

Quarterly Communications Report Oct-Dec 2015

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Section 1: Reactive communications

Forest Enterprise: PFE media enquiries and locations requests

- No spikes in calls or coverage about particular issues, but noticeably more calls than usual.
- A high number of requests to use PFE as a location for TV productions – including programmes about weather, competitions, and a 'Myleene Klass Meets Single Mums' documentary.
- Briefing and media support for to national office inquiries secured good coverage, including a Countryfile (BBC1) investigation into wild boar in Forest of Dean and Mark Ballard's excellent performance on autumn colours which was broadcasted on Gardeners' Question time (BBC Radio 4).
- Reputational issues handled included dog illnesses, horse-riding and fly-tipping. We have also prepared a comms plan and reactive lines to take for Chalara confirmation at Westonbirt, and lines to take following Chalara being confirmed in all English counties.

Forest Services: Countryside Stewardship

- After Higher Tier (woodland improvement) applicants were given an update on how NE plans to issue agreements. This raised questions about other grants, we drafted reactive lines to explain FCs position.
- A letter has also been sent in December to woodland creation applicants who have not yet had agreements issued, outlining how we will progress their applications.

Forest Services/ Central Services: Statistics and tree health

- We have handled media requests following statistical publications, including timber forecasting and restocking, we have including provided briefing for Farming Today's 'Forestry Week'. Public concern over restocking notices also prompted media engagement.



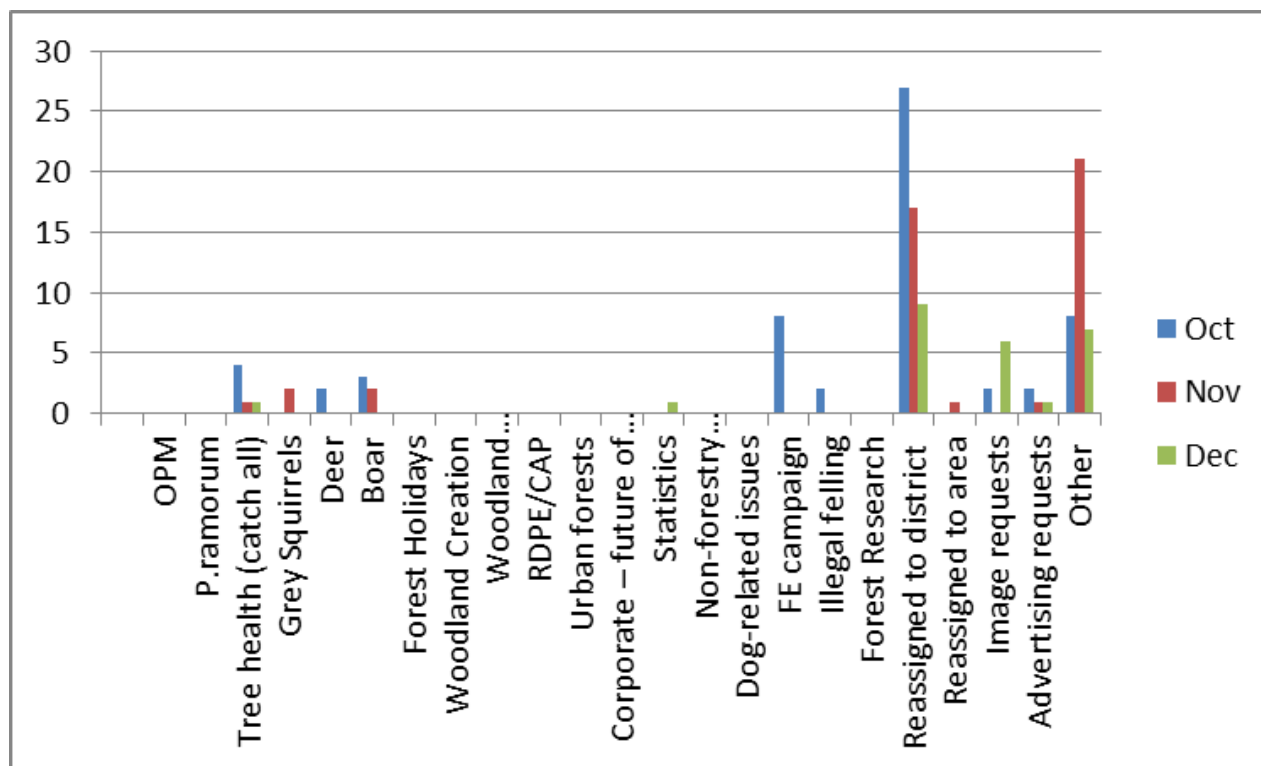
Where are the best places to enjoy autumn colours in the UK? 10 beauty spots to visit this season

