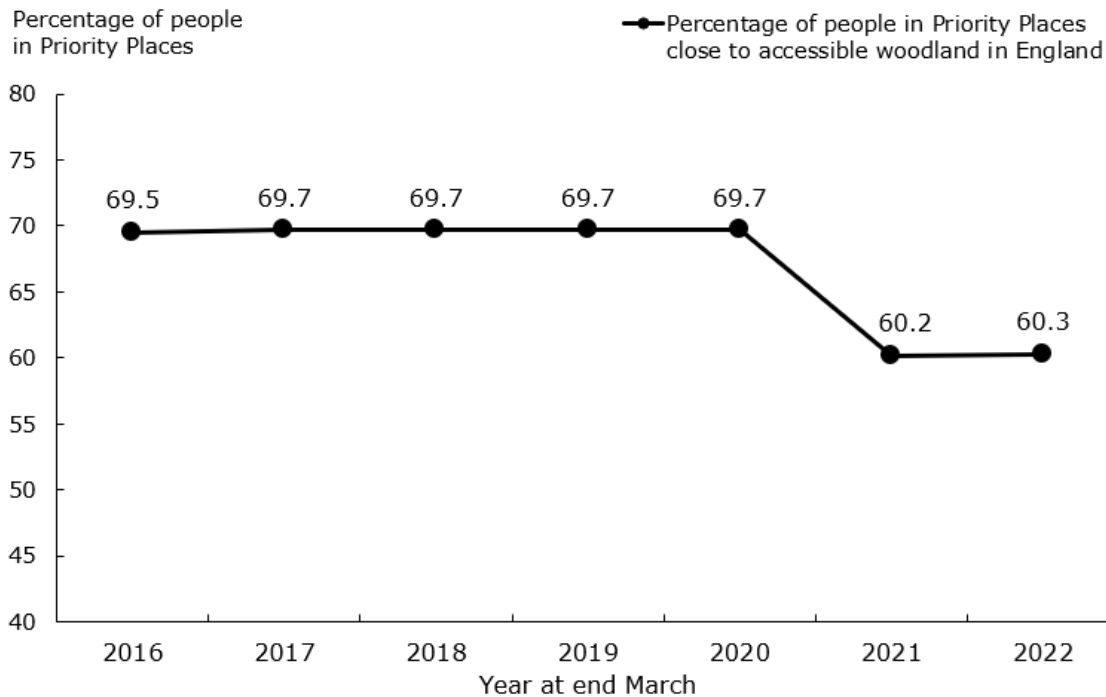
Woodlands continue to be a popular place to visit and the numbers of visits are maintaining healthy numbers and remain in the top three most popular places to visit in the outdoors. The Woodland Access Implementation Plan aims to maintain and where possible increase the number of visits and will seek to ensure a greater representation of society has the ability and confidence to visit a woodland close to where they live.

Assessment of change in: Percentage of adults in England who visited a woodland or forest

One-year trend only, 2021-22 compared to 2020-21

Little or no overall change

## Percentage of people in Priority Places close to accessible woodland in England



Source: Based on the Woods for People dataset (variously the Woodland Trust/ and Forestry Commission), [Census of Population](#) (Office for National Statistics) and the [Index of Multiple Deprivation](#) (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government).

The latest data for March 2022 shows a gradual decline in access to woodlands close to where priority populations live. This could be due to the key dataset used for the analysis (Woods for People) no longer contains England Woodland Grant Scheme supported permissive access arrangements. However, this dataset also does not include other forms of legal access such as public rights of way (PRoW). Work is underway to address these concerns through the [England Trees Action Plan 2021-2024](#) through development of a Woodland Access Implementation Plan and more attractive options to support public access through the new England Woodland Creation Offer.

Note: Priority Places are defined as those within the most deprived 40% of places on the Index of Multiple Deprivation also in built up areas of >10,000 population. Access is defined as residence within 4 kilometres (2.5 miles) of one or more accessible woodlands >20 hectares in size.

