

**Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**

# **Government Forestry and Woodlands Policy Statement**

## **Implementation Plan**

**July 2013**

# Government Forestry and Woodlands Policy Statement – Implementation Plan

July 2013 Update

| Commitment   | Current Position   | Next Milestones   |
|--|--|---|
| <b>Protecting our Woodland Assets</b>  |  |   |
| <p>1. We will give greater priority to tree and plant health than ever before.</p> | <p>Defra has made plant health one of its top 4 priorities and allocated an additional £8m for research into tree health and plant biosecurity over the next four years.</p> <p>New controls on imports of some native species (oak, sweet chestnut, plane, ash) were introduced in January 2013. Defra negotiators are successfully influencing the ongoing review of the EU Plant Health regime.</p> <p><i>Chalara</i> management plan published March 2013.<sup>1</sup></p> <p>Defra is funding additional accelerated action by FC to eradicate/contain the spread of oak processionary moth in London and Berkshire.<sup>2</sup></p> <p>FC has redeployed resources to increase numbers of plant health field staff.</p> <p>Horticultural Trade Association biosecurity event, York 30 May.</p> | <p>Next update of Chalara management plan March 2014.</p> |

<sup>1</sup><https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/chalara-management-plan>

<sup>2</sup><http://www.forestry.gov.uk/opm>

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| <p>2. We will review the arrangements and resources needed for tree health in light of the final report of the Tree Health and Plant Biosecurity Expert Taskforce.</p>     | <p>Tree Health and Plant Biosecurity Expert Task Force final report was published May 2013<sup>3</sup>. Defra is working closely with stakeholders to respond initially later in the Summer.</p> <p>First version of prioritised risk register produced in June 2013</p>  | <p>July 2013 – Tree Health and Plant Biosecurity Task Force stakeholder summit</p>   |
| <p><b>Improving Our Woodland Assets to Drive Economic Growth</b></p>   |   |  |
| <p>3. We will exchange knowledge with advisors from across the sector on how to take a low burden, risk-based approach to implementing the UK Forestry Standard (UKFS)</p> | <p>Training for sector on increasing resilience of woodland planting in progress: 20 events, 1,250 participants. Sector increasingly taking this up themselves, e.g. Institute of Chartered Foresters, Woodland Trust, Royal Forestry Society, ConFor, National Trust..Session with Natural England advisers held May 2013.</p> <p>UKFS for planners published May 2013<sup>4</sup>.</p> <p>Training on European Protected Species and forestry in progress – 10 sessions, 250 participants to date.<sup>5</sup> Including one for the Wildlife Crime Unit.</p> | <p><b>September 2013</b> - launch of new management planning template with risk based approach linked to UKFS.</p> <p><b>Autumn 2013</b> – FC prepares and with the sector delivers UKFS-compliant forest management planning training events.</p> <p><b>March 2014</b> - FC builds evidence from knowledge exchange back into incentives and regulatory implementation.</p> |

<sup>3</sup><https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tree-health-and-plant-biosecurity-expert-taskforce-final-report>

<sup>4</sup><http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-96LBX9>

<sup>5</sup> For example: [http://www.cla.org.uk/In\\_Your\\_Area/South\\_East/Events/1013674.htm/](http://www.cla.org.uk/In_Your_Area/South_East/Events/1013674.htm/), note for the first time we are charging for attendance as part of trialling charging for advisory services, which was mentioned in the policy statement.

