

Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators

Headline Performance Update
30 June 2022

Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators Headline Performance Update at 30 June 2022 (First Release)

The Forestry Commission publishes a range of key performance indicators (KPIs) to highlight our contribution towards forestry and woodlands in England, and to show barometers of trends in the wider forestry sector in England. The indicators reflect our objectives 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 indicators also reflects our commitment to evidence-based working, and to ensuring that there is a robust evidence base 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 Plan¹, The England Trees Action Plan 2021-2024² and the Tree Health Resilience Strategy 2018³.

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, 38 in all, were most recently reported in the Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators: Report for 2021-22, published⁴ in June 2022.

Our first interim quarterly monitoring report of 2022-23 on the set of six headline indicators is provided in this Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators: Headline Performance Update at 30 June 2022. The quarterly interim updates are provided where data are available at that time of year. The six headline indicators are listed in Table 1.

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

This is an Official Statistics publication, produced with a view to adhering to the standards of the Code of Practice for Statistics (Office for Statistics Regulation and UK

¹ 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>

² UK Government (2021) *The England Trees Action Plan 2021-2024*, London: Defra, 38 pages, at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/england-trees-action-plan-2021-to-2024>

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

⁴ Forestry Commission (2022) *Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators: Report for 2021-22*, Bristol: Forestry Commission, 68 pages, at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/forestry-commission-key-performance-indicators-report-for-2021-22>

Statistics Authority, 2022). The Government Internal Audit Agency have assured the latest and previous annual out-turn statistics.

Table 1: Forestry Commission Headline Key Performance Indicators

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We publish:

- Updates on the six headline Forest Services indicators quarterly
- Updates on the six headline Forestry England indicators annually
- Reports on the full suite of 38 Forestry Commission indicators annually.

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

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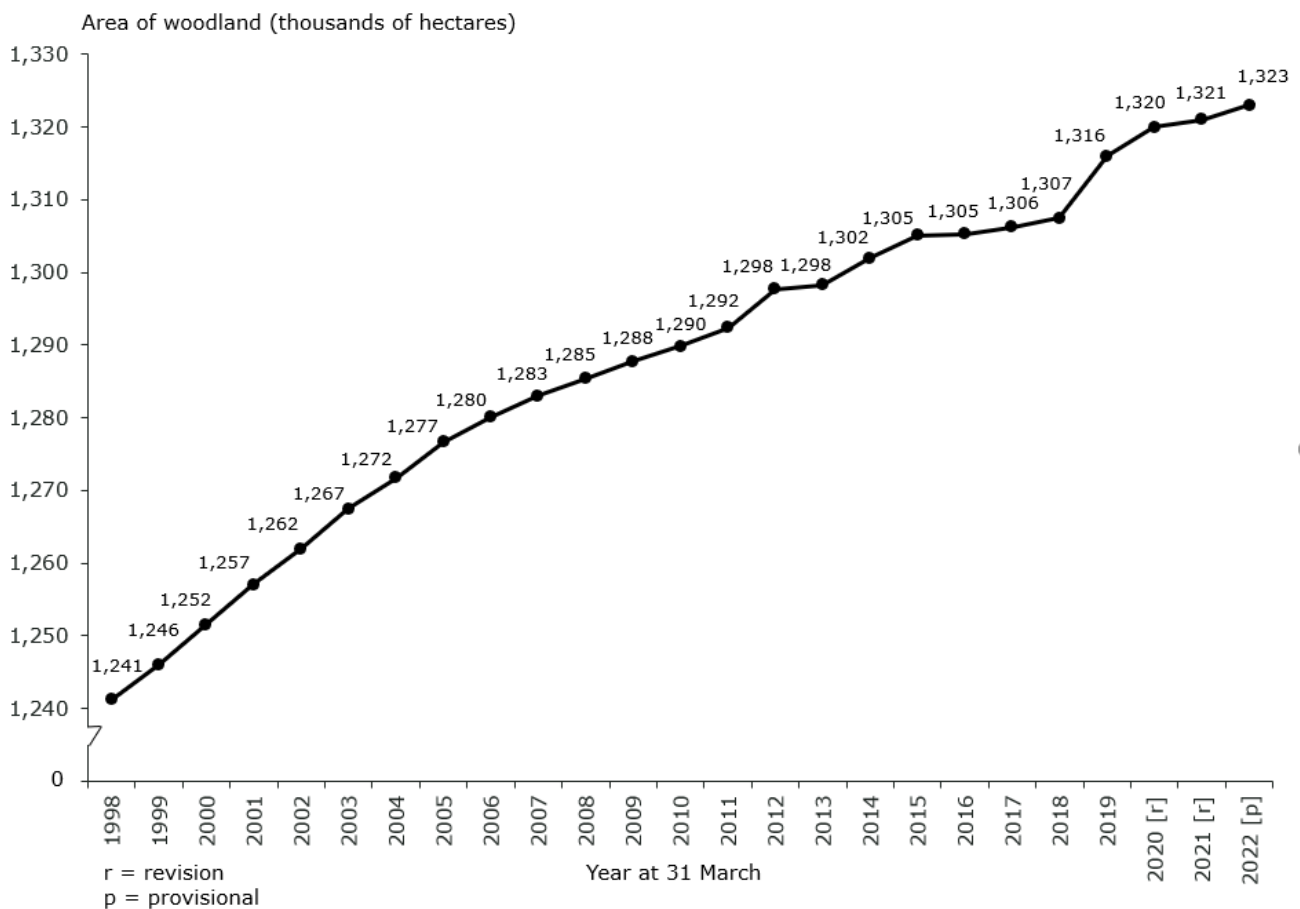
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10 August 2022