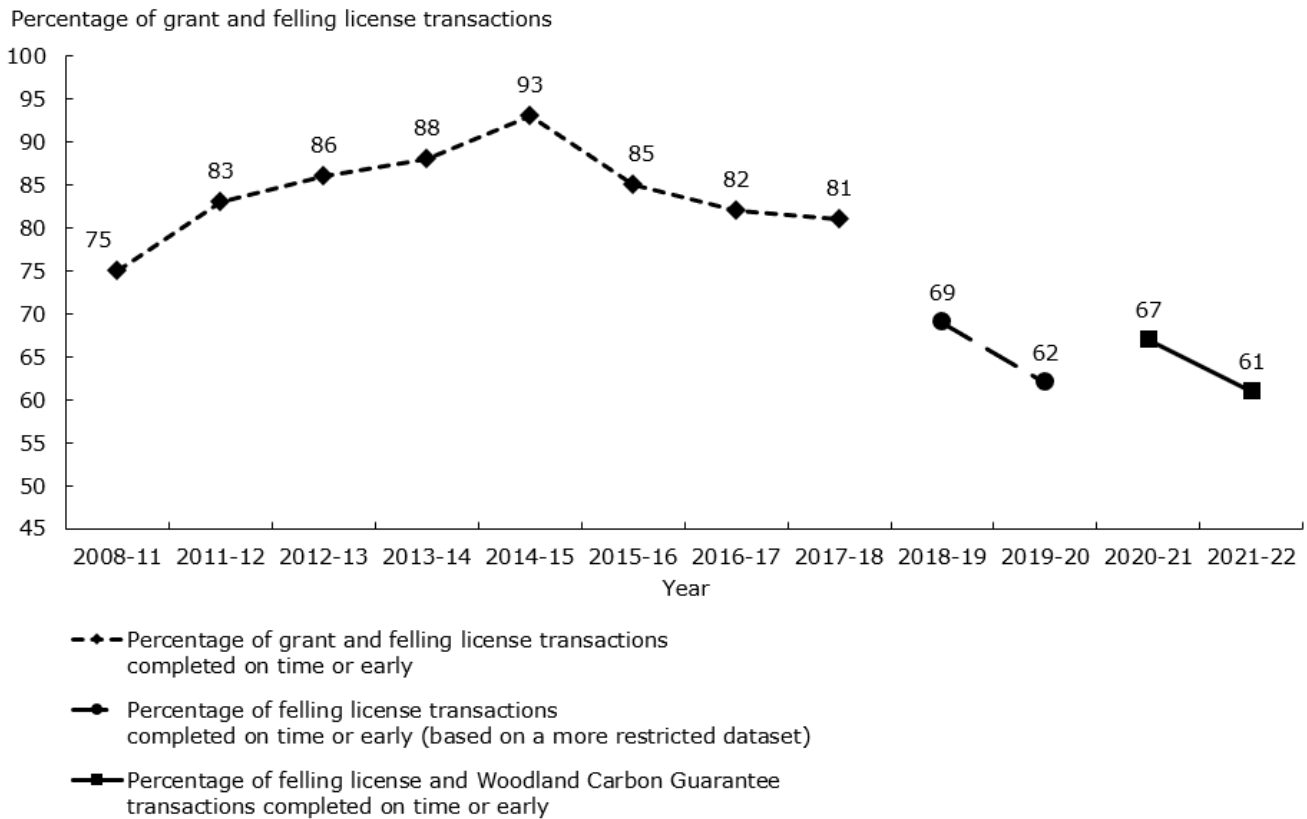
Assessment of change in: Percentage of people in Priority Places close to accessible woodland other than that in the nation's forests

Five-year trend, Mar-22 compared to Mar-17

Deteriorating

## Organisational health

### Percentage of grant and felling license transactions completed on time or early



Source: Forestry Commission administrative data.

Note the indicator is based in the overall percentage of felling licenses 'granted' in 77 days or less and the percentage of Woodland Carbon Guarantee decisions issued within 14 days of the close of the auction.

With felling license transactions, we continue to struggle to meet the Charter target of 85% within the target time. Significant turnover of Area field staff involved in processing applications, and delays in training new recruits has resulted in a challenging year. A felling license task force has been established to review end to end processing, identify and implement improvements, and this is starting to bear fruit as a greater proportion of recent applications are now meeting Charter, with the overall outturn reflecting the legacy of older cases still working through the system. All 19 successful Woodland Carbon Guarantee bids received a decision 18 days after the auction closed, missing Charter by four days.