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|  | <p>Training on forestry and landscape in progress – 6 events, 87 participants<br/>December 2012 – March 2013.</p> <p>5 events and 75 people planned for June 2013 - March 2014</p> <p>A programme of general UKFS training events around a new UKFS compliant management planning template is being planned.</p>  |  |
| <p>4. We will work with businesses and civil society to increase the total capacity and capability available to provide targeted advice about woodland management.</p> | <p>Much cross-sector activity already in progress (see commitment 3 above, for example).</p> <p>Draft advice programme produced June 2013.</p>  | <p><b>July 2013</b> - programme activated.</p> <p><b>March 2014</b> – FC refines advice packages and targets for local areas based on evidence.</p>  |
| <p>5. We will publish research on the potential impact of different ways of incentivising landowners to manage and create woodland.</p>                                | <p>The scope of this research project was extended to include a more detailed analysis of (wood)land owners' motivations towards woodland creation. Seizing this opportunity has meant extending the project timetable to end of July 2013 but will result in a more robust evidence base for future analysis.</p> <p>All data gathering is now complete (there was an excellent response to the Ipsos MORI interviews conducted) and work is now progressing well on designing/testing the final segmentation model outputs.</p> | <p><b>Mid July 2013</b> - Final report delivered to Defra.</p> <p><b>Summer 2013</b> and beyond – Initial findings to be fed into design of next RDP.</p> <p>Further analysis of data to be used in future policy-making/other actions to increase woodland management and creation.</p> |

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| <p>6. We will work with businesses on industry-led actions which increase the amount of timber being sold and which help woodland owners manage their woodlands.</p> | <p>The Grown in Britain Action Plan (this has replaced the term 'Wood Industry Action Plan') is underway and making excellent progress. The campaign is being chaired by Peter Bonfield, led by industry with resource support from Defra and FC.</p> <p>Developing areas include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promising commitments to increase market demand and better linking of supply chains</li> <li>• A Corporate Social Responsibility Forest Fund – to be supported by corporate and business bodies</li> <li>• Grown in Britain Brand has been created and quality assurance pilots are in process</li> <li>• Promotion of a better 'wood culture' across society – Grown in Britain has secured significant commitments for societal outreach activities during a 'Grown in Britain week' scheduled from 14<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> October.</li> </ul> | <p><b>July 2013</b> - Peter Bonfield to update at the Forestry Stakeholders Forum.</p> <p><b>July – September 2013</b><br/>– Work to link end users and retailers to timber processors and woodland owners to increase volumes of wood bought. Help industry develop Grown in Britain brand and, if appropriate, align this to timber procurement policy and UKFS.</p> <p><b>October 2013</b> - Grown in Britain week to be held from 14 October with a range of sector led events to celebrate what will be continuing Grown in Britain movement</p> |
| <p>7. We will look for opportunities to take advantage of new initiatives such as the Renewable Heat Incentive</p>   | <p>The industry is responding well to the RHI with more than 1,000 boilers installed in England using £12M of funding so far. Included in Grown in Britain work.</p>  | <p><b>Spring 2014</b> – Government launch of domestic RHI. Work with retailers on increasing boiler deployment in stores. Also focus on self</p>  |

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| (RHI).  | Review of progress on Woodfuel Implementation Plan completed in June 2013 – plan remains on track.   | supply sector.<br><br><b>March 2014</b> - Review progress of Woodfuel Implementation Plan and recommend any actions arising.   |
| 8. We will explore with the National Parks the possibility that they might pilot locally-focused woodfuel initiatives in their areas.                 | The National Park Authorities (NPAs) are involved in a range of woodfuel initiatives and are making good progress. They are working with partners to promote sustainable woodfuel and help join up supply and demand.  | <b>Summer 2013</b> – Defra, FC and NPAs meet to discuss potential approaches<br><br><b>Summer 2013</b> – Defra, FC and NPAs scope and develop plans for pilot initiatives                |
| 9. We will give preferential consideration to woodfuel-based solutions being brought forward under the Rural Community Renewable Energy Fund.         | Defra and DECC have recently launched the £15m Rural Community Energy Fund (recently re-named from the RCREF). This will offer funding to community groups in rural areas of England for feasibility studies and planning applications for renewable energy projects, including biomass, anaerobic digestion, ground and air source heat pumps. Preferential consideration will be given to supporting woodfuel projects in the RCEF assessment process. | <b>Summer 2013</b> – Fund opened for for bids on 28 June and applications welcome. Contact WRAP for more information: <a href="mailto:renewables@wrap.org.uk">renewables@wrap.org.uk</a> |
| 10. We will review the woodland management position in 5 years in conjunction with the sector and decide whether further joint action is necessary to | The FC has built this into its future business planning.   | No actions this year.  |