Forest Services Headline Key Performance Indicators

Expanding and connecting our trees and woodland

Area of woodland in England



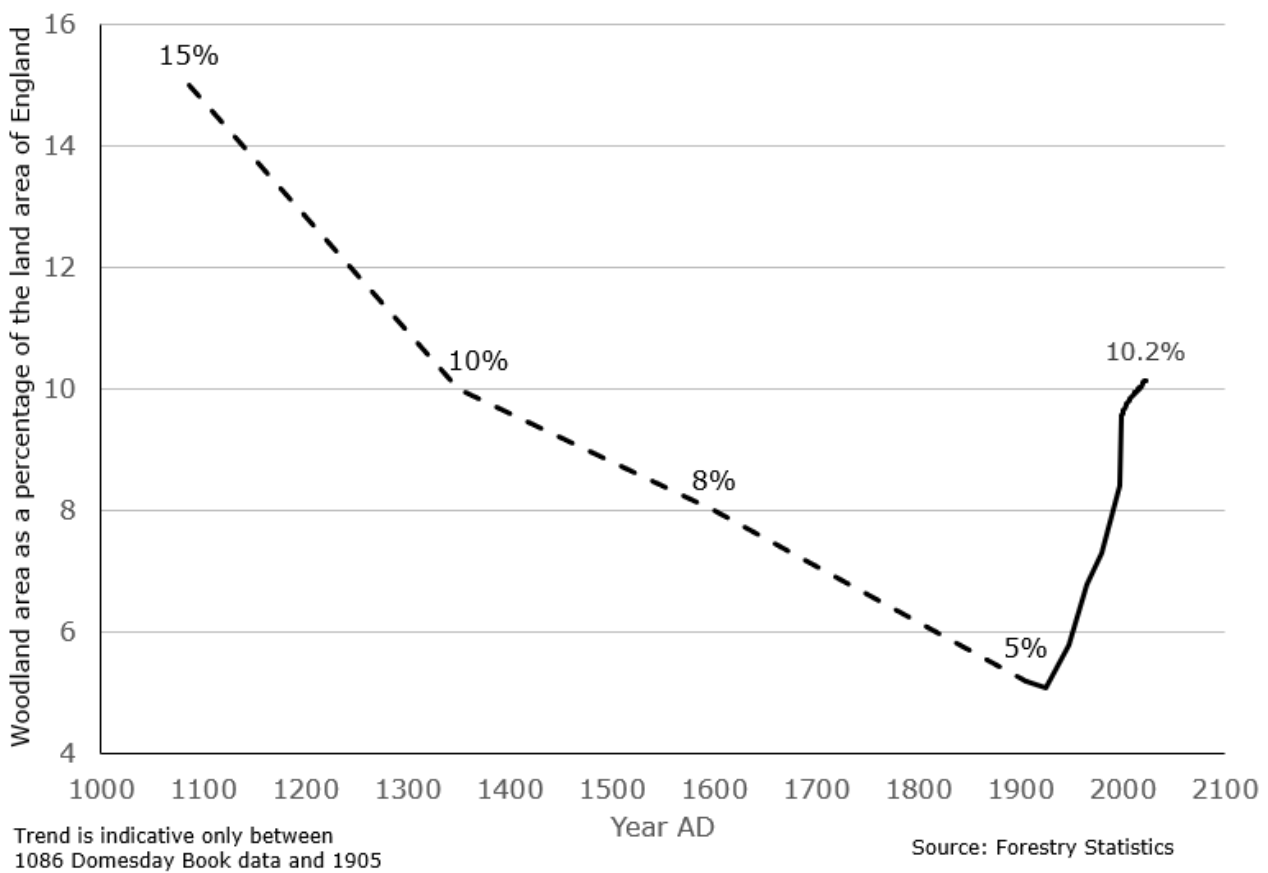
Source: [Forestry Statistics 2021](#) and [Provisional Woodland Statistics 2022](#) (Forest Research), based mainly on the [National Forest Inventory](#) and Forestry Commission administrative data.