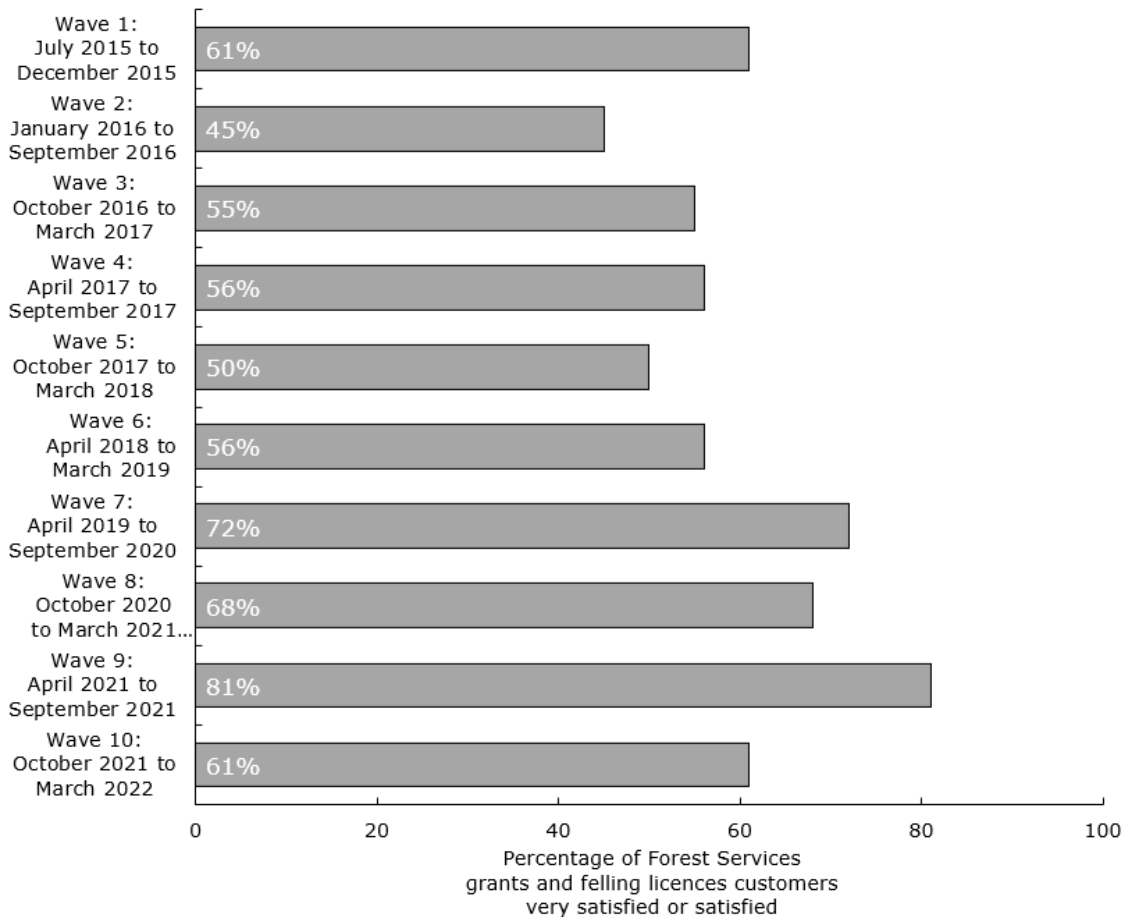
Assessment of change in: Percentage of grant and felling license transactions completed on time or early

Five-year trend, 2021-22 compared to 2016-17

Deteriorating



## Percentage of Forest Services grants and felling license customers who report their customer satisfaction as either very satisfied or satisfied



Source: Forestry Commission customer survey conducted with the help of the [Rural Payments Agency](#) Customer Insight team. Figures shown are sample based estimates.

Note 1: The indicator figure for Wave 8 of the survey has been revised to 68% since first release.

Note 2: Estimates for Wave 8 are based on a relatively small number of respondents in that survey wave.

The immediate trend is down which is disappointing. We are in a period of significant change particular with the grants we offer with changing systems and processes as well as new field and administrative staff. We are addressing this with training and a period of consolidation.