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| bring more woodland under management  |  |   |
| 11. We will work with industry to highlight opportunities for investment in new bioenergy and energy efficiency projects, including the development of suitable forest-based supply chains.                                       | <p>The industry is already responding well to the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI). As for commitment 7.</p> <p>Grown in Britain has already begun forging promising links to match an increased demand for wood products to increased supply from the forest gate. Better connections being made between wood product markets, processors and woodland owners and managers.</p> | As for commitment 7   |
| 12. We will establish a register of forestry-related projects that are being supported by Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and disseminate examples of best practice and business opportunities widely across the LEP network | <p>Forest Services Area teams have established several projects with LEPs, e.g. Marches LEP forestry initiative<sup>6</sup>.</p> <p>Cumbria LEP has proposed that they chair a LEP forestry group initially facilitated by FC and Defra.</p> <p>England Woodland and Timber Partnership (EWTP) LEP sub-group meeting set up.</p>   | <p><b>July 2013</b> - initial meetings of EWTP LEP group and LEP forestry group. FC to explore bringing these two together.</p> <p><b>Autumn 2013</b> – first activity by EWTP – LEP combined forestry enterprise sub-group, subject to sector support.</p> |
| 13. We will publish the results of our research into wood products and their markets in summer 2013   | Final project reports and recommendations will be provided to Defra shortly.   | <p><b>July 2013</b> - Final report delivered to Defra.</p> <p><b>Autumn 2013</b> - Findings</p>   |

<sup>6</sup>[http://www.ruralhubpartnership.co.uk/\\_marches\\_timber\\_study](http://www.ruralhubpartnership.co.uk/_marches_timber_study)

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|  |  | fed into Grown in Britain and design of next RDP   |
| <b>Improving Our Woodland Assets to Benefit People and Communities</b>   |  |  |
| <p>14. We will work with the sector in seeking funding for possible future initiatives aimed at developing local access, individual potential and community cohesion through engagement with trees, woods and forests.</p> | <p>Further discussions held with the BIG Lottery Fund. Focus currently on engaging the sector then returning to BIG. Also considering other funding sources</p> <p>Funding bid by sector (Small Woods) to support establishment of a Community Woodland Network submitted but unsuccessful so far.</p> | <p><b>Summer 2013</b> - work with the sector to explore options for taking this forward.</p>   |
| <p>15. We will launch a new initiative to develop further the involvement of local communities with the Public Forest Estate.</p>  | <p>Community Groups consulted on plans in April 2013. Four Community Involvement projects selected. Each project's initiation planning underway.</p>   | <p><b>June 2013</b> – FC recruits staff required to deliver projects.</p> <p><b>Summer 2013 onwards</b> – FC delivers projects</p>   |
| <p>16. We will contribute to a pilot project to test further social enterprise activities in woodlands</p>   | <p>Sector-led woodland social enterprise network established. Group had introductory meeting with Minister of State in June 2013,</p>  | <p><b>Summer 2013</b> - network meeting, 19 July. Management group to develop pilot project identified, collecting evidence of social enterprises</p> <p><b>September 2013</b> - Assess potential funders, collate source of tools</p> |