Reports for this indicator are published annually. Our most recent report as at 31 March 2022 was included in our annual Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators: Report for 2021-22 and is as follows⁵.

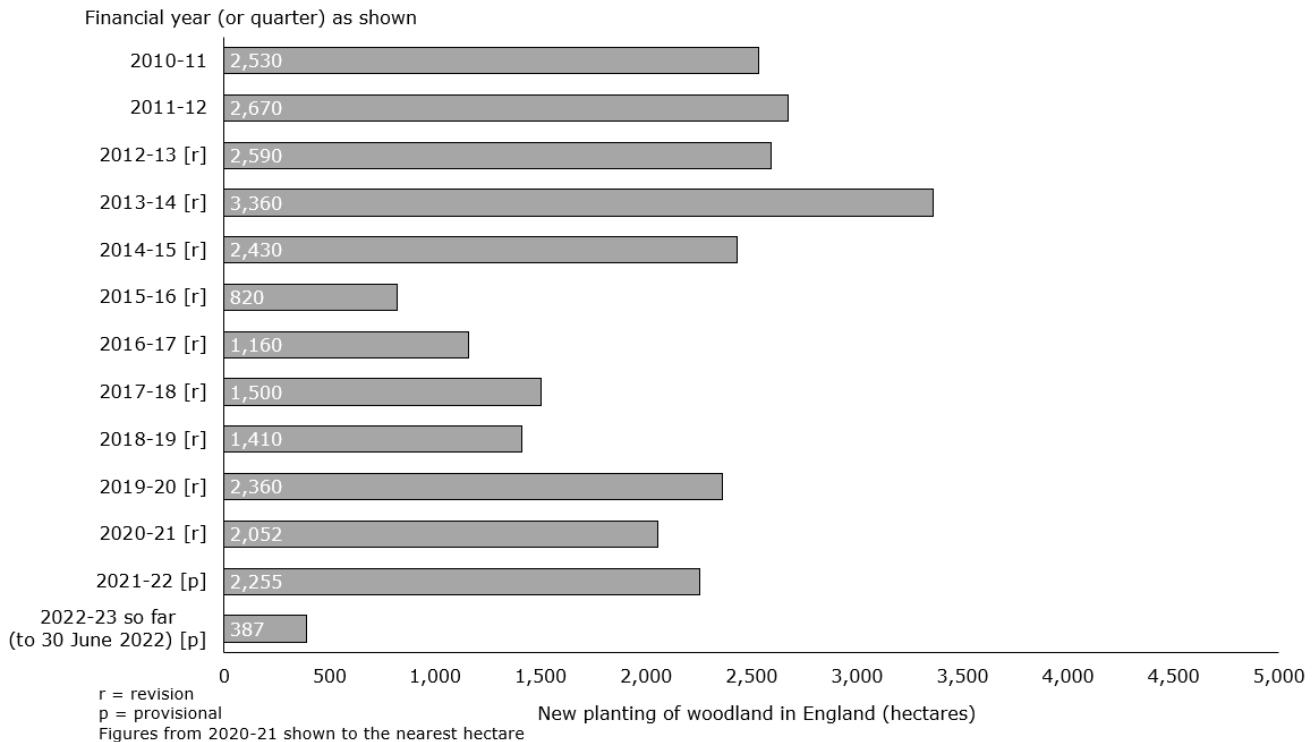
⁵ Forestry Commission (2022) *Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators: Report for 2021-22*, Bristol: Forestry Commission, Bristol: Forestry Commission, 68 pages, at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/forestry-commission-key-performance-indicators-report-for-2021-22>

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



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.