HorticultureWeek HS2 promises to secure plant stock from the UK

Section 1: Reactive communications

Press Calls

128 press calls and emails were received during the quarter, with the most common enquiry being district related. The chart below shows the record of calls by topics.



Section 2: Proactive Communications – FS

Making woodlands work

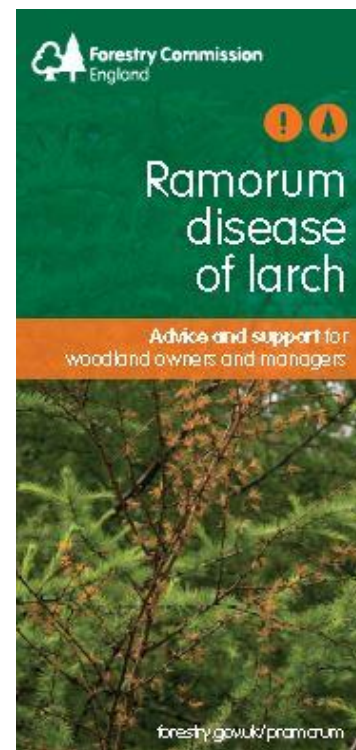
- We have created a series of info-graphics reflecting the results of our woodland owner survey, and summarising the benefits of actively managed woodlands.
- These will be used on Twitter, in editorial and on our new Making Woodlands Work Facebook page.

Forestry Innovation Fund

- We supported the launch of the new Forestry Innovation Fund and Woodland Creation Planning Grant by contributing to a press release published by Confor.
- We also updated stakeholders via our e-alert and an applicants' focus group, and briefed staff via webinar.

Tree Health

- We refreshed our *Phytophthora ramorum* leaflet, and are updating the Chalara one. These are being distributed by Areas and Districts, and the *P. ramorum* leaflet is also being distributed as an insert with forestry trade magazines. PDF versions will be available on our website;
- We have worked with Defra and Woodland Trust colleagues to influence the messages, tone and language of a series of WT-sponsored articles about tree health in the Daily Telegraph;
- In November we published Edition 4 of Tree Health News.
- We have published a new web page about *Xylella fastidiosa*, a new threat to some tree species of forestry interest; and
- We published a contingency plan for outbreaks of 8-toothed European spruce bark beetle (*Ips typographus*).



Woodland makes up 10% of England. If you own woodland, you have a valuable resource at your fingertips.



Section 3: Proactive Communications – FE

Autumn Colours

The autumn colours campaign was received well across broadcast, print and digital media. Highlight results were:

- 167 pieces of press coverage including the Express, Daily Mail, Telegraph, Mail on Sunday, Times and Mirror;
- 4 items on radio and TV, including BBC Look East, ITV, Sussex Breakfast and Farming Today;
- On twitter our #autumnleafwatch communications reached 122342 people with 2678 engagements - the biggest reach was achieved by our 'chemistry of autumn colours' infographic;
- the great success of the #autumnleafwatch photo competition, with more than 350 submissions via Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. More than 800 people voted for the winner, making it our most successful competition to date.

Stickman

There has only been local media coverage highlighting the Stickman trails because no national media promotion was allowed. National coverage is expected in the New Year after the film was shown by the BBC on Christmas Day.

Enchanted Christmas

Westonbirt's Enchanted Christmas gained excellent local and national media coverage following an arranged photo call. The Times also included it on its iPad edition, which was the lead image in its daily picture gallery.