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|   |   | <p>and assess evidence base.</p> <p><b>December 2013</b> – initiate discussions with potential funders.</p>  |
| <p>17. We will provide guidance to assist Local Authorities in reviewing Rights of Way Improvement Plans, with a particular emphasis on woodland access improvements</p>            | <p>Currently surveying Local Authorities to identify requirements and preferences</p>   | <p><b>Summer 2013</b> - Assess survey results</p> <p><b>Autumn 2013</b> - Draft guidance</p> <p><b>Winter 2013</b> - Publish guidance</p>  |
| <p>18. We will fund a pilot project to assess and improve the condition, quality, and connectivity of Public Rights of Way (PROW) for woodland access by foot, cycle and horse.</p> | <p>FC leading on scoping this project, working with Woodland Trust, walkers, cyclists, horse riders and Institute of PROW officers. Project to be led by Sports and Recreation Alliance (SARA).</p> | <p><b>June 2013</b> – workshop by SARA planned to agree pilot selection and project specification</p> <p><b>Summer/Autumn 2013</b> – local assessment surveys of accessibility</p> |
| <p>19. We will continue to provide data for the Woodland Trust's VisitWoods web gateway and work with the Woodland Trust to identify future funding</p>                             | <p>Woodland Trust has committed to carrying on with this service.</p>   | <p><b>Complete</b> – FC will continue to provide data</p>  |
| <p>20. We will help to support a</p>  | <p>The network is working with support from</p>   | <p><b>September 2013</b> -</p>   |

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| sector-led Forestry and Planning network, encouraging them to demonstrate how trees and woodlands contribute to sustainable development and help enable growth                                  | FC and has agreed to prepare signposting site for planners to easily access the information they need when dealing with trees and woodlands  | network engaged in Government planning guidance review project.<br><br><b>Autumn / Winter 2013-14</b> - Signposting information in place and promoted through existing planning sector contacts. |
| 21. We will support the Royal Forestry Society (RFS) to include an Urban Forestry category in their Excellence in Forestry Awards   | FC funding already provided. 11 high quality entries across the North West and West Midlands. Winner and runners up identified. They will be announced in an awards ceremony in Manchester on 3 July.  | <b>July 2013</b> - RFS announce results. Commitment then completed.  |
| <b>Improving Our Woodland Assets to Benefit Wildlife and the Natural Environment</b>  |  |  |
| 22. We will continue to implement the Natural Environment White Paper and Biodiversity 2020, including by encouraging woodland management and creation that helps conserve and enhance wildlife | <p>The potential woodland contribution to Biodiversity 2020 has been presented to the terrestrial biodiversity group (TBG) leading on wider biodiversity implementation actions and thence to the Biodiversity Programme Board.</p> <p>FC funding for Deer Initiative agreed and local area agreement on collaborative deer management being set-up.</p> <p>To implement the NEWP commitment to 'maximise the contribution which Environmental Stewardship and the</p> | <b>Autumn 2013</b> - establish linkage between UK Forestry Standard and Biodiversity 2020 habitat condition targets.   |

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|  | English Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS) make to promote multiple benefits from ecological restoration at a landscape scale', FC is planning to mesh EWGS within a redesigned environmental land management scheme to achieve improved ecosystem outcomes on a landscape scale. |  |
| 23. We will work to improve and restore our native and ancient woodlands and open habitats through renewing our commitment to the policies set out in the Open Habitats Policy and Keepers of Time | Indicators published in May 2013 showing progress against open habitat and PAWS restoration in preparation.   | <b>Summer 2013</b> - awareness raising of policy with stakeholders and other partners.                                       |
| 24. We will publish a strategy for Open Habitat Policy delivery on the Public Forest Estate to set out the future priorities for development and management of open habitats across the Estate     | The Open Habitat Strategy is in the process of being drafted under the direction of the FEE Head of Forestry Management.  | <b>Autumn 2013</b> - publish strategy  |
| 25. We will encourage, where appropriate, Local Nature Partnerships to identify forestry as a local  | FC currently gathering information on forestry sector engagement with Local Nature Partnerships.  | <b>Summer 2013</b> - Joint Natural England, Environment Agency, Forestry Commission, Marine Management Organisation offer to |

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| priority  |  | <p>LNPs published</p> <p><b>Summer 2013</b> – complete information gathering on forestry sector engagement</p> <p><b>Autumn 2013</b> – review engagement with LNPs</p> <p><b>Spring 2014</b> – refresh delivery offer to LNPs.</p> |
| <b>Expanding Our Woodland Assets</b>  |  |  |
| 26. We will work with the sector to find new ways of encouraging landowners to plant more trees where it best suits them and their local conditions | <p>The Woodland Carbon Task Force (WCTF) is well established. Refreshed scope and membership to be explored.</p> <p>WCTF identified as National Stakeholder Steering Group for 'EIA pilot' (see 27).</p> | <p><b>August 2013</b> - Membership and remit of WCTF further strengthened and revised, cross-sector programme agreed.</p> <p><b>September 2014</b> – results of Woodland Potential Consultation published.</p>                     |
| 27. We will pilot an approach that would reduce the regulatory burden on landowners who want to plant woodland                                      | Forestry Regulation Task Force generally endorsed the approach to regulation of woodland creation under current conditions.  | <b>September 2013</b> - pilot scoped, stakeholder group established, initial mapping requirements set out.   |

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| <p>by clarifying where a full Environmental Statement is unlikely to be required</p>   | <p>Project description agreed – June 2013</p>  | <p><b>December 2013</b> - initial mapping completed, pilot approach agreed.</p> <p><b>March 2014</b> - options report drafted.</p>  |
| <p>28. We will introduce a carbon registry and a group scheme for the Woodland Carbon Code (WCC), support further work on carbon accounting in wood products and underpin new woodland planting in guidance to businesses on reporting greenhouse gas emissions and reductions</p> | <p>WCC is progressing with uptake by landowners increasing. 1<sup>st</sup> WCC group scheme validated April 2013.<sup>7</sup></p> <p>Internal Operational Guidance on WCC published June 2013.</p> <p>Informal consultation on methodology for Harvested Wood Products (HWP) in the Carbon Reporting Framework delayed to March 2014 to allow implications of the Defra-funded project ‘Furthering the Use of English Wood Products’ to be taken into account.</p> | <p><b>Summer 2013</b> - launch of the WCC on Markit Environmental Registry</p> <p><b>September 2013</b> - Annual update of WCC published;; scope methodology for UK Carbon Reporting Framework.</p> <p><b>September 2013</b> – Publication of WCC pilot report on options for improved reporting of ecosystem services (link to Grown in Britain).</p> <p><b>March 2014</b> – consult informally on HWP methodology in the UK CRF</p> <p><b>March 2014</b> - Evaluate</p> |

<sup>7</sup><http://www.forestry.gov.uk/newsrele.nsf/AllByUNID/9B7701E4E9D083AD80257B550030C7A7>

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|   |  | initial response to the Markit registry and associated income streams available; HWP methodology available on UK CRF.  |
| <p>29. We will consider the inclusion of a new tree canopy cover metric as a complement to woodland cover reporting in the National Forest Inventory (NFI) when the next cycle of the NFI is reviewed in 2014</p>               | <p>National Forest Inventory up and running.</p> <p>Scope of pilot study initially agreed – June 2013. Considering how Northern Upland Chain LNP project on mapping small woodlands might be included within the design of the pilot.</p>    | <p><b>December 2013</b> – complete analysis</p> <p><b>March 2014</b> – circulate report on pilot to stakeholders, decide whether to take forward.</p> <p><b>June 2014</b> –develop potential funding mechanisms, if appropriate.</p> |
| <p><b>Realising Our Woodlands Value</b></p>   |  |  |
| <p>30. We will work with the Natural Capital Committee and the Office of National Statistics to develop a set of natural capital accounts for UK forestry and use this to develop a set of natural capital accounts for the</p> | <p>Currently engaging with Office of National Statistics (ONS) and Natural Capital Committee (NCC) as UK forestry accounts are developed.</p> <p>The ONS published a range of papers on natural capital accounts on 26 June.<sup>8</sup></p> | <p><b>Summer 2013</b> – continue to work with ONS and NCC on development of forestry accounts</p>  |

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/user-guidance/well-being/publications/index.html>

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| Public Forest Estate   |  |  |
| <p>31. We will develop a woodland ecosystem market roadmap by summer 2013 to bring together actions by Government and our partners over the next 5 years to (a) build knowledge (b) develop wider networks of collaboration and expertise and (c) implement mechanisms and projects to demonstrate good practice</p> | <p>Initial draft has been produced for comment amongst the FC economics team. Full draft now in preparation.</p>   | <p><b>Spring/Summer 2013</b> - Draft roadmap</p> <p><b>Autumn 2013</b> - publish roadmap</p>   |
| <p>32. We will work with other organisations and initiatives to support the further development of markets in forest carbon and other ecosystem services such as water and biodiversity</p>  | <p>Voluntary markets for forest carbon are emerging. Working with Enviromarket to develop a framework for assessing the social and environmental benefits of forestry. Planning a pilot study to do this, using an existing Woodland Carbon Code project (linked to GiB).</p> <p>Engaging with corporates and representative bodies (e.g. IEMA) to improve understanding of corporate needs.</p> <p>Woodland for Water measures included in draft RDP proposals.</p> | <p><b>July 2013</b> – stakeholder workshop on Woodland Carbon Code in partnership with ECCI</p> <p><b>August 2013</b> – publish research on the cost-effectiveness of forestry in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions abatement</p> <p><b>Autumn 2013</b> – publish FC Research Note on investment returns to forest carbon markets</p> |

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|  | <p>Environment Agency contributing to local woodland creation initiatives.</p> <p>Work ongoing to improve woodland creation targeting to maximise water benefits</p> <p>FC has proposed contribution to delivering water management objectives through the Catchment Based Approach and the Water Quality and Agriculture project (June 2013).</p> | <p><b>Summer 2013</b> - hold bilateral discussions and, if appropriate, a workshop on finance instruments for investment in woodland creation and complete market research into forest ecosystem service markets.</p> <p><b>March 2014</b> - Establish forum or network for forest finance.</p> |
| <b>Developing Strong and Resilient Delivery Arrangements</b>   |  |   |
| <p>33. We will retain a core of forestry expertise within Government with the capacity to deliver a range of functions duties and powers</p> | <p>Defra/FC joint review of current arrangements completed.</p> <p>Future delivery options for the regulatory and advisory forestry functions to be explored through joint FC/Defra Woodland Policy Enabling Programme, with appropriate involvement of Devolved Administrations and stakeholders</p>  | <p><b>3 July</b> – update to be provided at National Forestry Forum.</p>  |
| <p>34. We will confirm the organisational arrangements through which the Government's ongoing forestry expertise and</p>                     | <p>Defra/FC joint review of current arrangements completed.</p> <p>Future delivery options for the regulatory and advisory forestry functions to be explored through joint FC/Defra Woodland Policy Enabling Programme, with appropriate</p>   | <p><b>3 July</b> - update to be provided at National Forestry Forum</p>   |

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| <p>functions will be delivered in the future after the Triennial Review reports its preliminary conclusions in spring 2013</p>  | <p>involvement of Devolved Administrations and stakeholders</p>  |   |
| <p>35. We will work with the devolved nations to ensure that vital cross-border functions in areas such as research, standards and tree health can continue to be delivered centrally, where this is appropriate</p>  | <p>Defra and FC engaging with devolved administrations in a range of areas including responding to Tree Health and Plant Biosecurity Expert Task Force final report.</p> <p>Cross Border issues being taken forward through joint FC/Defra Woodland Policy Enabling Programme with involvement of Scottish and Welsh Governments</p> | <p><b>Summer 2013</b> - Government produces initial response to task Force Report.</p> <p><b>Summer 2013</b> – progress WPEP Cross Border project, including discussions with DAs.</p> <p><b>Summer 2013</b> - consult on revised Science and Innovation Strategy for Forestry in GB.</p> |
| <p>36. We will establish a new, operationally-independent Public Forest Estate management body to hold the estate in trust for the nation and manage its resources effectively to maximise the value of the land, trees and other assets under its care</p> | <p>Development of PFE Management Organisation (PFE MO) being taken forward through joint FC/Defra Woodland Policy Enabling Programme.</p> <p>FC/Defra Project Team established and work underway to develop plans for the new body, keeping stakeholders informed of progress.</p>   | <p><b>3 July</b> - update to be provided at National Forestry Forum</p>   |

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