An area of 387 hectares of new planting of woodland in England was reported for the first quarter of 2022-23, together with 9,000 trees outside woodland (equivalent to an area of approximately five hectares). The area of new woodland planted is broadly comparable with the same period in 2021-22, when 471 hectares of woodland was reported (revised statistic). It should be noted that this is only a partial picture of tree planting, as returns have not been submitted by all partners.

Table 2: New planting of woodland and trees in England, by source, 1 April 2022 to 30 June 2022: provisional statistics

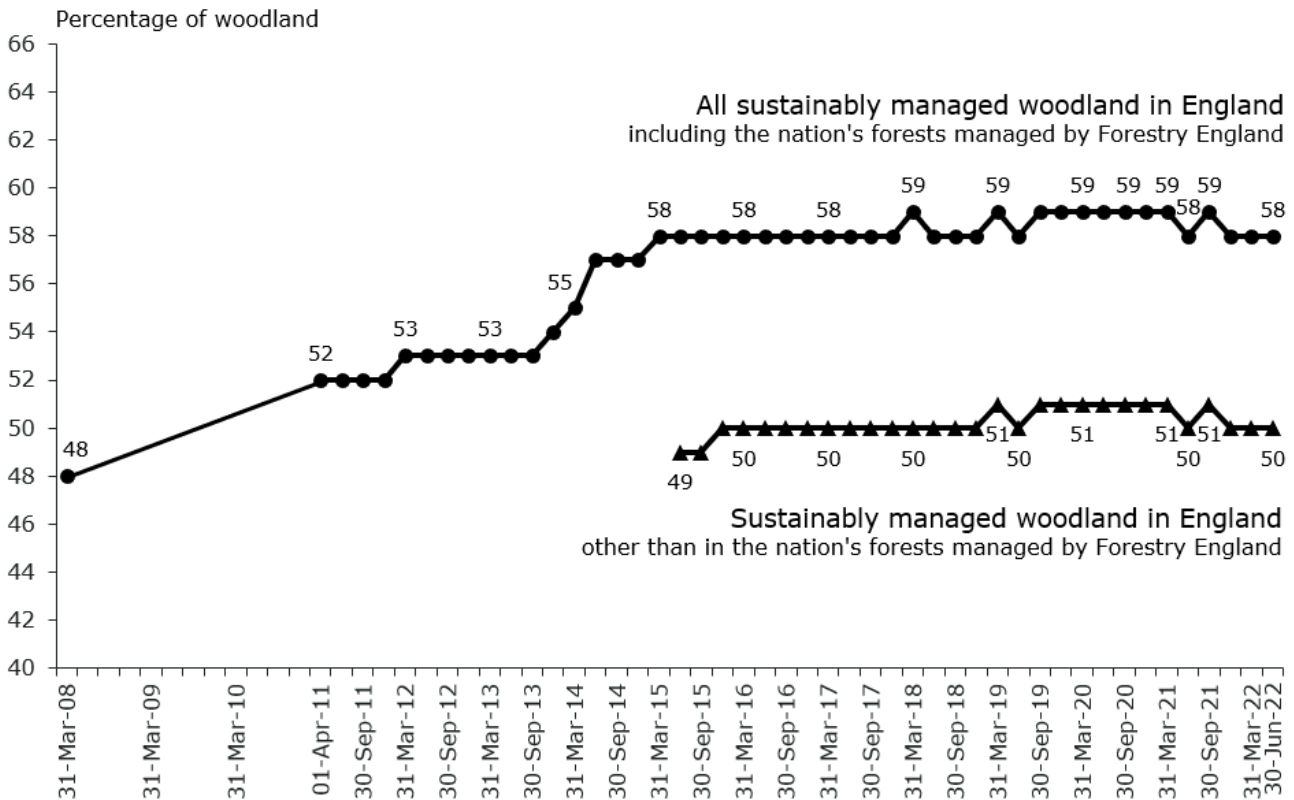
New planting of woodland	Reported area of woodland newly planted, 1 April 2022 to 30 June 2022 (hectares)	Reported area of woodland newly planted, 1 April 2022 to 30 June 2022 (equivalent number of trees)
Government-supported		
Countryside Stewardship woodland creation	87	150,000
England Woodland Creation Offer	221	370,000
Woodland Carbon Fund	0	0
High Speed 2 Woodland Fund	9	12,000
Forestry England	34	90,000
Countryside Stewardship: other tree planting options	37	59,000
Environment Agency	x	x
Northern Forest	x	x
National Forest Company	0	0
Ministry of Defence	x	x
National Highways	x	x
Community Forests	x	x
Sub-total Government supported	387	680,000
Non-governmental organisations		
Woodland Trust	0	0
Total woodland	387 hectares of woodland	680,000 trees within woodland
New planting of trees outside woodland	(Approximate equivalent in hectares)	Individual trees newly planted (number)
Government-supported		
Countryside Stewardship: single trees	4	6,000
Urban Tree Challenge Fund	x	x
Local Authority Treescapes Fund	1	2,000
Forestry England	0	0
Environment Agency	x	x
Northern Forest	x	x
National Forest Company	0	0
Community Forests	x	x
Total trees outside woodland	Approximately 5 hectares	9,000 trees outside woodland
Total woodland and trees outside woodland	Approximately 392 hectares within and outside woodland	689,000 trees within and outside woodland