Christmas

- The Kielder Christmas tree to Parliament story was picked up locally (Creative Concern issued to local media), and The One Show covered the story on 16th December. (Sadly, there was no mention of the FC after all Alex Maclellan's hard work!)
- The #sensesofchristmas campaign, which focused on Christmas events across the PFE, was received well digitally, and was picked up by local media.
- The #treecycling campaign, which aimed to encourage people to recycle their Christmas trees, comprised a press release and scheduled Facebook and Twitter posts. This has been received well so far, and was published nationally by the BBC.

 **Forestry Commission Woods and Forests**
23 November 2015

Congratulations to our #autumnleafwatch competition winner, Shweta Chauhan, with her beautiful image taken at Westonbirt Arboretum! We'd also like to congratulate the two runners up Jon Lord and Ivonne Goffin. Thanks to everyone who submitted entries.



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newsbeat

Latest Popular Topics

Five top tips (and some others) on what to do with your Christmas tree

Section 4: In focus – Making Woodlands Work

The Government has set a goal to get 66% of England’s woodlands under active management by 2018; the current levels of managed woodland stand at 58%.

Forestry Commission England has developed a communications strategy to highlight the benefits of active management to woodland owners, encouraging them to get management plans in place. The campaign sets out to change their attitudes about managing woodlands, including busting some myths such as ‘it’s too expensive’, ‘access is difficult’ and ‘it’s not profitable’.

Customer Insight

To inform our plans, we commissioned an on-line survey of woodland owners and in-depth focus groups in early-mid 2015, and heard from 175 members of our target audience. Some key findings include:

- 33% of participants did not have a woodland management plans in place;
- 39% were unaware of the guidance and financial support that we could help them to access;
- 79% of participants who currently actively manage their woodlands do so for wildlife management; and
- 72% do so to harvest wood fuel. This is compared with only 12% who do so to improve resilience on their land, and 16% who do so to take advantage of commercial game shoot opportunities

The survey highlighted the vital importance, when engaging with this audience, of face-to-face communications opportunities offered by the events held by Area teams. The results also illustrated the importance of partnership working with member organisations such as the CLA when communicating with landowners. Trade events and print media are also key.

Grown in Britain week

Grown in Britain (GiB) Week took place in October, launched by the Secretary of State at an event at Heals to champion the benefits of buying home-grown timber. Ian Tubby and GiB CEO Dougal Driver appeared on BBC Breakfast to reinforce this message.

During GiB Week, and to mark the National Woodfuel Conference, we issued a press release to highlight some of the results of our survey. They illustrated how much revenue many landowners are failing to realise by not exploiting the full potential of their woodlands. The story was reported by Farming UK, Pro Arb, Horticulture Week and Farming National Monthly, amongst others.



Commercial benefits include income from:



Popular myths – busted!



Section 4: In focus – Making Woodlands Work

Communications toolkit

We have created a toolkit for use by Area and NET teams to help communicate the benefits of actively managed woodlands over the coming months. The toolkit includes:

- leaflets;
- real-life case studies;
- a stakeholder presentation;
- a key messages summary; and more...

Social media

We have created a series of info-graphics reflecting the results of our woodland owner survey, and summarising the benefits of actively managed woodlands. These will be used on Twitter, in editorial and on our new Making Woodlands Work Facebook page.

Editorial

Articles are due to appear in January in:

- Reclamation Magazine;
- the CLBA members' magazine; and
- Farmer's Weekly.

While meeting your own objectives you also maintain England's treasured landscapes and wildlife. Managed woodland provides:

.....

Wildlife habitats and biodiversity



Protection from flooding



Resilience to pests and disease



Section 5: In focus – Christmas

Aims:

- To promote public forests as fantastic places get into the Christmas spirit with our events/walks/festive stalls.
- To help increase sales of real Christmas trees in England.
- To engage with members of the public to get them involved in our social media sites.
- To promote the Forestry Commission as experts in trees, woodlands and sustainable forestry.



Outputs

National PR:

- The benefits on buying real Christmas trees, focusing on the top senses which people can discover in the forest at winter.
- The Forestry Commission experience – promoting events across the PFE.
- Great Britain's famous tree – a look at the journey from Kielder to the Houses of Parliament.
- Recycle your Christmas tree, focusing on the benefits to the environment and economy.