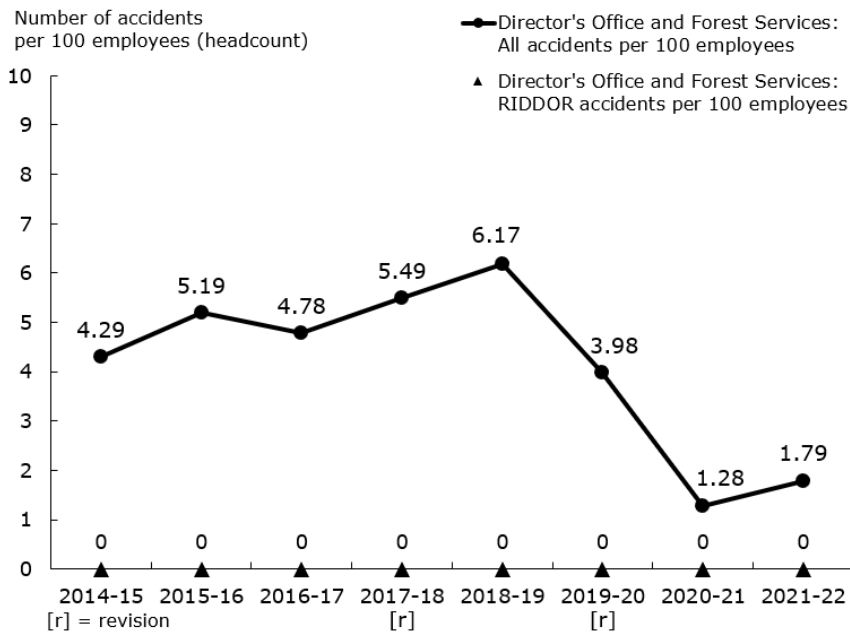
Assessment of change in: Percentage of Forest Services grants and felling license customers who report their customer satisfaction as either very satisfied or satisfied.

Trend for five years:

Oct-21/Mar-22 compared to Oct-16/Mar-17

Improving

## Number of work-related accidents per 100 employees in Forest Services



Source: Forestry Commission administrative data.

Notes:

- 'RIDDOR accidents' are incidents of a type that must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013.
- Statistics for 2017-18 and 2019-20 have been revised to include updated information on staff headcount.

The accident rate per 100 employees (headcount) is relatively static compared with last year, at 1.79. This continues to reflect changing working practices due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with staff working from home wherever possible for much of the reporting period.

Assessment of change in: Number of work-related accidents per 100 employees (headcount) in Forest Services

Five-year trend: 2021-22 compared to 2016-17 (all accidents element)

Improving

## Annex 1: Internal Audit Certificate of Assurance



Government  
Internal Audit  
Agency



Forestry Commission

### INTERNAL AUDIT CERTIFICATE OF ASSURANCE

Forestry Commission (FC) Performance Indicators for the year ended 31 March 2022 have been subject to independent audit by the Government Internal Audit Agency.

We have reviewed the overall governance, risk and control framework for the preparation of the indicators. For each headline indicator, and a sample of other indicators, we have:

- conducted interviews to obtain an understanding of the systems and controls used to generate, aggregate and report on the key data; and
- reviewed the completeness and accuracy of the key data by:
  - assessing relevant supporting documentation used to report the indicators;
  - assessing significant assumptions and judgements where used;
  - testing the documentation which supports the measurement, calculation and estimation; and
  - assessing and testing the source data used to generate the indicators where available.

For the indicators based on information from outside of the FC, we relied on information supplied by other organisations such as Defra and the Environment Agency. We did not carry out any independent verification procedures on the information provided to the FC other than conducting interviews to obtain an understanding of the external information used and the level of information available to support the indicators.

As a result of the procedures carried out and evidence provided, we have obtained reasonable assurance that the indicators are free from material misstatement, and we consider the overall arrangements for the production of the Performance Indicators in the year ended 31 March 2022, to be effective and appropriate. |

*Sally Flett*

Sally Flett FCPFA, ACFS, IIA(Aff)  
Head of Internal Audit, Forestry Commission  
Government Internal Audit Agency  
08 June 2022

## Official Statistics

This is an Official Statistics publication, produced with a view to meeting the standards of the *Code of Practice for Statistics* edition 2.1 (Office for Statistics Regulation and UK Statistics Authority, 2022) available from <https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/code-of-practice/>. More information about Official Statistics is available from [www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk](http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk).

## Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators: Report for 2021-22

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