Notes to Table 2:

1. Statistics may not sum due to rounding.
2. Areas of woodland are rounded to the nearest hectare and tree numbers are approximate and rounded to the nearest 1,000 trees.
3. [x] denotes no confirmed report of new planting is available. We currently expect returns for most of these additional sources of new planting after the 2022-23 year end. Exceptions include, for example, new planting by National Highways where a date can't be given for reporting while work progresses on a central database, and that in the Northern Forest where we expect a return after the second quarter of 2022-23.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. The density of tree planting, in numbers of trees planted per hectare of land, varies between planting schemes.
7. The statistics for new planting of woodland in England in the April 2021 to June 2021 quarter have been revised to 471 hectares (equating to 931,000 trees). This reflects revisions to the component statistics for Rural Development Programme for England: CS and EWGS woodland creation to 253 hectares (439,000 trees) and that by Forestry England to 5 hectares (8,000 trees).
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.

Protecting and improving our trees and woodland

Percentage of woodland that is sustainably managed



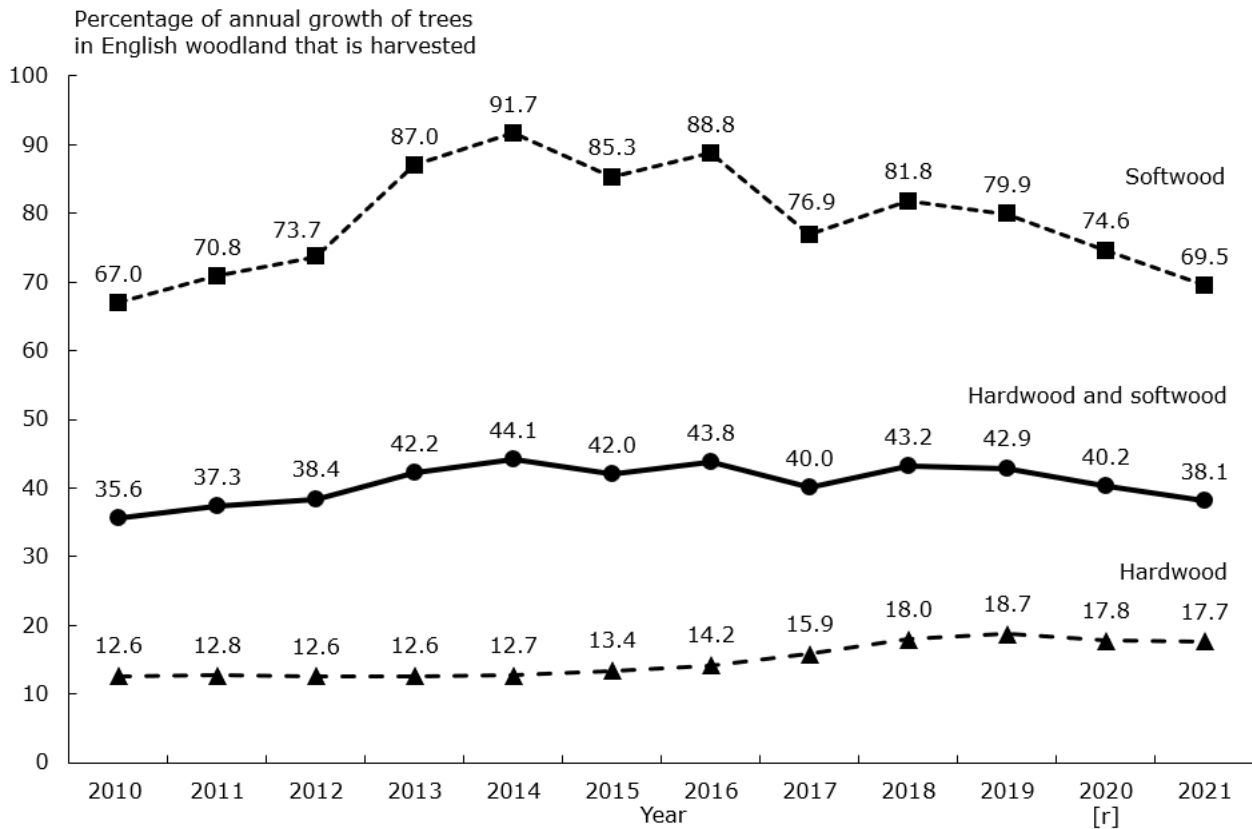
Source: Forestry Commission administrative data and the [National Forest Inventory](#) (Forest Research).