Regional PR

- Localised from national releases

Social media

- Tweets and Facebook posts relating to the senses of Christmas (taste, touch, sound, smell and sight) which people can enjoy in a Forestry Commission woodland during the Christmas period. This were delivered using the hashtag #sensesofchristmas.
- A digital quiz designed to enable people to pick their ideal Christmas tree.
- An info-graphic on how to care for Christmas trees.
- 12 posts delivered across Facebook and Twitter to promote different ways for people to recycle their Christmas trees after the festive period – 12 days of #treecycling.

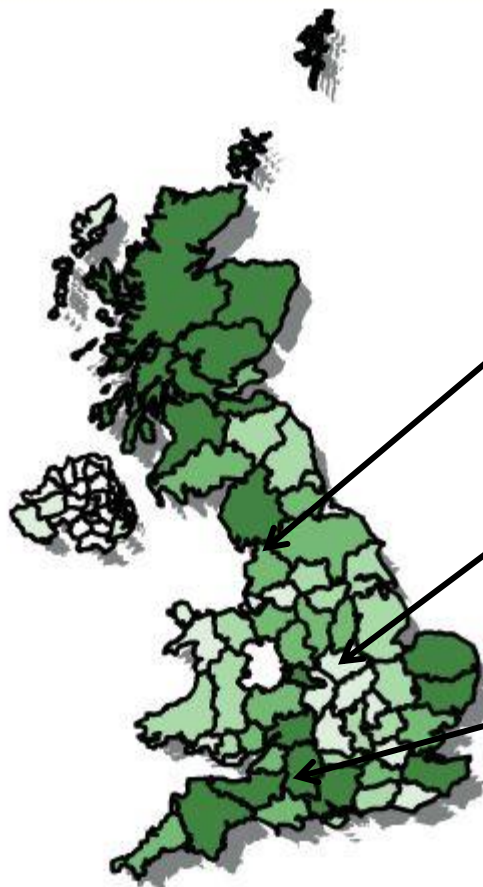
Section 5: In focus – Christmas

Outcomes:

- The Kielder Christmas tree to Parliament story was picked up locally and The One Show covered the story on 16 December.
- The #sensesofchristmas campaign was received well across our social media channels, and local press coverage was received showcasing our events. Highlights included:
 - 3718 unique views to forestry.gov.uk/sensesofchristmas;
 - 39,527 people were reached by #sensesofchristmas tweets, with 642 engagements; and
 - an increase of 1000 unique views to www.forestry.gov.uk/caringforyoutree from 2014/15 due to the new graphics on Facebook and Twitter.
- The #treecycling campaign has been received well digitally and has also been picked up by national media. Highlights included:
 - BBC News published our story; and
 - A reach of 47,002 on Facebook, with 2,082 engagements.



Section 6: District communications



North

- Grizedale has partnered with National Trust, Lake District National Park and other key organisations to start the China Forum to encourage Chinese tourists to visit the Lake District and our tourist attractions.
- Gisburn Forest Hub was awarded Dark Sky status, which gained media coverage.