As at 30 June 2022, 58% of all woodland in England was sustainably managed; totalling 762,000 hectares of woodland in management (at this date, when rounded). The equivalent figure for woodland other than in the nation’s forests was 50%, totalling 548,000 hectares of woodland in management.

Our definition of ‘sustainably managed’ is woodland managed to the UK Forestry Standard that has a Woodland Management Plan, or for which we have made a previous grant of 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.

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. This will help improve woodland resilience, manage tree pests and diseases, and reduce England’s reliance on timber imports in the face of global supply-chain uncertainties.

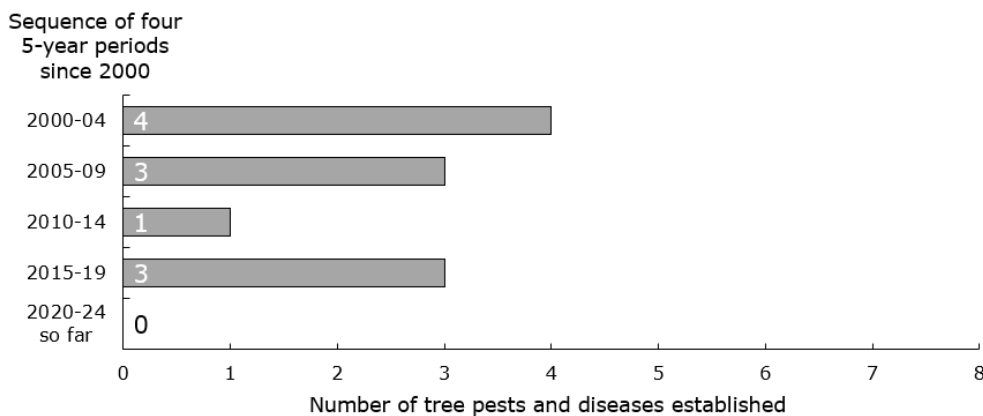
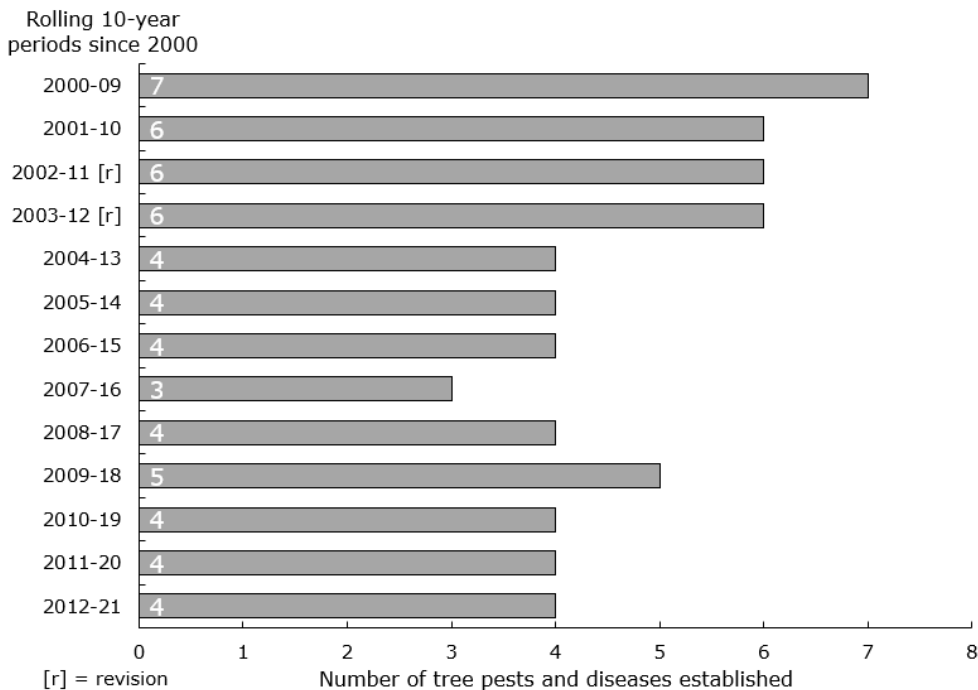
Percentage of the annual growth of trees in English woodlands that is harvested



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.

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



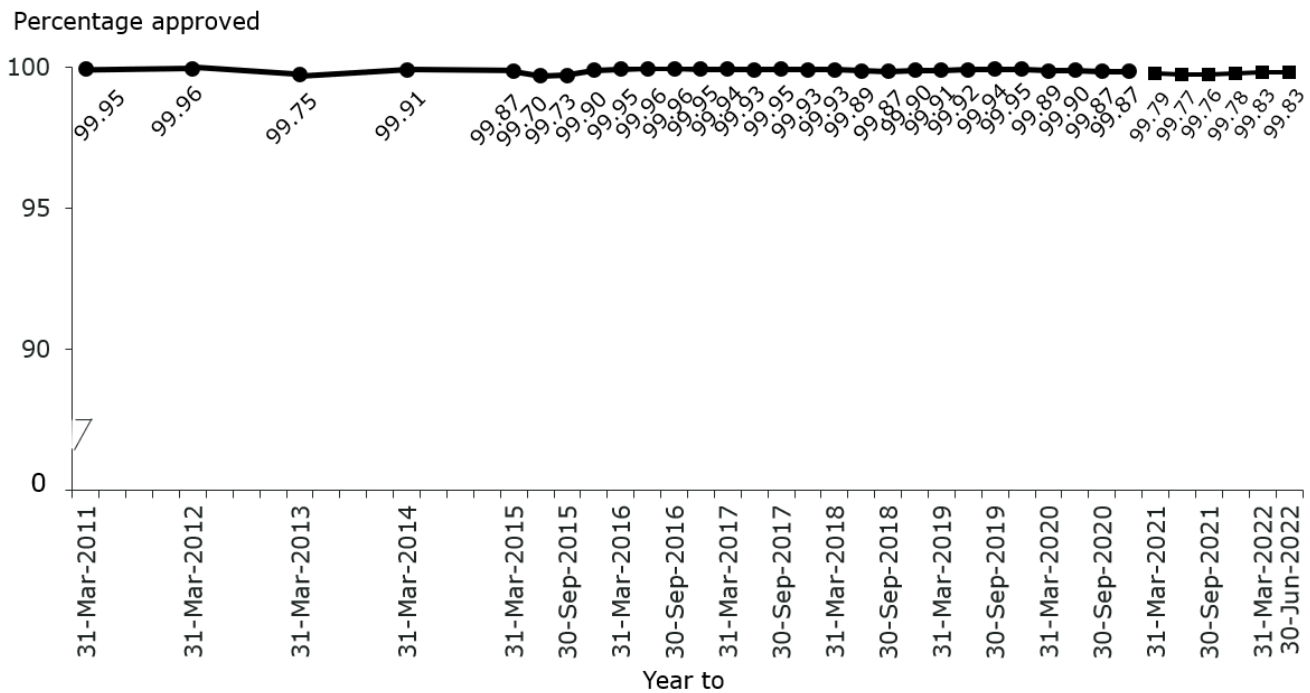
The number of additional tree pests and diseases becoming established in England within a rolling 10-year period fell from a peak of seven in the 10-year period 2000-09 to a low of three in 2007-16.

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 Treescaping 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.

Percentage of known tree felling carried out with Forestry Commission approval



Source: Forestry Commission administrative data.

Report for year to 31 June 2022: 99.83% of known tree felling was carried out with Forestry Commission approval.

The overall figure of legal felling remains at a consistently very high level.