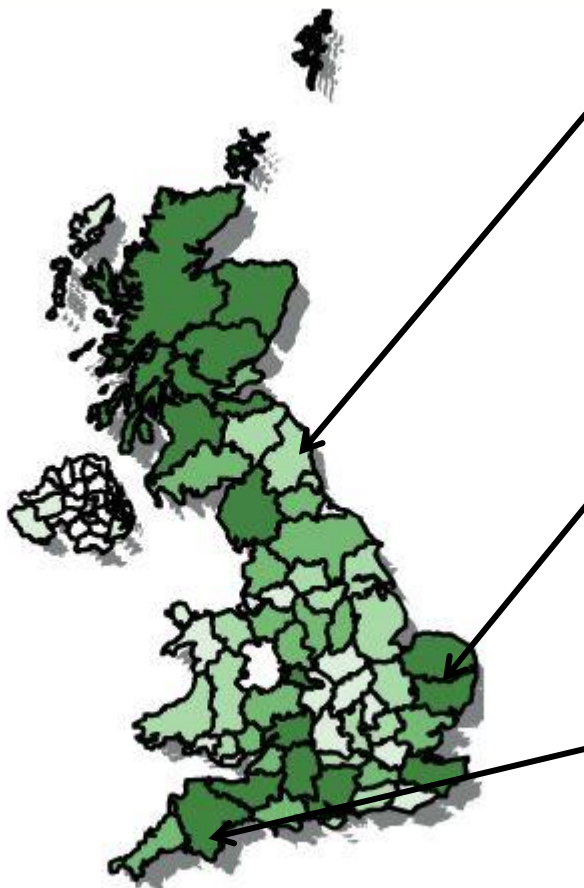
Central

- Thank You campaign – good feedback anecdotally. Follow-up research planned for the Feb half-term break.
- Stickman – teaser social media posts performed really well. Further communications about this will have to be carefully judged as to whether it is necessary so that we don't overload sites with visitors (especially tree sales sites). Will look at doing bigger push from January to March, which are key off-peak times.

Westonbirt

- Fantastic press coverage received for autumn colours. and record visitor numbers during the season.
- Enchanted Christmas also a huge success – selling out on all nights! Fantastic national coverage received.

Section 7: Area communications



Yorkshire & North East

- Tree health events held on 4th and 5th November in York and Newcastle, with more than 150 stakeholders at both events. The events met their objectives.
- Elizabeth Truss, SoS, opened the Pickering 'Slowing the flow' project, which was covered well in a Bark article.

East & East Midlands

- Filming completed for two videos for Making Woodlands work- myth busting, filmed in Cumbria.
- Pie and pint events going well. Following the first master-class there has been a rethink about the structure of this event to make it more interactive.

South West

- 8 Pie & Pint events planned First was 24th November, last is 28th Feb. Bookings through Eventbrite – going well so far.
- Email sent to promote FACE advice, and this is proving popular. Giving initial advice when people contact us and referring on to LEADER and others. Keeping spreadsheet to decide who to refer to FACE.

Section 8: Social media

Forestry Commission England



@ForestryCommEng followers:

14,801 (up 9% on last quarter)

Engagement rate (no. of engagements divided by impressions - impressions are the number of times a post is displayed in users' feeds):

1.7% (same as previous quarter)

Forest Enterprise



FC Woods and Forests Facebook page likes:

18,179 (up 9% on last quarter)

Engagement rate

3.6% (up 0.3% on previous quarter)


Top posts – Forest Enterprise

 **Forestry Commission Woods and Forests**
Published by Sian Fullylovey [?] · November 7 · 🌟


Breaking news! Stick Man's lost and he needs your help to get him back home to his family this winter! Keep an eye out at a forest near you... www.forestry.gov.uk/stickman. #stickmantrail



73,375 people reached Boost Post


 **Forestry Commission Woods and Forests**
Published by Sian Fullylovey [?] · December 4 at 9:51am · 🌟

Look out for the beautiful new animation of Stick Man on TV this Christmas! Starring Martin Freeman, Hugh Bonneville, Russell Tovey, Rob Brydon, Sally Hawkins and Jennifer Saunders. More info at www.stickmanofficial.com/film. After you've seen the film try a Stick Man trail in a forest near you: www.forestry.gov.uk/stickman.




Stick Man - Film
Official Stick Man Website. Stick Man is not only a wonderful picture book written by Julia Donaldson and illustrated by Axel Scheffler, but also a delightful stage show, fun-filled app and a brand new animated film coming to BBC1 this Christmas.
STICKMANOFFICIAL.COM | BY LIMEPARK STUDIOS

43,504 people reached Boost Post

 **Forestry Commission Woods and Forests**
Published by Sian Fullylovey [?] · December 8 at 7:50pm · 🌟


Today we've launched this film about managing our forests for people, wildlife and the economy, featuring the passionate and enthusiastic Brian Blessed.

Brian and our Head of Land Management for Central District Andrew Powers discuss the importance of timber production, wildlife and recreation in the role of sustainably managing our forests.

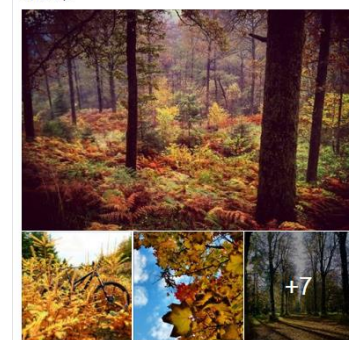


Brian Blessed finds out about managing the public forests of England
Actor, presenter and nature lover Brian Blessed talks with the Forestry Commission to find out how...
YOUTUBE.COM

37,510 people reached Boosted

 **Forestry Commission Woods and Forests** added 10 new photos.
Published by Sian Fullylovey [?] · November 16 · 🌟

Thanks to everyone who entered their pictures in to our autumn photo competition – we've had some really great entries! It's now down to you to vote for the image you want to win by 'liking' your favourite. Votes close at 10am on 23 November 2016, then we will announce one winner and two runners up.



9,666 people reached Boost Post

Section 8: Social media

Forest Services



@TreePestNews followers:

3,806 (up 5% on previous quarter)

Tree Pest News @TreePestNews - Nov 18
Environmental factors including #pestsanddiseases are changing woodlands | Tree Health News: bit.ly/1X4byNv



RETWEETS 11 LIKES 3

Top posts – Forest Services

Forestry Commission @ForestryCommEng

During #NationalTreeWeek celebrate the economic, social and cultural value of our forests, woodlands, and trees



RETWEETS 63 LIKES 53

Forestry Commission @ForestryCommEng

So you own a woodland but don't know the best way to manage it?
forestry.gov.uk/makingwoodland...
#MakingWoodlandsWork



RETWEETS 26 LIKES 22

Forestry Commission @ForestryCommEng

British timber sculptures span the globe. Here's one in Tokyo #ExportingisGREAT @charliewhinney



RETWEETS 24 LIKES 15

Section 8: Social media

Video: Brian Blessed finds out about managing the public forests of England

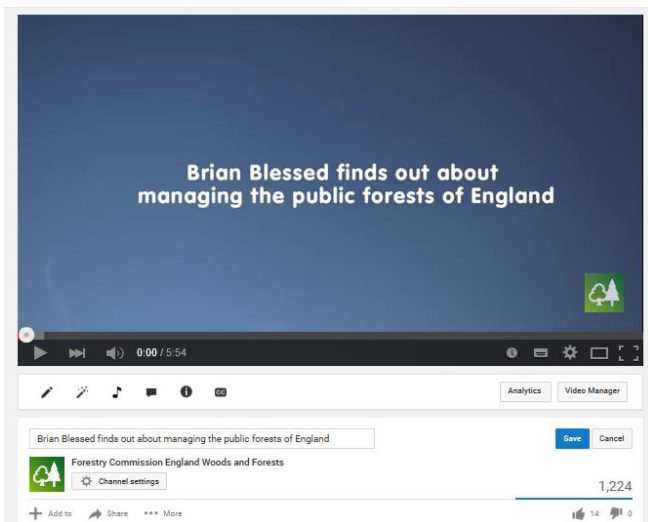
Forestry Commission Woods and Forests

2 posts

Combined reach > **66,670** users

822 clicks through to Youtube video

141 shares



Youtube: 1,224 views

@ForestryCommEng

15 tweets

Combined impressions > **29,220** users

84 clicks through to Youtube video

92 retweets



Brian Blessed joins us to discuss managing England's public forests in this short film:

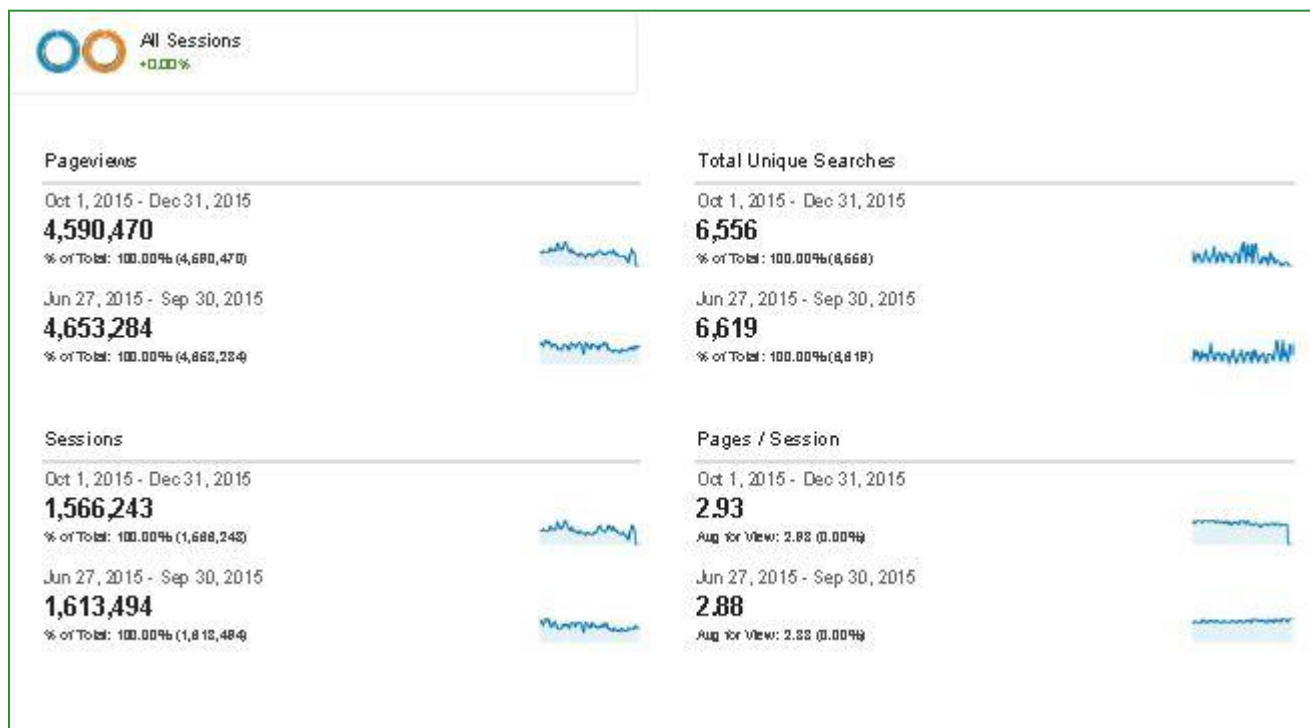
bit.ly/LandMgmtFilm



RETWEETS 17 LIKES 18



Section 9: Web Update



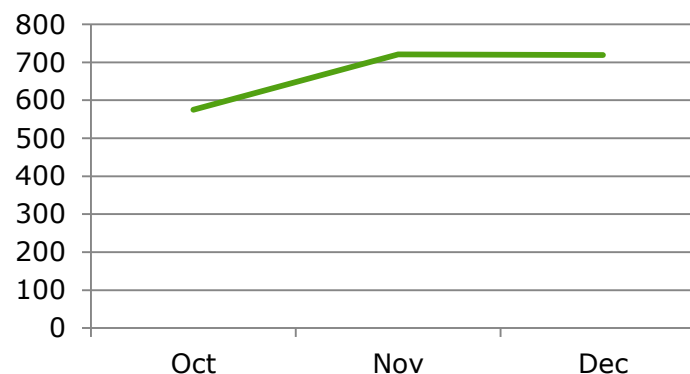
The figures are holding steady to the previous quarter's numbers for page views, unique searches and sessions.

Section 10: Internal Communications

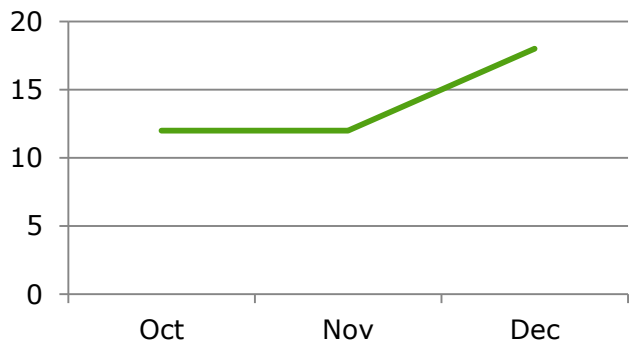
Most popular articles in Bark in this period:

1. It started with a wasp – Ben Jones nominated for Inspirational Line Manager Civil Service Award
2. Lake scheme to bring multiple benefits – woodland creation scheme in Kentmere
3. The value of London Trees is proven in ground breaking report – London iTree Eco Project

Number of Bark readers



Number of Yammer posts

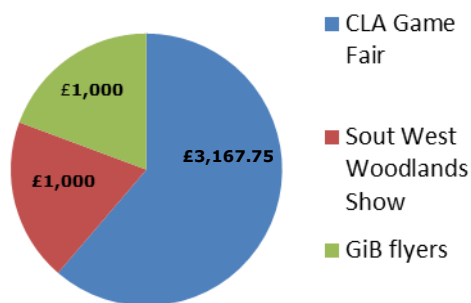


Feedback from Bark reader's survey: (71 responses)

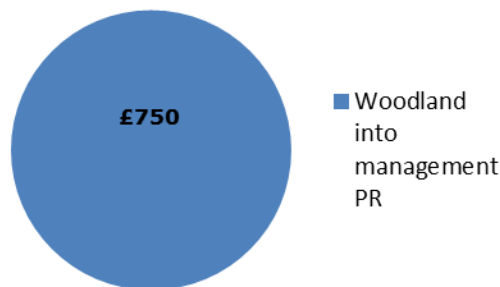
- 69% said they read all or most of every issue.
- 80% said that 'most' or 'a good amount' of the content is of interest to them.
- 78% said that the style of Bark is very readable and the tone is right
- 75% agreed that Bark helps them to learn more about the organisation
- 63% agreed that Bark helps them to feel part of the Forestry Commission
- 41% said they look forward to reading Bark

Section 11: Spending Controls

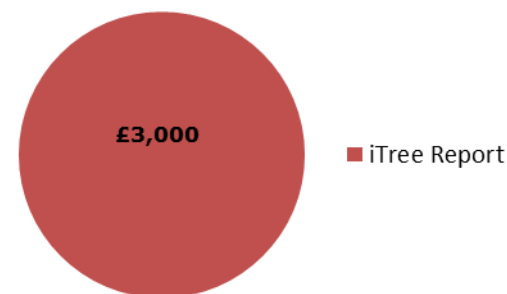
October



November



December



Outcomes:

- CLA Game Fair – There were 35 discussions with owners and agents at the stand, which left them better informed with their questions answered.
- SW Woodlands outcomes – There were 2060 visitors to the show over two days, with 505 advisory conversations. 102 attended practical demonstrations, and 27 people signed up for Forest Services newsletter.
- Woodlands Into Management PR – Case studies prepared and articles lined up for Farmers' Weekly and CLA Magazine in January.
- Wildlife / regulatory – Programme team reviewing plans after PR firm's proposal rejected.

Section 12: Forward Look

Forest Services

- **Countryside Stewardship** - As we begin year two of the scheme, a lessons learned presentation will be created for stakeholder briefings, outlining scheme improvements to be introduced for 2016. A decision tree is also being created to outline the woodland opportunity for potential applicants. Together with case studies, these materials will be used as part of a proactive “prepare” campaign and a series of local Area events. Communications will also support programme milestones in the New Year: woodland creation is likely to open in February, and the Higher Tier (of which woodland improvement is part) will open in March.
- **Customer satisfaction survey** - A new customer satisfaction survey is set to launch in the New Year to evaluate the application processes for grants and regulatory services.
- **Tree Heath** - We plan to implement a proactive campaign highlighting the importance of good biosecurity practice, and setting out a clear call to action for the industry to lead by example in helping slow the spread of pests and diseases.

Forest Enterprise

- **Alabama Rot** - We expect Alabama Rot to continue into the New Year if previous years are to go by. Likely to affect more Districts, so we will continue to support with lines etc. and aim to position it as a wider-than-FC issue (as last year).
- **Forest Holidays** – work ongoing to prepare media and stakeholder engagement plans for sites due to submit planning applications or start planning process in 2016. We will work closely with Districts to ensure they are equipped with Q&As etc.
- **PR tender** – preparing new tender for PR and marketing agency support for 2016 and beyond. Hope to have new contracts in place by April 2016 after current contracts expire end March.

Section 12: Forward Look

Working with One Defra to identify key moments for 2016:

